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*May*

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Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Messenger

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## Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

My Grandpa Brodbeck was a master storyteller. He died way back in 1965 when I was 6½ years old, yet I still remember (almost word-for-word) many of the stories he told me. The Ghost of Eli is one of my favorites. Because of him I learned early on the wonder and impact of a good story.

Jesus was a storyteller, too. How many of His parables can you recall? Stop reading a minute and write them down. If you need a refresher, read Matthew 13.

Jesus has asked us to be storytellers as well. We don't need to be overly creative to do what He asks. We don't need unique characters (like Eli's ghost) or dramatic events to craft the stories He wants us to tell. We must only tell what has happened to us.

Here at Grace we call that our "faith story." It's the story of how you came to know Jesus as our Lord and Savior. It is a unique story because it is your story, and no one else has a story like it.

Beginning with this issue of the Messenger, we are asking people from our congregation to tell us their faith story. Matt Rugh leads us off. Be sure to read what he has to say. Afterwards, why not write your story and share it with me? I look forward to reading those too.

# MAY OUTREACH CORNER

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## **BLESSINGS IN A BOTTLE CAMPAIGN**

Every year, the Pregnancy Resource Clinic organizes their Blessings in a Bottle campaign which provides a way for local churches, schools, and other organizations to support the ministry of the PRC. The Pregnancy Resource Clinic of Clark County is a Christ-centered organization that provides trusted care, support, and resources to all people regarding pregnancy and sexual health. They will be using a QR code again this year for their fund-raising campaign that you can scan to make an online donation or you can pick up a bottle to fill with coins and return by 6/15/2025. Watch for more information or see Sandy Thompson.



## **ST JOHN'S FOOD PANTRY**

May is another of our months to serve at St John's Food Pantry on Wednesday mornings. If you are interested in helping to distribute food, please contact Judy Fredrich at 937-925-1177. St John's could also use cereal, soup, Ramen noodles, spaghetti, canned fruits and vegetables. Place donations in the shopping cart in the Community Center.

# GRACE OUTREACH IMPACT

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## GRACE OUTREACH IMPACT FIRST QUARTER 2025



Breakfast Break 1st Quarter 2025: \$1,306 donated to the Haitian Community Help and Support Center



32 Blue Banks were filled and returned for Habitat for Humanity's annual Home for the Holidays campaign



We Collected 37, \$10 gas and grocery gift cards for Springfield City Schools families struggling with poverty



We collected \$130 for SMI Haiti rice and beans fundraiser



We collected a \$1,360 offering for Laurel Mission flood damage

## OHIO MISSION REGION CONVOCATION

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On May 2-3 our Grace congregation will be the host church for the annual meeting of the NALC's Ohio Mission Region (OMR). Ohio is one of the largest mission regions in the denomination with about 70 churches spread across five mission districts.

The theme this year is "Come and See." The featured speaker is Tom Hilpert, Director of Life Together Churches in Nashville, TN. His ministry, which is a partner of the NALC, supports people hosting worship and congregational life in small group environments.

Your delegates for this event are Sandy Thompson, Steve Piel and Angie Caudill, along with Pastor Tom Brodbeck. Michelle Kouse is the treasurer for the OMR and is one of the organizers for this event.

# GRACE IS NOW HIRING

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## Our search for a new Director of Lay Ministry Continues



Janet Rice retired at the end of March, and we continue to look for the right person to continue her duties.

If you are interested in applying for this position or know someone who would be a great fit, you can find the job description and application packet on the front desk in the church office or on our Grace Website: [www.grace-nalc.org](http://www.grace-nalc.org) under the employment tab. Please see Sandy Thompson for more information, [sandy.thompson@grace-nalc.org](mailto:sandy.thompson@grace-nalc.org) or 937-399-6257.

## YOUNG AT HEART

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A great time to share Christian fellowship and love to others this month. Fourteen of us enjoyed dinner and dancing at the USS Senior Center last Friday. On the 27<sup>th</sup> we will be exploring the Gary Blevins art gallery. Another La Comedia Dinner Theatre outing will be on May 9<sup>th</sup>. We are going to see the musical, "Children of Eden". I still have seven seats available if you are interested. We will go to another dance that same evening. On May 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, we are attending several concerts at local churches. May 28<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> will be attending the Springfield Champion City Kings baseball games. We hope that you will take some time to join us for a great time of fellowship. If you have any questions, please contact Roger Bentz or Sonya Ryhal.



# WOMAN OF GRACE BIBLE STUDY

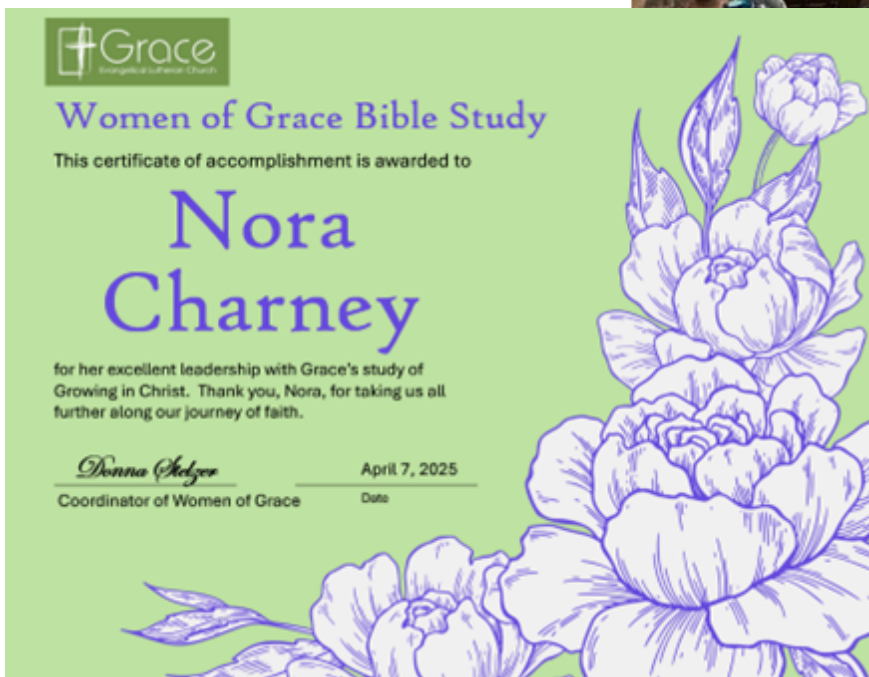
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On April 7, Women of Grace finished a 13-week Bible Study program which we started in January. We had 40 participants in that group including a few who participated from home. This Bible Study was based on the book, *Growing in Christ* by NavPress which is the publishing ministry of the Navigators, an international Christian organization.

Thanks go to Nora Charney who was our instructor. Nora's insightful teaching and supportive guidance made a significant difference in each attendee's spiritual journey. It was truly inspiring to experience how Nora demonstrated her ability to connect us with the scripture in so many ways.

Thank you to all who participated for your time, energy, and commitment to this Bible study. The surveys completed on April 7 by attendees indicated how thankful they were for the guidance they received from Nora. Also, our attendees thanked the members of a small group in our congregation that continually prayed for the attendees in each Bible Study session we had.

Stay tuned for what and when our next Women of Grace Bible Study will begin.



# WOMAN OF GRACE SECRET SISTER REVEAL PARTY ON MAY 5TH

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The latest round of the Women of Grace Program for Secret Sisters started in January 2025 and will be concluding in early May, 2025. On May 5, there will be a Secret Sister Reveal Party at Grace's Fellowship Hall from 7 pm – 8:15 pm. All Secret Sisters are requested to attend. Dessert will be served, we will participate in some fun activities, and we will share recipes. Each Secret Sister is asked to bring 2 things:

- 1) a gift with their Secret Sister's name on the outside of the package and
- 2) Their favorite recipe written on the Recipe Sheet that is available on the Secret Sister display table in the library.

The plan for that evening is to share in fellowship, get to know your Secret Sister, as well as other Secret Sisters better and to go home with a copy of each recipe each participant brings that evening as well as a gift from your Secret Sister. Everyone participating in the Secret Sisters are requested to RSVP with Donna Stelzer at 937-902 0671 to confirm you are attending the event. If you are a Secret Sister and you cannot attend the Reveal Party, please let Donna know that as soon as possible, so she can work out a plan for your Secret Sister to get your special gift.

Here's more information about our Secret Sister Program in case you are not familiar with Secret Sisters.

**Purpose:**

The primary goal is to provide encouragement and a sense of belonging for women within our church. Women at Grace are encouraged to pray for one another and possibly get to know someone they are unfamiliar with or get to know more about someone they already know. It's a great way to build friendship and fellowship among women.

**How it works:**

Participants are matched with a "sister" who they are to secretly encourage and pray for over a set period (in our case, over a 4-month period).

**Encouragement:**

This can include small gifts, cards, notes, or even just acts of kindness.

**Secrecy:**

The identities of the Secret Sisters are kept secret, adding an element of surprise and mystery.

**Reveal:**

At the end of the program, there is a "reveal" party so that participants will finally discover the woman who was their Secret Sister for the past 4 months.

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."  
1 Thessalonians 5:11 (ESV)

# WOMAN OF GRACE SECRET SISTER REVEAL PARTY ON MAY 5TH (CONT.)

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**Grace's  
Secret Sister Dessert  
Reveal Party**

**When: Monday, May 5, 2025  
7 PM – 8:15 PM**

**RSVP: Donna Stelzer 937-902-0671  
by May 3**

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# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

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Welcome to Adult Sunday School at Grace! We meet each week at 9:15 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall and are always eager to invite new participants to join us.

Starting in May, and running through the second Sunday in June, Pastor Tom will facilitate one of the "Essentials" courses designed to coincide with our Adult Discipleship Pathway's letter "G (Growing in God's Word). This course is titled "Intro the Bible."

Through the six weeks of the class, participants will grow in their understanding of the overall story of Scripture as well as how and why the various parts of the story were chosen. We will talk about how the story was written (inspiration) and who decided what books to include (canonicity). Your understanding for and love of God's Holy Word is certain to grow.

## 2 CORINTHIANS 6:10

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As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

Paul knew as Christians, we would face many hardships but with Christ we have a joy that exceeds human understanding. Our bank accounts may not be as full as we would like, but our hearts are full of peace and love by the Holy Spirit that dwells within us. Though we may not possess many worldly treasures, we can be assured that we have true riches through eternal life because God sent his only son to die on the cross for us. Paul's message encourages us to find contentment and joy in knowing we'll spend eternity in heaven. It's a noisy world out there but let's spend some quiet time in prayer and reading God's word to remind us of the joy of our salvation. Let's place our trust in him and he will supply all our needs according to his riches in glory. Thanks be to God!

Beth Szekacs



# FAITH STORY: MATT RUGH

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I was raised by a Lutheran minister who lived and breathed First Lutheran Church 24-7. From childhood through college, I literally grew up in the church. My faith story may *start* early, but as far as actual mature FAITH goes, I didn't achieve anything close to that until I was in my 50's.

What became clear in recent years is faith in Jesus Christ is YOUR belief-not your parent's or grandparent's, not your minister's or teacher's or anyone else's...accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior is a decision/action/commitment that can only come from YOUR heart! I went through the motions like a "good boy" for most of my life which included attending worship/events with my family plus serving on church council and a variety of ministries, having never experienced the catalyst needed to make the truths of the Gospel truly flourish within my own heart and life.

As part of a full church "launch" over a decade ago, "The Ways of the Alongsider" (a resource that catapulted Grace Lutheran into growing disciples through personal relationships), helped me discover an intimate faith that I had only seen in others over the years. 53 years old and I finally GOT IT through the fundamentals of the Alongsider concept: building authentic Christian friendships, by learning to love and live the scriptures while partnering with the Holy Spirit through prayer, and much more. Based on the results of my personal experience, I encourage everyone to embrace all your church has to offer...God Bless!

# LETTER TO GRACE CARD MINISTRY

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Dear Friends,

Your church Card Ministry is wonderful. I have had a wealth of cards over the years since Sam put my name on your list.

I miss him as do so many others. I told Kathy this story;

When Sam was in second grade, they called from school asking why Sam had no lunch money. It turns out he was saving his lunch money to send to Save the Children fund!

And while Sam gave much of himself to Grace Lutheran, Grace Lutheran gave even more to him.

Blessings,

Mary Poston, Sam's mother

# LETTER FROM AARON AND MARCIA OSMON

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We want to thank our Grace Family for the many beautiful cards & words of sympathy you sent to us during the sad time of Marcia's brother, Mark J. Dever's homegoing this past January. Some of you knew Mark from school & had faithfully kept in touch with him over these many years. We miss him greatly but we praise God that Mark is now safely home & at rest with the Father & his beloved wife, Julie. God Bless You, Grace Family.

# MAY CALENDER 2025

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## **Thursday, May 1**

7:00 am Community Group  
11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:30 pm Quilter  
6-8 pm Long Range Planning

## **Friday, May 2**

12-5 pm NALC Convocation/  
OMR  
8:00 pm Community Group

## **Saturday, May 3**

8 am-4 pm NALC  
Convocation/OMR  
8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## **Sunday, May 4**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

## **Monday, May 5**

6:00 pm Helping W/O Hurting  
7:00 pm Secret Sister

## **Tuesday, May 6**

Election Polling Place  
8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
8:30 am Miss. Inc BK St.  
11:30 am Staff Meeting

## **Wednesday, May 7**

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

## **Thursday, May 8**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study  
1:30 pm Quilters

## **Friday, May 9**

8:00 pm Community Group

## **Saturday, May 10**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## **Sunday, May 11**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

## **Monday, May 12**

6:00 pm Endowment  
7:00 pm Agape Guild

## **Tuesday, May 13**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
8:30 am Miss. Inc. BK St.  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
2:00 pm Joy Guild  
6:00 pm Exec. Comm  
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

## **Wednesday, May 14**

10:00 am Hope Guild  
1:30 pm Charity Guild  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

## **Thursday, May 15**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study

## **Friday, May 16**

8:00 pm Community Group

## **Saturday, May 17**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
10-11:30 am Prayer Partners  
3-6 pm Community Group

## **Sunday, May 18**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

## **Monday, May 19**

6:00 pm Stephen Ministry

## **Tuesday, May 20**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
7:00 pm Council  
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

## **Wednesday, May 21**

5:30 pm Grace Notes  
7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

## **Thursday, May 22**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study

## **Friday, May 23**

8:00 pm Community Group

## **Saturday, May 24**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

## **Sunday, May 25**

8:00 am Worship  
9:15 am Sunday School  
10:45 am Worship  
8:00 pm Community Group

## **Monday, May 26**

## **Tuesday, May 27**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study  
11:30 am Staff Meeting  
7:00 pm Cub Scouts

## **Wednesday, May 28**

7:00 pm Sanctuary Choir

## **Thursday, May 29**

11:00 am Adult Bible Study

## **Friday, May 30**

8:00 pm Community Group

## **Saturday, May 31**

8:00 am Men's Bible Study

# CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

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**Contemporary worship** will be moved to the last  
week of June

## June 29th of Next Month

CURRENT RESIDENT OR



[www.grace-nalc.org](http://www.grace-nalc.org) 937.399.6257

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Evangelical Lutheran Church



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