



Grace Notes

Volume 77, Number 10



Grace

Lutheran Church

Lead Pastor

Shane Koepke

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/](https://www.facebook.com/GraceAlbertLea)

GraceAlbertLea

Out of the Chaos, God Creates

“In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.” (Genesis 1:1-2)

When we open our Bibles to the very first page, we are met with mystery. The beginning of everything is not neat and tidy. It is not laid out like a clean blueprint. Instead, we are shown a God moving in the void. A God who stirs the darkness and the deep with Spirit. A God who speaks into nothingness and brings forth light, sky, land, seas, stars, plants, animals, and finally, humanity.

This is often described as a story of chaos becoming order. From the swirling unknown comes day and night, water and land, plants grow and harvest comes. It is true: God shapes creation into a world with rhythm and beauty. But if we stop there, we risk shrinking the story down to something that only comforts us instead of revealing something that challenges us. Too often, people use Genesis 1 as a way to put God in a box, defining God only by this one telling and ignoring the layers of meaning in the words.

Look closer, and you'll see that God does not eliminate chaos altogether. God allows a garden where plants grow wild, bearing fruit only in their season, shaped by weather patterns beyond our control. God allows animals who fight, mate, and hunt, living by instincts we sometimes find violent or confusing. God allows a serpent in the garden. God allows humans to make choices—choices that spiral into disorder.

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Pastor Shane (continued from page 1)

The Bible's creation story is not a fairy tale of perfection. It is a story of a God who is not afraid of messiness. God does not fix everything, sanitize everything, or lock it all into predictable patterns. Instead, God remains present. The Spirit who hovered over the waters in the beginning is the same Spirit that hovers still, reaching for us when we wander, whispering hope when life feels like chaos, grounding us when we feel like we are spinning.

That is good news, because our lives are not neat and tidy either. Families carry griefs and joys mixed together. Communities argue and struggle to find common ground. The world feels turbulent, full of uncertainty. Yet the God of Genesis is still our God. The One who brings something out of nothing, who speaks light into darkness, who stays close when we are lost in the deep.

Creation is not only what happened once upon a time. Creation is what God keeps doing. Every sunrise is a reminder that God is still separating light from dark. Every season of growth, every messy conflict worked through, every child born, every new beginning in your life—all of it testifies to a God who is not finished creating.

So take heart. Out of the void, God creates. Out of the chaos, God speaks. Out of the deep, God still reaches for us.

~PShane

Music

The Colors of October

October is a month to look at closely. Costumes and porch lights glow at dusk, and right alongside that we hear stories of remembrance—from All Saints in the church, to Halloween's lantern-lit sidewalks and old spooky jack-o'-lantern tales, to cultural traditions like *Día de los Muertos* that many experience or first met through the movie *Coco*.

I remember the first time I heard about the *Day of the Dead* in high-school Spanish. I expected something solemn and all black, like a funeral. I was wrong. *Día de los Muertos* is a celebration: bright, vivid color, favorite foods, music, and remembrance that keeps love from fading. When you watch *Coco*, a large portion of that bright color can be found in luminous creatures called alebrijes. Their concept began as modern Mexican folk art, imagined as hybrids first made in papier-mâché and later carved in wood and painted in Oaxaca.

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Beyond fantastic animals, they function as companions and guardians in the story space: guides, helpers, carriers of a gift. Their forms and patterns signal the job they're built for: eagle wings — speed and guidance; turtle shell — protection; jaguar legs — strength; lizard tail — agility; owl eyes — watchfulness; marigold motifs — remembrance.

Dante, the protagonist's alebrije in *Coco*: is a Xoloitzcuintli (show-loh-eats-QUEENT-lee) better known as the Mexican hairless dog, an ancient Mesoamerican breed often depicted as a faithful companion. In the film he becomes a glowing guide. In real life, Xolos are prized for their loyalty and warmth. Fun fact: Xolos show up in Diego Rivera's murals and Frida Kahlo's paintings, two prominent Mexican artists.

Where do music and costumes land in this picture? Both shape how we carry meaning, whether in body or voice. Costumes give body to a role; songs give a voice to a lasting memory. A hymn like "For All the Saints" gathers names into a shared chorus; a cape or lab coat lets a child rehearse protector or problem-solver. One lives in sound, one in fabric, and each helps us hold and live in a story.

Let's talk cards. Illustrations of creatures on cardboard are a pocket-sized gallery. If your home speaks Pokémon, the connection is easy to spot: wings, shells, leaves, lightning; a small text box that describes the creature; rarity and deeper illustration that build a bit of folklore. It's the same idea you see in alebrijes translated into something you can hold, trade, and play. Asher and I will be at Collect-A-Con Chicago on October 11–12, wandering around a giant convention center to visit artists' tables and card vendors and watching how veterans of the show dress in elaborate costumes to share and celebrate their passion with friends. A trading card isn't a spirit guide, but it does something kindred: it opens a door to play and keeps a memory alive so, for an afternoon at a convention, grown-ups get to be kids alongside their kids.

Now that you know my weekend plans, let's bring it back: I think if October has a single image to depict the month, it's that of a light in the dark: porch pumpkins glowing, marigold paths and ofrenda candles, candles at All Saints. They're different settings, yet similar intents. I hope your October is filled with vivid colors, light where there's darkness, and stories shared with company.

Happy October!

Aaron



Church Council Minutes

September 9, 2025

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

Opening Devotions: Given by Jerry Dahl calling us to lead and serve together, justly and with mercy, humbly before God. Using kindness, compassion, wisdom, grace and humility.

Open Forum: None

Approval of Today's agenda

Motion made by: Jerry Dahl

Seconded by: Gerry Vogt

Approved

Review of Last Months Minutes

Motion made by: Gerry Vogt

Seconded by: Jerry Dahl

Approved

Financial Report: Finances are in good shape. Maintenance and utilities are a bit over budget but still within reason. We are under budget in payroll as we had budgeted for a full-time pastor.

Motion made by: Jerry Dahl

Seconded by: Erica Samp

Approved

Old business: None

New/other business: None

Lead Pastor's Report Pastor Shane:

Key chains are still available and have been well received.

Confirmation for 7-8 grades will be on Wednesdays and 9th grade will be on Sunday after church. Confirmation will be held on Sunday October 26th, there will be 2 services that day.

Two new fake olive trees have been put on display in the front of the church.

Kitchen remodel is still looking for bids and hope to have that wrapped up by the end of September.

Committee Reports:

Altar guild: None

Building and grounds: None

Call Committee: Has been reinstated and is looking at new candidates and has an interview lined up and is feeling hopeful during this process.

Education: Flames and games had a good turn out and events have been planned throughout the rest of the year. They are working on having a lefse making event in November, a state park hiking event at the end of September. Sunday School Rally Sunday went well and had good attendance.

Mission team: None

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Church Council Minutes (continued from page 4)

Music: Aaron has been working with the bell and adult choir and is working on a pop-up choir to help lead songs from time to time in the future on short notice. He has been working with Sunday School kids using hand chimes to go with the bell choir. Key chains are going well but a lot of work.

Usher: None

Visitation Group: Has been out and about serving the community

friends health concerns, members & friends grieving the loss of loved ones, Sunday School and Confirmation students and volunteers, Chew & Chat restarting.

Next meeting time and date: October 14, 2025, 6:30pm

Adjournment: 7:18 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Adele Rosnow

Grace Lutheran Church Council Secretary

Round Table:

Positives from congregants: The olive trees in the front of the church, Pastor Shane's sermon on the recent school shooting in Minneapolis.

Tasks for next council meeting: None

Prayer Intercessions: For members &



Remember your coins for
Sunday's Noisy
Offering!

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

We will be selling coffee
before our worship service on
Sunday, October 5, 2025.



Generosity at Grace

**August
2025**

Average
Attendance
in person was:
138 per worship

Giving
\$46,868.41

Expenses
-\$44,466.58

**Year to Date
Giving vs
Expenses:**
\$362,621.39
-\$377,544.34
-\$14,922.95

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 **Betty Anderson**

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

For **Greg Henderson**

Prayers for those Grieving

For the family and friends of **Elaine Long**

Prayers of Hope

For God to guide the **call committee** with
wisdom, unity, and hope as they search
for a new associate pastor.

GRACE PRAYS: We are honored to pray with
and for you. To keep our list current, names
(shared with permission) remain for two weeks
and may be renewed. Please contact the church
office to add or remove a name. Thank you.

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

October

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

1. Richard & Darlene Jordahl, Danny
2. Pastor Milton Ost
3. Joel & Teresa Matheson, Carly, Benjamin,
Leah, & Samuel
4. Paul & Tonya Matson, Alyssa & Jacklyn
5. Alan & Jackie Attig, Alana & Ailey
6. Roger Johnson
7. Brady & Katelyn Flatness, Emma & Graham
8. Kathy Knutson
9. Tony & Tina Strom, Jaci, Hailey, & Logan
10. Cathy Bronson
11. Jeremy Brue, Jazmin & Jadin
12. Norman & Barbara Sebersen
13. Brian & Melissa Johannsen, Kaitlyn
14. Jeff & Amy Kelley, Paige & Austen
15. Adele Rosnow & Adele Helleksen
16. Linda Cornick
17. Scott & Jenni Hanna
18. Myron & Patricia Levisen
19. Ona Meyer
20. Michael Cottrell, Marisa & Dylan
21. Jameson & Amanda Toft
22. Larry & Penny Harmdierks
23. Brandon & Erin Brackey, Declan & Reese
24. Randy & Nicole Harig, Addison, Garrett,
Joshua, Lucas, & Paige
25. Andy & Keli Petersen, Jackson & Samuel
26. Jamison & Amy Cichosz, Gavin, Campbell,
Burke, & Mika
27. Jeff & Carol Olson
28. Phil Goodmanson, Kennady
29. Lester Perschbacher
30. Nick & Jessica Bremer, Ava & Asher
31. Ray & Carol Pedersen





Caring and Sharing

Chairperson: Doreen Pontow

Kathleen & Randy Appel
Laura McKibbin & Bob Ball
Paula & Dale Buendorf
Fern Drescher
Heather & Todd Earl
Jennifer & Jeshua Erickson
Janet & Dexter Henschel
Linda & Don Holst
Janece & Max Jeffrey
Vicki & Mike Larson
Faye Madson
Tonya & Paul Matson
Kelli & Andy Nelson
Nikki & Mike Olsen
Sharon Pasche
Shirley Pearson
Jenn & Jim Quiram
Kim & Dustin Rafdal
Amy & Kelvin Rehnelt
Heidi & Preston Robeck
Renaë & Neil Sather
Renee Thorson
Lori & Randy Tuchtenhagen
Diane VanGuilder
LaJean & James Westeng

Thank you to Jane Smith for chairing September! We're grateful to all who helped or provided food. There's still time to sign up as a co-chair—your support makes a difference!

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.



Pastoral Act for September

Funeral for Elaine Long



Gifts of Love

Altar Guild

In Memory Of:

Daniel Madson given by Dorothy & Dale Baldwin

Backpack Food Program

In Memory Of:

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by Mildred Jensen

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by Robert & Muriel Hoeg

Daniel Madson given by the Madson family

Elaine Long given by Jerry & Gerry Vogt

Gift Given By:

Kent Jasperson

Day-Breakers Kiwanis Club

Glenville American Legion Post 264

Debra Christensen

New Life Christian Church

Joe & Julie Johnston

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

"More Than Sisters" Service Project

Grant Given By:

Central Freeborn Lutheran Church

Ball Scholarship

Gift Given By:

Bob Ball & Laura McKibbin

Building Fund

In Memory Of:

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by Rex & Lois Stotts

Gift Given By:

Kent Jasperson

Food Shelf

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Heifer/Noisy Offering

Gift Given By:

Virginia Sorenson

Kitchen Remodeling Fund

In Memory of:

Daniel Madson given by Mitchell & Rebecca Hanson

Elaine Long given by Dexter & Janet Henschel

Elaine Long given by Wayne & Sharon Jahnke

Elaine Long given by Tuesday Morning Coffee Group

Elaine Long given by Lester Perschbacher

Daniel Madson given by Tony & Vonnie Daub

Daniel Madson given by Carlyn Tufte

Elaine Long given by Carlyn Tufte

Elaine Long given by Dorothy & Dale Baldwin

Gift Given by:

Hazel Spiering

Jerry Meyer

Jeffrey & Carol Olson

David & Carol Paschka

James & Judy Munyer

LOVE

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Ed & Julie Groeneweg

Martin Luther

Gift Given by:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Mary Harriman

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin



Gifts of Love

Memorial

In Memory of:

Daniel Madson given by the Madson family

Elaine Long given by Lowell & Barbara Peterson

Elaine Long given by Jane Madson

Mary Pirsig given by Mary Pirsig's family

Elaine Long given by Garnice Rasmusson

Daniel Madson given by Michael & Karen Hendrickson

Elaine Long given by Dyana Akemann

Elaine Long given by Michael & Karen Hendrickson

Elaine Long given by Debbie Holmen

Elaine Long given by Edmund & Angeline Nelson

Elaine Long given by Stanley & Janet Yocum

Elaine Long given by Ron & Pat Holtan

Elaine Long given by Mitchell & Rebecca T. Hanson

Missions

In Memory of:

Daniel Madson given by Rollin & Nancy Holum

Music Ministry

Gift Given By:

Mary Harriman

Prayer Garden

In Memory Of:

Clifford Engebretson given by Jason & Dayna Saltou, Mercedes & Lexus "Happy Grandparents Day!"

Prayer Garden

Gift Given By:

Greg & Marsha Smith

Debra Christensen

Mary Harriman

Quilting

In Memory Of:

Allan Halvorson given by Lester Perschbacher

Elaine Long given by Sandra Fredrickson

Elaine Long given by Judy Christenson

Youth Fund

In Memory of:

Terry Vandersnick given by Jean Bergo

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by Jean Bergo

Elaine Long given by Randy & Lynn Stay

Paul Field given by Dorothy Field

Gift Given By:

Mary Harriman

PLEASE NOTE that any additional "Gifts of Love" recorded by the church office after September 22, 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.



Announcements

2ND WIND

Life brings many changes, and sometimes we need a fresh start. 2nd Wind is a new group for retired widows, widowers, and divorcees: a place for encouragement, friendship, and hope.

 Thursday, October 9th
 5:00 p.m.  Pizza Ranch

Milt Ost is turning 90!

Join us for an Open House style celebration!
 Saturday, November 8 | 1-3 PM

Grace Lutheran Church
 Fellowship Hall

Feel free to bring friends & family!

Please, NO gifts!

Cake, cookies, and coffee will be served.

SAVE THE DATES & STAY TUNED
 6TH-12TH GRADERS

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 12 BYOB Snack Boards + Board Games	NOVEMBER 8 SERVE & PLAY Feed My Starving Children & Dave & Buster's	NOVEMBER 16 FRIENDSGIVING A fall favorite!
NOVEMBER 22 LEFSE MAKING For Youth & Adults "Rolling out" a new tradition!	DECEMBER 13 BAKING SPIRITS BRIGHT Cookie baking & a Christmas movie	DECEMBER 17 CAROLING AT NURSING HOME The best way to spread Christmas cheer!

Grace Lutheran Church KITCHEN REMODEL

Help us remodel our community table!

Every gift counts and thanks to a generous matching donor, your contribution will be doubled up to \$35,000!

- Updated cabinetry and countertops
- Ice maker
- A height-adjustable stainless-steel work and meeting table
- New lighting and electrical panel upgrades
- A commercial gas stovetop, ovens with warming features
- Fresh paint in the kitchen and new flooring in the basement hallways
- Improved airflow and air conditioning in the chapel, kitchen, and youth room
- Removal of asbestos in older flooring

Kick Off September 14th
 Get Started Now



Bring Your Own Board Social
 6TH-12TH GRADERS

Sunday, October 12th 10:30 AM Youth Room
 9th graders, join us after confirmation class!

Stick around after church for a morning of fun & food!

We'll play games in the youth room while enjoying everyone's awesome snack boards.

Your snack board can be: • Sweet • Savory • Silly • Themed

Let us know if you'd like to brainstorm some delicious ideas!

SIGN UP

www.gracelutheranchurch2flocknote.com/signup/227553



Coffee, Cookies & Community Safety!

Friday October 10th
 @ Grace Lutheran Church
 9am-Noon

Grab a cup of coffee, a cookie, and join us for friendly conversations with local fraud experts about information security.



Bring your documents for FREE document shredding and leave with peace of mind!

Sponsored By:



FAITH & BLUE

ARCADIAN BANK



October 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
5 8:30 am Fair-Trade Coffee 9:00 am Worship with baptism 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am 9 th Grade Confirmation	6 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Grief Share 5:00 pm Mary Circle	7 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	1 9:00 am Quilting 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:00 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir	2 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	3 Building and Office Closed	4 Building and Office Closed
12 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am 9 th Grade Confirmation 10:30 am Bring-Your-Own Board Social (6-12 th Grade)	13 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Grief Share	14 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Council Meeting	15 9:00 am Quilting 6:00 pm Bell Choir 7:00 pm Adult Choir 7:00 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir	16 MEA 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	17 MEA Building and Office Closed 9 am - Noon Shredding & Community Safety event	18 Building and Office Closed
19 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School	20 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Grief Share	21 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Council Meeting	22 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:00 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir	23 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	24 Building and Office Closed	25 Building and Office Closed
26 9:00 am Worship with baptism 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 11:00 am Affirmation of baptism	27 Newsletter Deadline 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Grief Share	28 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	29 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:00 pm Bell Choir 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 7:00 pm Adult Choir	30 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 9:00 am Grace Notes Mail Prep 1:30 pm SAIL	31 Building and Office Closed	 H A L L O W E E N

Grace Lutheran Church
918 Garfield Avenue
Albert Lea, MN 56007

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

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Fall 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 FlockNote!

Sunday School

Time: 10:00 am

Confirmation

Chew & Chat: Serving from 5:45 - 6:15 pm Wednesdays

9th Grade: Sundays (Sept. 14– Oct. 26), 10:00 am

7th & 8th Grade: Wednesdays, 6:30 pm

