

GRACE NOTES

November 2023



Experiencing God's Amazing Grace!

through

-  Meaningful
Worship
-  Caring
Community
-  Inspirational
Learning
-  Loving
Service
-  Gracious
Invitation

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A Note FROM THE PASTOR**Dear Saints of Grace:**

As we approach the end of the church year (on November 26) and the end of the calendar year (and our fiscal year) on December 31, we are faced with some significant challenges. Our membership is not growing. Our members are aging. People are feeling the pinch of inflation and economic insecurity. We are still navigating the aftermath of the greatest health threat in our lifetimes. Not to mention the seeming chaos going on around our own country and around the world. Or the threat of global warming.

A person is tempted to throw up his arms in despair. But despair is not in the vocabulary of Christianity. We are a people, a movement throughout time who live in HOPE. Our vision of a world the way God intends it, our belief that God is actively using us to carry out God's will, our recognition of the image of God in every person—all these propel us into a future in which we continue to celebrate God's benevolent reign. We ask repeatedly how God will use us!

Our grounding in hope also motivates us to work today for a better tomorrow. At Grace, in this particular moment, we need increased financial support from our friends and neighbors so we can finish out the current fiscal year on a strong footing and provide a strong foundation for our ministry in 2024 and beyond. As you will see elsewhere in this Grace Notes, we currently are running behind our budget expectations for regular (envelope) giving. Fortunately, we have managed to also keep our expenses significantly under budget but that is not sustainable. There are lots of reasons why our giving is lagging. Some folks have not been able to honor the "pledge" they made at this time last year because of changed circumstances. Some people who may worship now by Zoom, forget to keep their offerings regular like when the ushers collect the offering each week. Some people may have lost a job. Whatever the circumstances, we ask that IF YOU ARE ABLE, please make sure you are current with your pledged support for our ministry.

Throughout this month, we will hear brief testimonies from some of our members about what Grace means to them and why they support our mission together. On COMMITMENT SUNDAY, November 19, you will be given the opportunity to make your pledge of financial support for Grace in 2024. You should receive your pledge card in the mail within the next few days. Please consider, and yes, please pray about how much you can offer in support of our tremendous ministry together.

In this season of thanksgiving, I am so grateful for each one of you, SAINTS of GRACE. Ministers of Grace. I give thanks for the many ways you continue to teach me about the everyday realities of living in God's amazing grace.

In the love, joy, peace, and HOPE of Jesus!
Pastor Daniel Schwick

COUNCIL *Highlights*

Council Highlights from the September 26, 2023 meeting

- Pastor and property committee set October 21 as the day to review and reorganize the storage areas of church.
- Motion approved to empower a task force to review the documents of the church. Congregational Secretary will head the group consisting of the church officers, finance chairperson, and Barb Willis. Task to be completed by 12-31-2023
- The agreement with Iglesia will end soon. Pastor Dan and Dan Reimann will negotiate the new agreement with them. Discussion the work that needs to be done to ensure they leave our facility as neat and clean as they found it.
- Distribution of funds from the Grace Mission Endowment as approved at the August meeting were not made. Motion made to negate last month's decision and approve the following distributions instead: Grace Capital Improvement Fund \$2960, LSSI \$500, Mt. Prospect food pantry \$800, Connections to Care \$800, La Trinidad \$2832, Refuge One \$986.50, ELCA Disaster Relief \$986.50
- New floor in the youth area will be installed mid-October
- Grace will celebrate Pastor Schwick's 40th anniversary of his ordination on Reformation Sunday October 29
- The camera in the preschool play area is now on-line
- Social Ministry approved \$1000 of their designated funds to La Trinidad to reduce their mortgage balance.

Council Highlights from the October 24, 2023 meeting

- Pete Varley has resigned from council effective October 14
- The new agreement with Iglesia negotiated by Pastor Dan and Dan Reimann increases monthly donation by \$300. New rate is \$1500 a month. Also addressed were cleaning requirements, the purchase of their own refrigerator, and instruction on what should be placed in recycling bin.
- Stewardship Education committee will be giving temple talks on the 4 Sundays in November. The topic will be What Grace Church Means to Me. Finance committee will provide the speaker for Consecration Sunday November 19 when we make pledges to fund our church.
- Council agreed that the council for 2024 should be composed of 9 members serving staggered 3-year terms. That means that 2/3 of the council will be returning and 3 new members elected at the annual congregation meeting.
- Approved up to \$1200 to replace the church secretary's computer. The computer is outdated and no longer functioning properly.
- Approved the finance committee's recommendation that funds from the Children's Bible Story Books fund be used to purchase a new computer for the preschool and picture Bible story books for each of the 20 preschool children.
- Approved the finance committee's recommendation that our organist, Seungwha Baek, receive a \$1,000 bonus to be paid out of the Schultz Music Fund

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Worship*

Zoom Worship Service: Join us on Sundays at 10am for worship.

THE ALL GRACE ALL THE TIME CONNECTION INFORMATION IS:

Grace Lutheran Church, Mount Prospect
All worship services, Bible Study and Meetings

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86543729643> Meeting ID: 865 4372 9643

One tap mobile: +13126266799, 86543729643#

Dial (audio connection only) +1 312 626 6799 Meeting ID: 865 4372 9643

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Fellowship*

CALLING ALL GRACE CONFIRMANDS-- ALL CLASSES FROM 1960 TO 2022:

If you were confirmed at Grace or if you are in contact with anyone who was confirmed here, please share this information:

Grace Lutheran In Mount Prospect will hold a Confirmation Class Reunion for all classes on Friday, December 29, from 6:00 to 8:00pm. In addition to returning confirmands, we invite their families and friends who may have been with them for their confirmation. Plus, the whole congregation is invited to the reunion since all of us share responsibility for the raising of our children and youth! Food and beverages will be served. Look for the signup sheet on the Red Board in the back of the church or call the church office to RSVP. ALL ARE WELCOME!

OPPORTUNITIES FOR *Learning*

Wired Word: Wired Word is our weekly discussion group in which we focus on a particular current event and look at it from a Christian perspective. An optional weekly reading assignment helps to focus the discussion. Materials are available on the shelf outside the church office or ask Barb to email you the packet. We meet on Wednesdays at 1:00pm either in person or on Zoom.

Bible Study: Join us on Wednesdays at 7:00pm on Zoom for insights into the scriptures we share.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR Outreach

La Trinidad Community Dinner: Once each month a group of Grace members gather at La Trinidad Lutheran Church in Humboldt Park for worship together with La Trinidad members and then to partake in a community meal that is part of the service ministry of La Trinidad. Grace's contribution to the meal is made possible by your support for our Social Ministry fundraising campaign. The next dinner is November 19, 2023.

Gift Cards for La Trinidad: In the past we have collected turkeys for La Trinidad. In the last few years, it has been easier to give them gift cards so that they can purchase exactly what they need for their meal. They've asked for gift cards to their local supermarket. The Social Ministry Committee is asking for monetary donations to La Trinidad. Donations need to be received by November 12 so that the funds can be taken with to the community dinner of November 19. Thanks for your support.

Christmas Gifts: Robert Frost School and Euclid School would prefer gift cards so that the parents can get exactly what their children want for Christmas. Watch for the poster on November 19 in the Atrium. Donations can be made through December 10th.

Winter Boots and Snowpants: – District 21 would like snow pants and boots for their Pre-K through elementary school students in need. Students without snow pants and boots are not allowed off the blacktop at recess time. We will collect November 26 through January 14 and deliver on December 15 and January 15. Thanks for your support.

- Snow pants – unisex or boy/girl sizes 4T to 14/16
- Snow Boots – size 11 (kids) to size 6

Mallternative: Watch for the poster in the Atrium the end of November. The Social Ministry Committee will have a table up December 3 and December 10 so that you can purchase a "gift" for a family member or friend.

- Chicks \$10
- Fruit Tree Seedlings \$10
- Honeybees \$20
- Piglet \$30
- Goat \$50
- Seeds and Gardening Tools \$50
- Community Vegetable Garden \$200
- Blanket \$10
- Backpack Stocked with Food \$10
- One Month's Nutrition for a Child \$25
- Vaccinations for a Child \$30
- Water Filter \$30
- Feed a Refugee Family for a Week \$50

Food Pantries: The local food pantries are having trouble keeping up with the demand Please help by placing food items in the grocery cart provided at the east entry and/or

marking your check for “food pantry” and the Social Ministry Committee will see that they receive the funds. Thank you.

AROUND the Parish

Saints of Grace



Name: Carolynn White

D.O.B: April 26, 1945

Member: Since 1978. When my daughter was 3 years old we were driving and she saw the VBS sign. She wanted to know what it was. When I explained it to her she really wanted to go. I signed her up and we have been going to Grace ever since.

Favorite Memory of Grace: I have been doing Meals on Wheels for years and I really have enjoyed doing that. I have met so many wonderful people.

Currently Living: Currently living in Mt. Prospect but will return in November to my Florida home in Estero for the winter months

Grew Up: Born in Philadelphia, moved to Indianapolis for 8 years, then to Pittsburgh and landed in Park Ridge.

Schooling: Maine East, Hillary Clinton was in my youth group at my church at the time. Northern Illinois.

Studied/Extra Curricular: Teaching and Sociology. I worked for the radio station in Maine Township, did theater club, and in college was in one of the choirs.

Spouse: Bob (RIP)

Children: Debbie (51), Kevin who passed away when he was 38.

Siblings: A brother named Ted and I have a half-brother in Florida named Rick.

Occupation: A teacher and a mother. I taught for close to 24 years.

Favorite Season: I love them all. I find beauty in each one.

Biggest Accomplishment: Raising my children

Favorite Actor: Harrison Ford

Favorite Song: One Hand, One Heart from West Side Story

Favorite Holiday: Thanksgiving

Favorite Car: My first car was a Camaro convertible

Favorite Sound: Soft music

Favorite Scent: Cookies baking

Favorite Professional Sports Team: Cubs and Pirates. In Florida, Florida Gulf Coast University basketball teams.

Favorite Subject: Social Studies

Hobbies: Baking, reading, swimming and meditation

Dream Vacation: New Zealand

Best Vacation: My honeymoon with Bob in Jamaica

Color: Turquoise

Ice Cream: Jamocha Almond Fudge

Candy: Anything chocolate

Meal: Culver's Cod Sandwich

Dinner with: My Bob and My Kevin

If I won the lottery: I would find places to donate it. To the church and to the adoption agency The Cradle where we adopted our children. I would just want to help people.

Special Birthdays: Betty Benson turns 92 on November 25th. Please send Betty birthday greetings at 1323 South Kaspar Avenue, Arlington Heights, IL 60005. Happy Birthday, Betty!

Jayne Boom Cookie Walk: This year's Jayne Boom Holiday Cookie Walk will be on Sunday, December 10 after the worship service in Charter Hall. Help make this event a success by bring a bunch of your favorite homemade delights to church on that day. Watch the bulletin and Grace Notes for details on getting ready for the cookie walk. Set up and baking will be on Saturday, December 9 from 8:30am until noon.

FINANCIAL Report

Financial Report ending September 30, 2023

	Budget	Actual	Difference
Weekly Envelope Income	\$ 222,002	\$ 203,466	\$ (18,536)
Special Income	36,000	35,095	(905)
Prepaid Income	7,498	7,500	2
Total Income	\$ 265,500	\$ 246,061	\$ (19,439)
Expenses thru September	299,950	284,109	
Current Year Surplus or (Deficit)		\$ (38,048)	
<i>General Fund Balance 1/1/23</i>		<i>46,296</i>	
Current Year Surplus or (Deficit)		\$ (38,048)	
General Fund Balance 9/30//23		\$ 8,248	

Above numbers reflect our current year financial status through the first 9 months of 2023. We ask you to note the current year deficit \$38,000 and the deficit in Weekly Envelope Income of \$18,500. Both give us some concern as we enter the last 3 months of the year. **A request for increased giving the last quarter is warranted so we don't fall into a negative balance in our operating funds. "The Lord loves the Cheerful Giver."**

We were able to complete replacement of Charter Hall roof and a fresh coat of paint using funds in the Building Fund dedicated account during September.

An Idea from Your Finance Committee: RMD to QCD to NO TAXATION

How many of you are required to take an RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) from your traditional IRA (Individual Retirement Account) or Inherited IRA each year? Did you know that you can make all or part of that RMD free from Federal Income Tax by designating a portion as a QCD (Qualified Charitable Distribution) with direct payment to a qualified charity like Grace?

Consider your annual commitment to Grace. Let's say it's \$3,000 and you pay federal tax at a 15% rate. That is \$450 savings on taxes which optionally could be added to your commitment. You would not be able to use the \$3,000 as an itemized deduction but with the new higher standard deduction, many people do not itemize any more. You will still get the full standard deduction if you donate through a QCD.

Regardless of who or how you get your taxes done, do consider a QCD in place of a regular donation in order to reduce taxes you will pay on the full RMD.

Notes of **THANKS**

On behalf of myself, sons and extended family members from eight states, please accept my heartfelt thanks for a touching funeral service for my late wife, Karen. Our family members thought it was a very appropriate worship setting to celebrate the life of my wife of 55-years.

We especially thank Pr. Dan Schwick for his assistance and message, Barbara Willis for her work on the bulletin, Music Director, Susan Nelson and the choir, and organist Seungwha Baek. Also, we are truly thankful for the members of Grace who provided for refreshments at the wake and the 'Coffee And' following the service.

Karen especially enjoyed being part of the music program since we started attending in 2004. We thank those who offered prayers, thoughts, gifts to the Endowment Fund and any who assisted us in this difficult time. Thank you again and blessings.

Pastor Paul Pfeffer, Andrew, Mark and other family members

Dear Grace Lutheran Church Congregation,

I would like to say thank you to you all for supporting me in my journey through college. I am honored that the scholarship committee awarded me with a scholarship this year! It really means a lot and will continue to help support me. So once again thank you all for the support.

Sincerely, Matthew Pracko



Thank You to everyone who worked on this year's garden. The last harvest is in and 601 pounds were donated to local food pantries. What a wonderful accomplishment and way to support our community.

SPECIAL Events

- **Thanksgiving Eve Service:** Wednesday, November 22, 2023 at 7:00pm
- **Christ the King Sunday:** Sunday, November 26, 2023, Worship at 10:00am
- **Hanging of the Greens:** Saturday, December 2, 2023 at 9:00am
- **First Sunday of Advent:** Sunday, December 3, 2023, Worship at 10:00am
- **Second Sunday of Advent:** Sunday, December 10, 2023, Worship at 10:00am
- **Jayne Boom Holiday Cookie Walk:** Sunday, December 10, 2023, following the worship service in Charter Hall
- **Midweek Advent Service:** Wednesday, December 13, 2023, Worship in person at 7:00pm
- **Third Sunday of Advent:** Sunday, December 17, 2023, Worship at 10:00am
- **La Trinidad Community Dinner:** Sunday, December 17, 2023, leaving church at 9:00am
- **Fourth Sunday of Advent:** Sunday, December 24, 2023, Worship at 10:00am
- **Christmas Eve Service:** Service of Lessons and Carols and Holy Communion at 4:30pm
- **Reunion:** Saturday, December 29, 2023 for all high school youth, college students and young adults
- **New Year's Eve** Sunday, December 31, 2023, Worship at 10:00am led by our youth/young adults

Birthday LIST

November

2	Daniel Ellertson	18	Cindy Pirron
3	JoAnne Panzer	19	Robin Greaves
5	Dan Reimann	21	Jeff Greaves
8	Kristin Grimpe Jane Hartfelder	23	Thomas Swiatkiewicz
9	Cory Cordier	25	Betty Benson
14	Steve Hanna	27	Wendy Kjeldbjerg
15	Jack Dietrich	28	Ryan Bell
16	Gianna Lauletta	29	Joanna Josten Mary Meschbach





1624 E. Euclid Ave.
Mount Prospect, IL 60056

Phone 847-824-7408
www.gracemtprospect.org
www.facebook.com/gracemtprospect



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Evangelical Lutheran Church
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OUR *Mission* AND *Vision*

Our mission is to tell the good news of Jesus and touch people with his love.

Our vision is to joyfully praise and serve God, committed to being a church of friendship, openness and diversity.

Staff *DIRECTORY*

Pastor: Daniel Schwick
d.schwick@gracemtprospect.org

Church Secretary: Barbara Willis
b.willis@gracemtprospect.org

Media Coordinator: Joy Medrano
jetmedrano@gmail.com

Director of Music: Susan Nelson
sopranosusannelson@gmail.com

Organist: Seungwha Baek
Gratia7724@gmail.com

Pre-school Director: Rebeka Russell
Gracedirector1624@gmail.com

Mission Partner:

Grace Notes Editor: Debbie Bodett
bodettdeb@sbcglobal.net



ARTICLE *Deadline:* November 19

