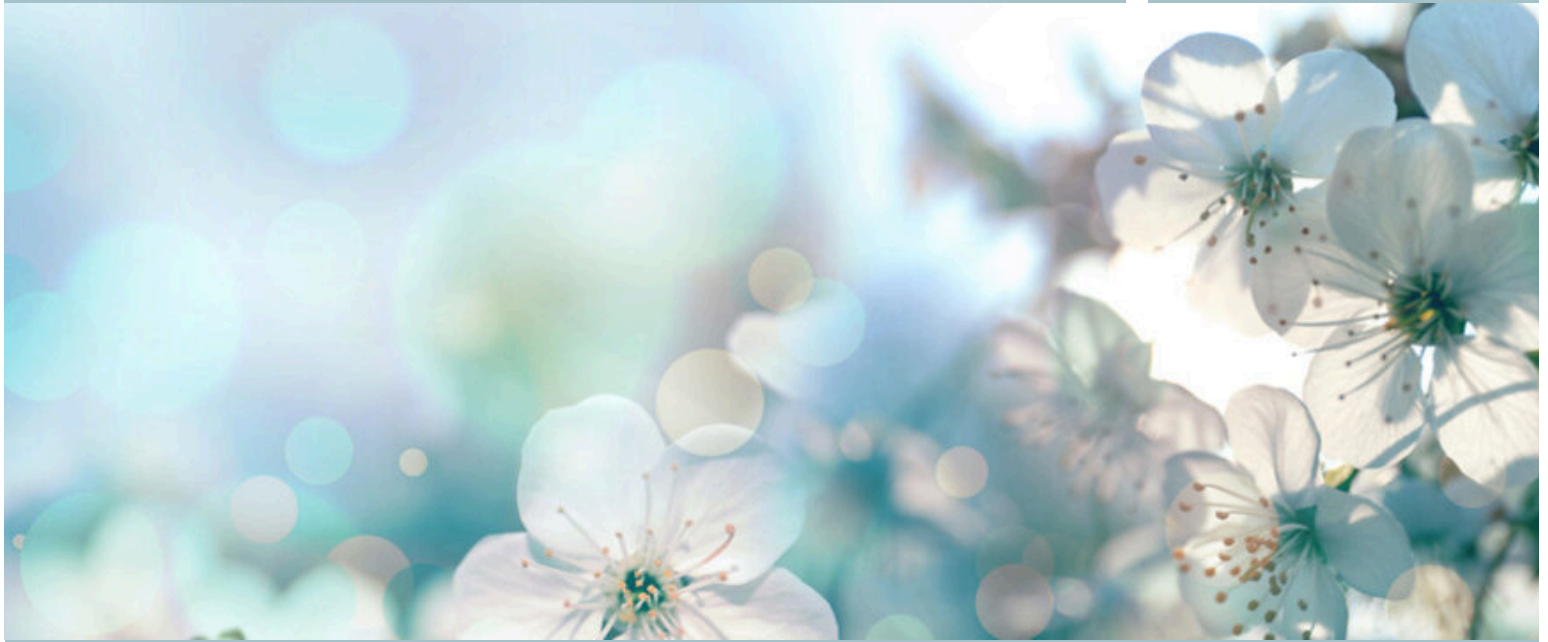


# May MESSENGER



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

2026



## Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

What were they thinking? It is A.D. 33. The resurrection was now a historical fact, and Pentecost had not yet come. In fact, those early Christians did not know what Pentecost was – at least not as we understand it today. During this time Jesus was making periodic appearances. They never knew when He would show up or what He would say or do. The Holy Spirit had not come.

As a part of my devotions during this “in between” period (between Easter and Pentecost) I have been reflecting on those days and comparing them to “these days.” That is, how is this “in between” period of 2026 like the same time period in A.D. 33? I find myself thinking questions those first

disciples might have been thinking as well:

What is God doing right now?

How do all the things going on around me fit into His plan?

Is this the end, or is there more to come?

And what should I be doing?

Like you, I am troubled by all that I see in the news, both at home and abroad. And like you I am not sure what to make of it all. Those questions don't have easy answers. But here is what I do know:

Now is not the time to be idle. There is kingdom work to be done. We have a story that the world needs to hear! Tell it often! Sing it out! Christ has risen indeed.

# May Outreach Corner

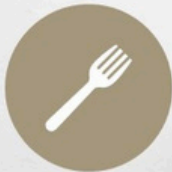


## *BLESSINGS IN A BOTTLE CAMPAIGN*

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 6/21/2026. Watch for more information or see Sandy Thompson.

## Grace Outreach Impact

### **GRACE OUTREACH IMPACT SECOND QUARTER 2026**



**Breakfast Break 2<sup>nd</sup>  
Quarter: \$1,072 raised for  
Encompass Connection  
Center**



**January: collected 23  
blue banks for Habitat  
for Humanity**



**February: Collected  
hygiene and food items  
for The Haitian Support  
Center**



**February: collected food  
and hygiene items for  
St John's Food Pantry**

# Ministry Updates

I'm grateful to share some encouraging updates from the ministries we support through our Ministry Plan Budget here at Grace. It is a joy to see how God is at work—both near and far—through your generosity and prayers.

## *Malawi Orphan Care Project*

We rejoice in the news that their director recently shared: a seventh young man in their orphan care ministry has now qualified for college—thanks be to God! In addition, construction is nearing completion on a new girls' rescue center. This safe, supportive home will provide protection for girls attending the boarding school and help guard them from early arranged marriages. What a powerful step toward hope and opportunity.



## *Naomi's Heart Mission*

Kristy Ward shares that the new school building in the Philippines is now complete! Supplies and furniture are in place, and classes are set to begin in June. This milestone is especially meaningful, as a portion of our 2024 auction proceeds (through Held By Him) helped make this building possible. Beyond the school, your support continues to provide daily meals for children, medical clinics in remote villages, and opportunities to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with all they serve.



## *H.O.P.E. Ministries*

Jackie Mounts reports that H.O.P.E. is preparing to celebrate its 21st annual summer basketball camp this June—an incredible opportunity to continue reaching inner-city youth with Christ's love. As the school year wraps up, both the Ark of Hope and Rock of Hope after-school programs have been filled with children and teens. Jackie also shared a moving testimony from a young man recently released from juvenile detention. He spoke about his desire for real change—recognizing the need for new friendships, spending time in Scripture, and growing closer to God. Thanks be to God for hearts being transformed!

**Thank you for your faithful and generous support—because of you, lives are being impacted here in Springfield and across the globe!**

**In Christ,  
Sandy Thompson**

# Women of Grace Secret Sister Reveal Party on Monday May 11 at 7 pm

The latest round of the Women of Grace Program for Secret Sisters started in February 2026 and will be concluding in May, 2026. On May 11 there will be a Secret Sister Reveal Party at Grace's Parlor from 7 pm – 8:15 pm. Our Secret Sister gathering will offer a warmer, more meaningful connection, allowing everyone to truly celebrate the investment made in one another. This reveal is the perfect opportunity to honor the prayers and encouragement shared all year, cementing friendships in a cozy setting.

- **Show You Care:** Your secret sister is looking forward to seeing you, and your presence confirms the value of the year's encouragement.
- **Celebrate Together:** Take time to share a dessert, exchange a small gift, and reveal the face behind the prayers.

All Secret Sisters are requested to attend. Each Secret Sister is asked to bring a gift with their Secret Sister's name on the outside of the package but do not put your name on the gift! We will reveal your identity during the actual event!

Everyone participating in the Secret Sisters are requested to RSVP with Donna Stelzer at 937-902 0671 or at [dmstelzer@gmail.com](mailto:dmstelzer@gmail.com) 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.



# The Power of a Pause: Becoming a Respite Care Provider

Foster homes in Clark County are in critically short supply—but you can still help, even if full-time fostering isn't an option. Consider becoming a respite care provider.

## What is Respite Care?

Respite care offers foster families a short-term break during times like emergencies, travel, or simply the need to rest and recharge. Care may be as brief as an overnight stay or a weekend.

## Why It Matters

Respite care supports both foster families and children by:

- Providing caregivers time to rest and manage life's demands
- Offering flexibility during unexpected situations
- Creating a stronger support system for fostering families
- Provide emergency housing until a foster family or kinship care can be arranged

## Why Consider It?

Respite care is a meaningful way to support children in need while serving on a flexible schedule. It's also a great way to explore foster caregiving before committing full-time.

## Getting Started

Respite caregivers must meet Ohio's certification requirements, including training and background checks.

Interested? Contact Sandy Thompson or Pastor Tom to learn more.



# Adult Sunday School in May

How do you live in a culture where the worldview conflicts with Christianity? Certainly Christians today wrestle with that question and its application. So did the earliest Christians, particularly those who found themselves in highly Romanized settings.

After spending time with Ray Vanderlaan in Philippi, the Adult Sunday School class in May will relocate to Greece, Corinth and Israel. Ray Vanderlaan continues to unpack the teachings of Paul as this famed apostle presents his beliefs to the most powerful audiences in the Greco-Roman world. You will discover how to live in our own increasingly secular Western world in a way that glorifies God.

Join us each Sunday in May at 9:15 in the Grace Fellowship Hall.

## Children Ministry

### 2026 1<sup>st</sup> Communicants



Bexley Bucey, Olivia Graham,  
Ella Clark, Silas Reed

Thank you to everyone who assisted  
with the Easter Egg hunt!  
The weather was perfect and  
everyone had a wonderful time.

Leslie McKinney



2026 Grace Vacation Bible School

June 15<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup>, 2026

6:00 – 8:30PM

June 18<sup>th</sup>, 2026

Family Cookout, 6:00PM

# VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT FOR THE 26<sup>TH</sup> GRACE CHARITABLE CHRISTMAS AUCTION!

We're seeking volunteers to guide the 26<sup>th</sup> Grace Charitable Christmas Auction on **Saturday, December 5!**

Members will assist with tasks like securing auction items, deciding the auction format, suggesting which charity will receive the proceeds, helping promote the event, and volunteering the day of the auction. If you, friends, neighbors, or family members have event experience or would like to have some, this is for you. Teens are welcome to join and help out.

The committee will help decide which audiences will be invited to attend, what types of items will be sought for auction (e.g.: handmade crafts, antiques, etc.) and to which charity the auction proceeds will be awarded. Many hands make light work, so pitch in for a fun pre-Christmas event!

If you are interested in learning more, contact Chris Norman (937) 399-6257 / email [chris.norman@grace-nalc.org](mailto:chris.norman@grace-nalc.org) OR Mary Lynn Johnson (937) 308-0026 / email [mlynnj719@yahoo.com](mailto:mlynnj719@yahoo.com)

## National Day of Prayer

The National Day of Prayer is a vital part of our national heritage. Since the first call to prayer in 1775, when the Continental Congress asked the colonies to pray for wisdom in forming a nation, the call to prayer has continued through our history, including President Lincoln's proclamation of a day of "humiliation, fasting, and prayer" in 1863. In 1952, a joint resolution by Congress, signed by President Truman, declared an annual national day of prayer. In 1988, the law was amended and signed by President Reagan, permanently setting the day as the first Thursday of every May.

This year's observance is Thursday, May 7. There will be several events throughout our community, organized by the Clark County Prayer Breakfast. The day begins, however, with the annual breakfast hosted by our congregation at 7 a.m. Tickets are required for this event and can be purchased through EventBrite.

Our congregation will also host a Sunday evening prayer service on May 3 at 6 p.m. Given all that is happening in our world right now, it is fitting that we gather as a church to pray. We will gather in the Sanctuary.

# Thank You Note

Thank you to my wonderful church family for the prayers, calls, and cards during my recent health emergency and hospitalization. Your support truly made a difference in my recovery, and I am grateful for God's healing touch.

With heartfelt appreciation,  
Tom Stelzer

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