



GRACE NOTES

Volume 78, Issue 6



Grace
Lutheran Church

Lead Pastor
Shane Koepke

Deacon
Jessie Camp

Financial Director
Marsha Smith

Music Director/IT
Aaron Bartz

Office Manager
Deb Attig

Building Supervisor
Darin LaFrance

Engagement Director
Jenny Campos

Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9:00 am - 2 pm
507-373-6496

Worship Services
Sunday Morning
9:00 am

Sunday School
Sunday Morning
10:00 am
Sept. through May

www.gracealbert.org

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

Every time I hear the stories from Sunday School, they bring me back to St. Luke in Emerson, Nebraska. My room smelled a bit musty and we were around a little table with little chairs and we learned these stories that filled my ears and my mind with images from Adam and Eve to Jesus and everything in between. Those stories, however, are meant for our ears now as we are older, and the telling of those stories might hit our ears and our hearts and our minds a bit different than when we were younger.

This summer, we will be re-telling those Sunday School Bible stories. Adam and Eve, Noah, Jesus feeds the 5,000 and many others, where we will hear the words, letting ourselves reminisce for a bit and then begin to think about how those formative stories still have the power to help transform and grow our faith today. This will not be a summer of nostalgia (although there may be a bit of that), it's more of a summer of hearing the Bible with ears that have gained experience. And in our experiences of life, it's good for us to re-visit these stories and hear their worth and truth in light of the world around us.

The best thing about the Bible is that it is a living document, full of history and lessons, moral compasses and living truth. That living truth is something that makes the Bible so amazing. It's been around for thousands of years and yet generation after generation find it valuable for the world they live in. We live in. Every new day connects with the story of God written and told so long ago. What I love about scripture, is that each reading provides the opportunity to see and think with fresh eyes and ears.

So whether we are young or not-so-young, please enjoy this summer's worship series the Sundays in June through August.

Pastor Shane



Deacon Jessie

“For as in one body we have many members and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.” – Romans 12:4-5

I truly believe the church is better off when we join together. We are blessed to have a community that is full of various places to worship and encounter the Gospel. Because of that, we can often feel like we are competing, or sizing ourselves up against everyone else, trying to see who can do ministry “better”. Ministry, though, is not a competition. All of our congregations have various gifts, traditions, passions, and knowledge to impart. Each of our congregations are members of the body of Christ, all serving different functions. When we come together, we remember we are the *one* body of Christ. We all share the same goal and have the same mission.

And so, we will be joining forces with Ascension Lutheran, Salem Lutheran, Trinity Lutheran, First Lutheran, and the United Methodist churches to put together an ecumenical VBS program for the community. The theme this year is *Tree of Healing*, where we will talk about how we are all made in the image of God with unique gifts to bear fruit for all people. VBS will be at the Edgewater Bay Pavilion from 1 PM – 5 PM on June 15-17. VBS is for kids 4 years old (must be toilet-trained) through those who just completed 6th grade. Registration for participants and volunteers is out now! All are welcome to attend: one need not be a member of the above congregations (or a member of any congregation) to participate in VBS.

In addition to VBS, there are various other youth events that will happen over the summer: monthly bonfires, monthly service projects, and our annual youth trip. All these events are opportunities aimed at building connections with each other, with our community, and with those around the world. When we take the time to learn about one another, we can better understand the unique gifts we bring into the world. From there, we can work together to imagine the possibilities of what we can do as one.

This summer at Grace is going to be full of fun and adventure, and I cannot wait to journey along with you all.

Deacon Jessie

Mission Team

Caring for Our Neighbors

Recently, we have learned about new ways to support people in our community.

There are programs being made available to help neighbors in their homes and volunteers are needed.

Some opportunities may include helping with **lawn care, laundry, household chores**, or simply spending time with someone who could use a friend.

No one can do everything, but most of us can do something to help our neighbors.

As more details become available, we look forward to sharing ways you can get involved.



Take Sunday into Monday

by being the hands and feet of **Christ** in our community.

Church Council Minutes (continued on page 5)

May 12, 2026

Present at meeting:

Pastor Shane Koepke, Deacon Jessie Camp, Doreen Pontow, Jerry Dahl, Gerry Vogt, JD Carlson, Robert Jacobson, Philip Lonneman, Erica Samp, Jennifer Zoller; Dave Drommerhausen, Marsha Smith

Opening Devotions (Deacon Jessie):

Devotion centered around Acts 1: 1-5 and Ascension Day, which commemorates the bodily ascension of Jesus Christ into heaven, occurring 40 days after Easter Sunday (Thursday, May 14 this year). While it seems like a logical choice that the disciples would have been rallied and ready to spread the gospel, Jesus instructed them to wait. We, too, are called to wait for the Holy Spirit, as we cannot spread the word all on our own. The Holy Spirit is essential to our ability to serve and carry out God's mission – which often requires us to first wait, listen, focus, and reflect on how, when, and where God is leading us.

Open Forum: Financial Procedures Overview

- Marsha Smith, Financial Director and Dave Drommerhausen, Financial Advisor
- Financial Director responsibilities for the church: income input (reports from giving, Vanco, and Flocknote); process and pay bills/expenses; payroll (twice monthly); preparation and payment of taxes; monitor investments; manage paperwork and electronic filing accordingly.
- Financial Director responsibilities for Grace Foundation: income input (farmland rent, interest on investments); process and pay bills/expenses (including scholarships); monitor investments; preparation and payment of taxes; manage paperwork and electronic filing accordingly; attend Foundation meetings triannually.
- Financial Advisor responsibilities: maintain and monitor church budget (current, year-over-year, etc.); review and oversight of all expenses with Finance Committee (weekly, monthly, yearly); present and discuss budget at monthly Council meetings.

Open Forum: Continued

- Grace's strong separation of financial responsibilities and stewardship is commended as a healthy operational practice. [Example: Offering collected by ushers; monies counted and deposited by a team of counters; giving records entered by the church secretary.]

Approval of May Council Agenda

Motion made by: Jerry Dahl

Seconded by: Robert Jacobson

Approved

Approval of April Council Minutes

Motion made by: Jerry Dahl

Seconded by: Philip Lonneman

Approved

Financial Report (Dave Drommerhausen):

- April giving was strong; finances improving; forecasted year-end deficit narrowed

Motion made by: Robert Jacobson

Seconded by: JD Carlson

Approved

Food For Backpacks (Dave Drommerhausen):

- A "standard" (yearly) donation application will be submitted by June 1.
- Program is nearly wrapped up for the year, with school ending soon.
- Good year of fundraising; program is healthy
- VBS offering will be donated to the Food for Backpacks program.

New Business (Doreen Pontow):

- A "Grace Lutheran Church Council Member Handbook" was developed and created by Doreen Pontown and Jenny Campos (Engagement Director), to serve as a reference guide. Each Council member received a handbook.

Old Business (Pastor Shane):

- Kitchen remodel near completion
- A/C units have been installed in youth room and chapel, with dehumidifiers; already making a difference in those spaces
- Fundraising efforts are close but not yet reached

Continued on page 5

Church Council Minutes

(continued from page 4)

Reports:

Pastor Shane:

- Sunday, May 31: Installation of Council Members (during worship)
- Sunday, May 31: Blessing of the Kitchen (after worship)
- Partnering with First Lutheran Church again for Summer Midweek Worship
 - Wednesdays, June 3–August 26, 6:30pm @ Central Park
 - Thirty minute outdoor service, including Communion
- Summer Sunday worship at Grace will be focused around Children's Bible Stories from the Spark Story Bible
- Pastor Shane will be out of office June 15–July 15

Deacon Jessie:

- Sunday, May 17: Baccalaureate Service
- Vacation Bible School (VBS), hosted by Grace and First Lutheran Church
 - The theme is Tree of Healing (ELCA World Hunger material)
 - Open to grades preK–6th from area churches
 - June 15, 16, 17 from 1:00–5:00pm @ Edgewater Bay Pavilion
- Summer Bonfires (fellowship gatherings)
 - Open to grades 6th–12th
 - June 11, July 9, August 13 from 8:00–9:00pm @ Grace Prayer Garden
- Grace in Action (community outreach)
 - Open to grades 6th–12th
 - June 18, July 16, August 20 from 9:00am–12pm @ Grace (sites TBD)
- Summer Youth Trip to Duluth and the North Shore
 - July 27–31
 - Staying at an Airbnb; combination of indoor and outdoor activities, exploration, faith formation and fellowship with Grace Youth
 - Donations and Foundation funds have covered the balance of the trip cost; there will be no additional cost to families beyond deposits that were already made
 - Adult Leader needed – no cost to attend! contact Deacon Jessie if interested

Committee Reports:

Altar Guild:

- Altar Guild "how-to" book has been completed
- Volunteers needed. Time commitment is minimal, about 15 minutes before and after worship.

Committee Reports: Continued

Building, Equipment & Grounds:

- A whole-building walkthrough with Darin LaFrance (Building Supervisor), Pastor Shane, and JD Carlson took place; priorities and plans in place for any current building needs.

Music:

- Bell Choir and Grace Choir are on hiatus for the summer.
- Several special music slots are available for Sundays during the summer; individuals or groups are encouraged to connect with Aaron Bartz if interested.

Sunday School:

- May 3 was the last day of Sunday School, ending with an outdoor celebration
- Postcard will be mailed to families with VBS information; sign-up coming soon

Visitation:

- Meeting held recently; new member joined Visitation team; visits going well

Youth Ministry:

- Escape Room event in Rochester was fun; several youth participated.
- Postcard was mailed to families with summer gathering and service opportunity dates.

Prayers:

For healing for Grace members and members' friends dealing with recent diagnoses; prayers for peace for those grieving recent losses; prayers for safe travels for upcoming trips; prayers for our graduates and their next adventures, may they be guided by Christ.

Roundtable:

- Feedback regarding inability to hear congregational singing over the piano on online worship stream; better when organ is played, but still difficult to hear voices; Pastor Shane will discuss audio adjustments with Aaron Bartz and Darin LaFrance

Next meeting: June 9, 2026, at 6:30 pm in the Fireside Room

Adjournment:

7:35 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Zoller Grace Lutheran Council Secretary

Grace Prays

Prayers of Healing

For **Bernice Moreau**

For **Lois Stotts**

For **Betty Anderson**

For those with new or ongoing health diagnoses

Prayers for those Grieving

For the family & friends of **Sue Barber**

For the family and friends of **Duane Odson**

Prayers of Hope

Some days are easier than others.
Help us hold onto hope when things feel uncertain,
stay patient when life feels heavy,
and remember to turn towards God in prayer through it all.

**Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction;
persevere in prayer.**

Romans 12:12

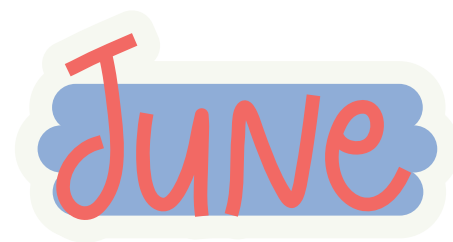
Grace Prays

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 office to add or remove a name. Thank you.

Pastoral Care

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

Please call: 507-373-6496



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

1. Bill Barber
2. Jerry & Gerry Vogt
3. Rex & Lois Stotts
4. Hazel Spiering
5. Matthew & Kristin Larson, Brekyn & Adler
6. Mark Jacobson
7. Brian & Christy Baas, Lilly
8. Shari Van Wey
9. Greg & Kris Hanson
10. Todd & Heather Earl
 - Payton, Jordyn & Brendan
11. Lorraine Branstad
12. Jane Madson
13. Jess & Matt Hatland, Reid & Lucy
14. Robert Kirchner
15. Max & Suzanne Mauer, Avery
16. Michelle Love, Brooke & Tenley Tufte
17. Rollin & Nancy Hoium
18. Dale & Charlotte Elvebak
19. Mary Beese
20. Paul Dunn
21. Wes & Kate Dahl
 - Jake, Brent & Lainey
22. Bob Jacobson
23. Faith Ryan
24. Irmie & Gerhard Kleih
25. Bryan & Sheila Calderon
 - Axel, Aidric & Ari
26. Grace Vee
27. Mark Severson
28. Dave & Sally Skrlin
29. Matt & Angie Moller
 - Judd, Greta, Cleo & Maggie
30. Don & Melody Munden



Caring and Sharing

Chairperson available

Debra & Jimmy Akemann

Linda Andersen

Pat & Alan Arends

Jean Bergo

Pat & Phil Blake

Norena & Travis Brekke

Angela Bryand

Sheila & Bryan Calderon

Helen & Dennis Hamberg

Sandra Jimenez

Jane Madson

Kathryn Peterson

Nicole Steven

Carol Thompson

Jodi & Lee Walters

Jen Zoller

Thank you to everyone who helped in May!
We're grateful for all who volunteered.

If you're looking for a way to get involved,
there's still time to sign up as a co-chair,
your support makes a real 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 great discussion &
fellowship.

Grace WELCA Women's Circles

Mary Circle meets every 1st Monday of
the month at 4:30 pm in the Fireside
Room.

New members are always welcome!

Call the church office for more
information at 507-373-6496.



Pastoral Acts for May

Funeral for Sue Barber
Funeral for Duane Odson

Altar Guild

Communion Bread & Wine In Memory Of:

Sharon Meyer given by Jerry Meyer

Backpack Food Program

In Honor Of:

Pastor Ost's 90th birthday given by Faith Ryan

In Memory Of:

Sue Barber given by Virginia Sorenson

Sue Barber given by David Drommerhausen

Donnie & Pat Johnson given by Debbie Christensen

Gift Given By:

Kent Jasperson

Ona Meyer

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

Grant Given By:

Albert Lea Moose Lodge #1703

Ball Scholarship

In Memory Of:

Bill McKibben given by Bob Ball & Laura McKibben

Don Ball given by Bob Ball & Laura McKibben

Ecumenical Food Pantry

In Honor Of:

Pastor Ost's 90th birthday given by Ross & Shelly Peterson

Gift Given By:

Barbara Tullberg

Kitchen Remodeling Fund

In Memory Of:

Paul Field given by Dorothy Field

Diane Skelley, daughter of Hazel Spiering, given by James & Judy Munyer

Sue Barber given by Carlyn Tufte

Steve Holland given by Carlyn Tufte

Sue Barber given by Kent Jasperson

Sue Barber given by Kenn & Gerri Breamer

Sue Barber given by Lester Perschbacher

Sue Barber given by Greg & Marsha Smith

Sue Barber given by Richard & Betty Anderson

Kitchen Remodeling Fund

Gift Given By:

Greg & Marsha Smith

Jerry Meyer

Markell & Roger Vogt

Mary Tufte

Barbara Tullberg

Ray & Joyce Langerud

Larry & Lanae Thorstad

Truman & Karen Hanson

David & Jeanne Lundak

Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

LOVE

In Memory Of:

LaVerne Hauge given by Dell & June Claussen

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Ed & Julie Groeneweg

Martin Luther

In Memory Of:

Diane Skelley, daughter of Hazel Spiering, given by Dex & Jan Henschel

Diane Skelley, daughter of Hazel Spiering, given by David & Jeanne Lundak

Sue Barber given by Hazel Spiering

Memorials

In Memory Of:

Sue Barber given by Joe & Deb Attig

Thayne Nordland given by Rex & Lois Stotts

Sue Barber given by Rex & Lois Stotts

Lillian Johnson, aunt of Rex & Lois Stotts

Diane Skelley, daughter of Hazel Spiering, given by Barb Thron



Remember your coins for Sunday's noisy offering!

Fair Trade Coffee

We will be selling coffee before and immediately following worship service on **Sunday, June 7, 2026.**



Prayer Garden

In Memory Of:

Clifford Engbretson, who is missed dearly, given by Jason, Dayna, Mercedes & Lexus Saltou

Sue Barber given by Kent Jaspersen

Marvin Gulbrandson, for his birthday, given by Eric Gulbrandson & Michelle Thompson

Donnie & Pat Johnson given by Debbie Christensen

Gift Given By:

Richard & Darlene Jordahl

Kent Jaspersen

Youth Ministry

In Honor Of:

'26 graduate, Brooke Tufte given by Stacy Stauss

In Memory Of:

Sue Barber given by Jane Madson

Sue Barber given by Gerhard & Irmgard Kleih

Sue Barber given by Robert Hoeg

Sue Barber given by Vince & Corrine Tims

Sue Barber given by Dex & Jan Henschel

Sue Barber given by Dale & Charlotte Elvebak

Sue Barber given by Ross & Joyce Hansen

Sue Barber given by Debra Parks

Sue Barber given by Suzanne Moore

Sue Barber given by Larry & Lanae Thorstad

Sue Barber given by Mitchell & Rebecca T Hanson

Youth Ministry

In Memory Of:

Sue Barber given by Rick & Virginia Loberg

Sue Barber given by Glen & Patricia Parsons

Sue Barber given by Thomas Dyrdal

Sue Barber given by Sandra Petersen

Sue Barber given by Rodney & Linda Johnson

Sue Barber given by Judy Christenson

Sue Barber given by Steve & Joann Bracker

Sue Barber given by Michael & Karen Hendrickson

Sue Barber given by Richard & Michele Harves

Sue Barber given by Kevin & Julie Kvenvold

Sue Barber given by Dave & Jeanne Lundak

Sue Barber given by William & Jane Buege

Sue Barber given by Dale & Dorothy Baldwin

Sue Barber given by Robert Ball

Sue Barber given by Rollin & Nancy Hoium

Sue Barber given by Bruce & Joni Cather

Sue Barber given by Susan Gottwald

Sue Barber given by William Barber

Sue Barber given by Jim & Judy Munyer

Sue Barber given by Thomas & Sandra Clawson

Sue Barber given by Gary & Jolene Viktora

Sue Barber given by Richard & Mary Bohlen

Sue Barber given by Kristie Jordahl

Sue Barber given by Al & Pat Arends

Sue Barber given by Steven & Jody Bowron

Butch Harves given by Jean Bergo

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

May 18, 2026 will appear in the next issue.

If you have given a gift and your name has not been recorded, please call 507-373-6496.

Generosity at Grace

**April
2026**

Average
Attendance
in person was:
107 per worship

Giving
\$59,424.45

Expenses
-\$47,698.14

**Year to Date
Giving vs
Expenses:**
\$193,427.90
- \$216,057.89
-\$22,629.99

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.

Announcements



Help Us Fill BABY KITS

SUPPORTING FAMILIES AROUND THE WORLD

THROUGH LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

The Mission Team is collecting items for Baby Kits during **JUNE AND JULY**.

Items Needed:



Place donations in the box below the Mission display in the narthex.

Monetary donations are also welcome.

Thank you for your generosity in supporting our neighbors near and far.

2nd Wind

Wedgewood • June 11
5 pm

Friendship, encouragement, and renewed hope for retired widows, widowers, and divorcees.



SUMMER WORSHIP SERIES

Stories from the
SPARK
STORY BIBLE

Simple stories. Big faith lessons.

AMERICAN LEGION POST 56 BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER

THE BREAKFAST IS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR VARIOUS YOUTH CAUSES



JUNE 14: LAKEVIEW LIONS
JUNE 26: ReAct

FOR EACH PERSON WHO SIGNS IN AS A MEMBER OF



Grace Lutheran Church

WE WILL RECEIVE **\$1**

TO SUPPORT OUR YOUTH GROUP



PARTICIPATING GROUPS
RECEIVE BREAKFAST
PROCEEDS

SUMMER OUTDOOR WORSHIP

WEDNESDAYS
6:30PM
CENTRAL PARK

(June 3 - August 26)
Bring a lawn chair



Grace
Lutheran Church

A JOINT COLLABORATION BY



FIRST
LUTHERAN

Ecumenical Vacation Bible School "TREE OF HEALING"

Join us for afternoons of Bible stories, music, games, snacks, and fun!



June 15-17
1:00pm - 5:00pm
Edgewater Bay Pavilion

*potty trained 4 year olds - completed 6th graders are welcomed!

Scan the QR Code to Register

Registration Deadline:
Friday June, 12



Sponsored by: Ascension Lutheran, Grace Lutheran, First Lutheran, United Methodist, Salem Lutheran, & Trinity Lutheran

Grace Youth Events

UPCOMING EVENTS TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR!



SUMMER BONFIRES Prayer Garden
June 11, July 9, August 13
8-9 pm, weather permitting



6-12TH GRADE



GRACE IN ACTION

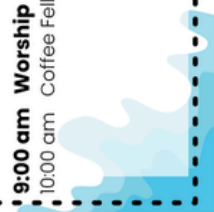
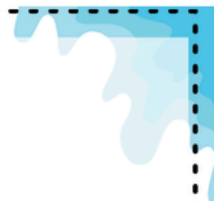
Join us for opportunities to give back to our community!

June 18 and July 16
9 am - 12 pm



JUNE 2026

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 9:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL 4:30 pm Mary Circle	2 10:00 am Tuesday Morning Bible Study 10:30 am Good Sam Communion	3 9:00 am Quilting 6:30 pm Worship Central Park	4 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL	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	8 9:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL	9 10:00 am Tuesday Morning Bible Study 6:30 pm Council Meeting	10 10:00 am Thorne Crest Communion 6:30 pm Worship Central Park	11 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 1:30 pm SAIL 5:00 pm 2 nd Wind Wedgewood 8:00 pm Youth Bonfire	12 Building and Office Closed	13 Building and Office Closed
14 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship 10:15 am Youth Team Meeting	15 Newsletter Deadline 9:00 am Staff Meeting 11-5 pm Vacation Bible School 1:30 pm SAIL	16 10:00 am Tuesday Morning Bible Study 1-5 pm Vacation Bible School	17 9:00 am Quilting 1-5 pm Vacation Bible School 6:30 pm Worship Central Park	18 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 9:00 am Youth Summer Service 1:30 pm SAIL	19 Building and Office Closed	20 Building and Office Closed
21 9:00 am worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship HAPPY Father's DAY	22 9:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL	23 10:00 am Tuesday Morning Bible Study	24 6:30 pm Worship Central Park	25 7:30 am Early Morning Bible Study 9:00 am Grace Notes Mail Prep 1:30 pm SAIL	26 Building and Office Closed	27 Building and Office Closed
28 9:00 am Worship 10:00 am Coffee Fellowship	29 9:00 am Staff Meeting 1:30 pm SAIL	30 10:00 am Tuesday Morning Bible Study				



Grace Lutheran Church
918 Garfield Avenue
Albert Lea, MN 56007

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

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Albert Lea, MN
Permit No. 208



Worship Schedule

Sunday Worship Service

Time: 9:00 am
Options: In person and online
Watch: Facebook (facebook.com/gracealbertlea)
Youtube (youtube.com/@gracealbertlea)

Outdoor Worship Service

Wednesdays at 6:30 (June 3–August 26)
Will be held at Central Park *Bring a lawn chair*

Vacation Bible School

Hosted by Grace Lutheran & First Lutheran Church
Scan the QR code to sign up
Dates: June 15, 16, 17
Time: 1:00–5:00 pm
Location: Edgewater Pavilion

