



Grace Notes

Volume 77, Number 9



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/GraceAlbertLea

Grace Lutheran Kitchen Remodel: Fundraising Kickoff September 14

At Grace Lutheran, our mission is *"Bringing people together and becoming disciples of Christ."* Few places in our building live out that mission more clearly than the kitchen. Around its tables, we have gathered for funeral lunches, youth fundraisers, confirmation celebrations, potlucks, and coffee fellowship. Since the church was built, our kitchen has helped bring people together in joy and in grief, in service and in learning.

This fall, we begin a project to remodel the kitchen and surrounding areas so that our facilities can continue to support ministry for years to come. The work will include:

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

Why do we invest in this space? Because the kitchen table is an extension of the communion table. In worship, we gather around bread and wine as the body of Christ. In fellowship, we gather around hot dish, coffee, and sandwiches remembering that both are holy tables that shape us as disciples of Jesus and send us out to serve our neighbors.

The total project cost is currently being assembled, but through early gifts and commitments, we have already raised **\$38,000**. Of that amount, **\$35,000 is a generous challenge match. Every dollar you give will be matched dollar for dollar, doubling the impact of your gift.**

On **Sunday, September 14**, we will officially launch the fundraising campaign. Our goal is to raise the remaining funds by the end of the year so that work can begin without delay.

Together, we can create a space that strengthens our mission of bringing people together and becoming disciples of Christ.

Please begin praying now about how you might be called to support this project. This kitchen and its tables have always been central to our fellowship. With your help, we can ensure that Grace will continue to nourish both body and spirit for generations to come.

Music

God's Work, Our Hands... and Voices

I'm writing this on August 19, the first day of school. Asher waved from the bus; I dropped Miles and Levi at daycare. I made it to the office early and even strung together a few full thoughts, then by midday I missed the familiar "Hey Dad, guess what?" refrain. Since Asher is into video-games and knows how to operate our Google Home Display, he frequently plays Legend of Zelda Soundtrack music when he wakes up and quizzes Miles on the name of each song and title of the game. This morning, instead, the torch was passed when adorable Miles looked up and asked, "*Dad, can we do Tears of the Kingdom?*" I said yes, of course (how could you not with that face and cute voice??) and then I witnessed his crafty fingers manipulate the "Google Pad" to play an epic title track to (you guessed it) the Legend of Zelda. The interpretive dance that ensued was well-rehearsed and intentional. I thought of it later as I came to write this and thought of how people and organizations have their own music they listen, sing, rehearse, and perform. At Grace, every fall brings a new soundtrack.

Our theme for Rally Sunday is **"God's Work, Our Hands."** In music that means hands that hold folders, ring bells, play organ, piano, etc. with **voices that serve by leading the congregation's song.** We want to lead by serving, and the best way to do that is by welcoming anyone who wants to sing or ring, and steadily growing our craft so worship is strong, beautiful, and joyful. Activities shared together build lifelong friendships. Families befriend families. This is how a congregation becomes a choir.

How we'll approach the year:

- **People first.** Come as you are; we'll help you find a comfortable part and a schedule that fits.
- **Singable core, growing craft.** We begin each week with a familiar hymn from the pew hymnal. Melody first so everyone can own it, then build harmony and musicality from there. Alongside that core, we'll prepare a few more challenging anthems that help the ensembles grow and stretch in healthy ways.
- **Rightsized commitments.** One hour rehearsals with clear goals; we sing in worship about **two Sundays a month.** If you're unsure, I challenge you to try a four week "taste & see."
- **A plan you can see.** On the **first rehearsal evening,** I'll share our fall plan: what we're leading each Sunday we sing and how it supports the day's readings and prayers.



Music

Growing an onramp for families. Sunday School will include regular music so kids learn faith by heart. Now and then they'll lead us in worship. As kids grow, there are natural next steps (bells, choirs, and a developing worship band) so music can deepen as a family practice.

If you've been away for a season, welcome back. If you're brand new, welcome! Let's put our **hands** to service and our **voices** to praise.

—Aaron

Music Director, Grace Lutheran

music@gracealbertlea.org

Rollout at a Glance

Bell Choir – Interest/First Ring: Wed, Sep. 10, 6:30–7:30PM (Sanctuary).

Beginners welcome; we'll teach you how to ring.

Adult Choir – Wednesdays, 7:30–8:30 PM (Choir Loft).

First rehearsal: Wed, Sep. 10. We lead worship about once a month. *No audition; all voices welcome.*

Sunday School Music –during class. Occasional kid-led moments in worship this fall.
Helpers wanted!

Worship Band (pilot) – send me a message to help gauge interest. Singers and instrumentalists—piano/keyboard, acoustic, electric, bass, percussion, strings, winds, brass.

Pop-up Choir – A quick-notice choir that helps lead music when needed. Often singing/playing within a week before the service. Simple anthems/canons, small-group-type music.

How to Join – Visit the **Music** table on **Rally Sunday** to sign up or email **music@gracealbertlea.org** with your interest.



Church Council Minutes

August 12, 2025

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

Opening Devotions: Given by Markey about how we need to change the way we think. Our minds and body are a gift from God and we should do good with them. We feel fear before we are afraid which gives us a fight or flight feeling. Our thoughts motivate us so we need to think differently to live differently in a way that is a gift to God.

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: Jerry Dahl
Approved

Financial Report: Unfortunately we fell out of the black but we are still doing quite well for the year. Staff is staying within their budgets, giving was down in July. Usually in the fall giving goes back up.

Motion made by: Robert Jacobson

Seconded by: Jerry Dahl
Approved

Old business: None

New/other business: Food for Backpacks has arrived and is ready for distribution.

Our Gift Policy was distributed and a motion was made by Jerry Dahl, seconded by Gerry Vogt, and approved and will be good for the next three years.

The Call Committee will be reinstated to look for another Pastor since Pastor Henry resigned from his position within Grace Lutheran.

Sunday School will begin September 14th with Rally Sunday being held September 7th. Jen Zoller has been brought on in a part-time paid position to organize Sunday School and has already been working on curriculum and planning for the upcoming weeks. Looking for volunteers to help out each week. She will have all of the materials gathered and prepared so volunteers can just grab their groups stuff to teach the lesson. There will be a big group gathering at the beginning and the end of each Sunday School session. Grades will be divided into Pre-K- 2nd grade and 3rd-5th grade. Sixth through 12th will be youth programming.

The kids area in the sanctuary is being updated with new activities.

Reports:

Lead Pastor's Report Pastor Shane: St. John's is selling its location and contacted area churches asking if they could use any of the equipment from there. Grace will be receiving a commercial oven, ice machine, serving items, shelving and bingo machine. We will also be starting a capital campaign for the kitchen remodel. Currently staff is gathering ideas on what needs to be done in the kitchen and will be getting bids.

Committee Reports:

Education: Planning on having an Open Leadership model where volunteers can signup on Sundays that work for them to lead Sunday School. Also looking to have a sign-up for bringing treats. Rally Sunday there will be swag items for the kids.

Continued on page 5



Church Council Minutes

Mission team: Tentatively planning on assembling baby kits September 15th to be shipped out in October. Supplies are being gathered for school kits through August. Campus Ministry, the Winona Campus Ministry would like to make a visit on October 5th. The Lofstrom's will be visiting on November 9th. The Mission Team is looking for volunteers to be on the committee.

Visitation Group: Has 6 volunteers signed up and has been split into teams to visit home-bound members of the church.

Youth: Youth room revival/reopening was a success. A variety of youth attended, 15 youth showed up and had pizza, popcorn, and root beer floats while watching a movie. Committee is working on bringing Chew-n-Chat back.

Positives from congregants: Youth leaders for all the things they have done recently. The Salad Luncheon was a big success.

Negatives from congregants: Learning the new office phones.

Tasks for next council meeting: None

Prayer Intercessions: Doreen's leadership, members & friends for their health concerns, members & friends grieving the loss of loved ones, Grief group revival, Call Committee, good conversations from the council, Sunday School revival.

Next meeting time and date: September 9, 2025, 6:30pm

Adjournment: 7:50 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, September 7, 2025.



Generosity at Grace

**July
2025**

Average
Attendance
in person was:
138 per worship

Giving
\$34,499.44

Expenses
-\$53,861.49

**Year to Date
Giving vs
Expenses:**
\$315,752.98
- \$333,077.76
-\$17,324.78

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 **Jim Munyer**

Prayers for those Grieving

For Gerry & Jerry Vogt on the loss of their
daughter, **Lynn Vogt Rasmussen**

For Jane Madson on the passing of her
son, **Daniel**

Prayers of Hope

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

We offer prayers for all **children, youth,
and young adults** beginning school and
college. May God bless them with
curiosity, confidence, and courage, and
surround them with supportive teachers,
friends, and families.

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.

September

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

1. Preston & Heidi Robeck, Jacy & Brennan
2. Ardis Bang
3. Victor Avery
4. Jody Mondeel
5. Dave & Jeanne Lundak
6. Jane Madson
7. Jerry & Gerry Vogt
8. Joan Moyer, Peggy
9. Carroll Hovland
10. Shirley Pearson
11. Cary & Peggy Williamson
12. Jim & Judy Munyer
13. Paula Wire, Keiffer & Kallee
14. James & LaJean Westeng
15. John & Tammy Bryand, Anthony, Jesse,
Jordan, & Paris
16. Alex & Angie Johnston, Hayden, Adler, &
Bryant
17. Wes & Kate Dahl, Brent, Jake, & Lainey
18. Marlene Tasker
19. Mark Jacobson
20. Philip & Erin Lonneman, Bethany
21. Tim & Angie Tappe, Carter & Dakota
22. Rodger Nelson
23. Fran & Solveig Sunblad
24. Bill & Deb Hobson
25. Margaret Schow
26. Marlys Hagen
27. Brian & Christy Baas, Lilly
28. Cole & Nicole Thompson, Norah
29. Jeff & Lori Miller
30. Michelle Love, Brooke & Tenley

September

Caring and Sharing

Chairperson: Jane Smith

Amy & Jay Cichosz

Kate & Wes Dahl

Pamela & Richard Hanson

Carol & Ronald Johnson

Diann & Don King

Carol Kubat

Kelli & David Nelson

Sharon O'Byrne

Patricia & Bruce Palmer

Nancy & Terry Peterson

Marsha & Greg Smith

Karen & Mark Sanderson

Shelly Sipple

Carol & Judean Thompson

Nicole & Cole Thompson

Gerry & Jerry Vogt

Karen Wangen

Sharon Westcott

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 August

Funeral for Lynn Vogt Rasmussen

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.



Caring & Sharing

Please consider signing up for co-chair. You can choose a month that works for you. We are in need of co-chairs for the months of **November and December.**

The sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

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

Gifts of Love

Altar Guild

In Memory Of:

Mary Lou Jacobson given by Bob Jacobson

Mary Pirsig given by Bev Evans

Daniel Madson, son of Jane Madson given by Don & Melody Munden

Daniel Madson, son of Jane Madson given by Jeff & Carol Olson

Dona Matheson given by Bev Evans

BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAM

In Memory Of:

Delores Nasby given by Mary Tufte

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by David & Jeanne Lundak

Norma Demmer given by Mick & Becky Hanson

Norma Demmer given by Richard & Marti Andersen

Norma Demmer given by William & Lynn Wanzek

Norma Demmer given by Corey & Cheryl Herrick

Norma Demmer given by Wesley & Kate Dahl

Norma Demmer given by Faith Ryan

Marge Hamersly given by Dex & Jan Henschel

Terry Vandersnick given by Barbara Tullberg

Gift Given By:

Albert Lea Lions Club, Kent Jasperson, Debra Christensen, New Life Christian Church, Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

BACKPACK FOOD PROGRAM

Grant:

Kenneth W Olson Charitable Foundation Fund, Southeast MN Realtors, One OC, CCF Bank

Building Fund

In Memory Of:

Babe Enderson given by Kent Jasperson

Larry Pearson given by Shirley Pearson

Gift Given By:

Kent Jasperson

Food Shelf

In Memory of:

Larry Pearson given by Shirley Pearson

Terry Vandersnick given by Barbara Tullberg

Kitchen Remodeling Fund

In Memory of:

Terry Vandersnick given by Barbara Tullberg

In Honor of:

Shirley Strand's 90th birthday given by Sharon & Wayne Jahnke

LOVE

In Memory of:

Norma Demmer given by Kenn & Gerri Breamer

Brian Claussen given by Dell & June Claussen

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Ed & Julie Groeneweg

Martin Luther

In Memory of:

Mary Pirsig given by Dexter & Janet Henschel

Gift Given by:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin



Gifts of Love

Memorial

In Memory of:

Mary Pirsig given by Jerry & Gerry Vogt

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by Ron & Pat Holtan

Delores Nasby given by Darrel & Juliann Jaeger

Delores Nasby given by Mary Thron

Delores Nasby given by Mildred Jensen

Delores Nasby given by Truman & Barbara Thron

Delores Nasby given by Marlene Thompson

Norma Demmer given by James & Pamela Seaser

Norma Demmer given by David & Carol Farmer

Norma Demmer given by Suzanne Moore

Missions

Gift Given By:

John & Jan Duscher

Music Ministry

Gift Given By:

Mary Harriman

Parish Nurse

Gift Given By:

Mary Harriman

Prayer Garden

In Memory Of:

Clifford Engebretson given by Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Terry Vandersnick given by Kent Jasperson

Prayer Garden

Gift Given By:

Debbie Christensen

Kent Jasperson

Mary Harriman

Prayer Shawl

Gift Given by:

Mary Harriman

Quilters

In Memory Of:

Roxanne Habana given by Lester Perschbacher

Norma Demmer given by Lester Perschbacher

Undesignated

Gift Given by:

Ardis Bang

Youth Fund

In Memory of:

Paul Field given by Dorothy Field

Lynn Vogt Rasmussen given by David & Jeanne Lundak

Gift Given By:

Mary Harriman

PLEASE NOTE that any additional "Gifts of Love" recorded by the church office after August 17, 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

YOUTH EVENTS coming up

Confirmation parent & student meeting:
Wednesday, September 3rd

Rally Sunday: Sunday, September 7th
Fellowship & Fun for **all ages!**

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

First day of **Sunday School:** Sunday, September 14th

First day of **9th Grade Confirmation:**
Sunday, September 14th

Go to: <https://gracelutheranchurch2.flocknote.com/signup/222625>
or Scan the QR code to signup!

Email Jenny with questions: connect@gracealbertlea.org



RALLY SUNDAY

Join us for a morning full of fun for all ages.
Everyone is welcome!!



- Popcorn & Snacks
- Bingo
- Scavenger Hunt
- Sunday School Room Tours
- Coloring Sheets
- Prizes

Sunday, September 7th

10:00 AM **Narthex & Chapel**

Grace 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**



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

7-8 PM



REGISTER NOW



SUNDAY SCHOOL

Seeking Sunday School Leaders!

Our children are eager to discover God's love —
and they need caring hearts to guide them on their faith journey!

We Provide:

- ☒ Easy-to-follow lessons
- ☒ All supplies & materials
- ☒ Snacks!

You Bring:

A listening ear, a joyful spirit, and a willingness to laugh, learn, and walk alongside our Grace kids as they grow in faith.

Details:

- Fall classes start: Sunday, Sept. 14
- Sign-up: In the narthex
- Contact: Jen Zoller – 507-383-6215

Opportunities Available:

- Co-lead 4-year-olds–2nd grade
- Co-lead 3rd–5th grade

Let's grow faith together — one Sunday at a time!

Chew & Chat

This is a great opportunity for our youth, Confirmation leaders, families and anyone else to join others for a **FREE meal**, each **Wednesday from 5:45–6:15 pm** when there is confirmation.



Please consider volunteering and hanging out with others before confirmation!

Quilting GROUP

**We are in need of
blankets,
sheets, and fabric**

- Must be at least a yard of fabric
- No fabric that has embroidery

February 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 Building and Office Closed 	2	3 9:00 am Quilting 6:30 pm Confirmation parent/student meeting 7-8 pm Flames & Games (6th-12th)	4	5 Building and Office Closed	6 Building and Office Closed	
7 8:30 am Fair-Trade Coffee 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Rally Sunday	8 1:30 pm SAIL 5:00 pm Mary Circle	9 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Council Meeting	10 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir	11 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL 2:00 pm Oak Park Communion	12 Building and Office Closed	13 Building and Office Closed
14 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am 9th Grade Confirmation	15 1:30 pm SAIL	16 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	17 9:00 am Quilting 10:00 am Thorne Crest Communion 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Con. 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir	18 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	19 Building and Office Closed	20 Building and Office Closed
21 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am 9th Grade Confirmation	22 Newsletter Deadline 1:30 pm SAIL 	23 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	24 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir	25 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	26 Building and Office Closed	
27 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am 9th Grade Confirmation	28 1:30 pm SAIL	29 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:00 am Women's Bible Study	30 5:45-6:15 pm Chew & Chat 6:30 pm 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation 6:30 pm Bell Choir 7:30 pm Adult Choir			

Grace Lutheran Church
918 Garfield Avenue
Albert Lea, MN 56007

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

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Permit No. 208



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 FlockNotes!

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

