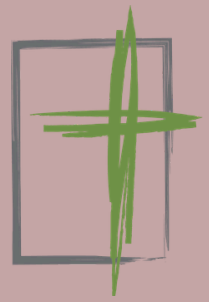


June MESSENGER



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

2026



Pastor's Reflection

Tom Brodbeck

Did you know that there are no tortoises in the State of Ohio? But there are 13 varieties of turtles. Did you know that the Pope cannot be an organ donor? It's canonical law that the Pope's body must be intact after death.

Did you know that rubber bands have a longer shelf life if they are refrigerated?

The world is full of useless bits of information. Answers to questions like these might help you win a game of Trivial Pursuit, but none of them addresses the real and vital questions of life. Those questions can only be found in the realm of faith.

Take, for example, this one: "What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?" (Mark 8:36-37)

Or this one: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" (Mark 10:17)

In a world that seeks real answers to real and meaningful questions, the church rises up with answers. We are the church – you and I. And that ultimately is what church is about, isn't it? Helping people find the answers to life's most important questions? Be the church. It's a great calling.

June Outreach Corner

Breakfast Break – Sunday, June 28

Our Breakfast Break on Sunday, June 28, will feature Born Sianjina from The Matthew 712 Project. Based on Matthew 7:12 – “So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you” – this small 501(c)(3) charitable organization shares the Gospel of Jesus Christ in rural communities of Zambia while also meeting physical needs through providing access to clean water.

Their mission is to build intentional relationships, just as Jesus did, and our own Justin Mohler helped connect Grace with this ministry opportunity.

Please join us to learn more about their impactful work! 9:15 a.m. – Fellowship Hall



Disaster Response

Flood Bucket and Health Care Kits Drives

The NALC Disaster Response Team remains busy year-round assisting victims of natural disasters across the United States, and their warehouse supplies are quickly depleted as needs continue to arise.

During the month of June, we will once again be collecting Flood Buckets and Health Care Kits to help replenish these much-needed supplies and support ongoing disaster relief efforts.

Please visit the Narthex display for instructions on what items are needed and how to properly assemble the kits. Together, we can help provide hope and practical assistance to those affected by disaster.

For more information, please contact Sandy Thompson or Steve Schumacher.

Staff Announcement

Grace Welcomes

New Director of Youth Ministry

Grace Lutheran Church is delighted to welcome Dennis Fry to our church family as our new Director of Youth Ministry.

Dennis officially began his role on May 1, 2026, and is already hard at work connecting with and leading our youth ministries. In this position, he will help foster the spiritual growth of students in grades 7–12 through Sunday School, Youth Group, fellowship activities, retreats, service projects, and mission trips.

Originally from Dublin, Ohio, Dennis has lived in Springfield since 2009 and brings extensive experience in youth ministry. He has served with Inside Out Youth, Eagle and Dove Academy, Lifewise Academy, and his most recent full-time ministry position as Youth Discipleship Director for the Salvation Army. Dennis holds dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Youth Ministry and Counseling, as well as a Master of Arts in Ministry with a focus on Youth and Family Ministry.

Dennis and his wife, Erin, are the proud parents of six boys ranging in age from 10 to 22. In addition to his passion for ministry, Dennis is a talented guitar player and enjoys leading worship whenever he has the opportunity.

“We are excited to welcome someone with Dennis’s background and experience to not only lead our youth ministry but also help us intentionally engage young families here in Springfield,” said Executive Director Sandy Thompson.



*Olivia
is serving as
an acolyte at
the 10:45am
service.
This is her
first year.
Thank you
for helping,
Olivia!*



One Service

Mark your calendars and readjust your alarm clocks because on Sunday, August 30 the two morning worship services will join together as ONE. Our plan is worship at 10 am, with Sunday

School at 9 am. Sunday School will last 45 minutes. There will be no fellowship between Sunday School and worship. The message that day will be titled "One." The text will be Romans 12:1-8, specifically verse 5: "in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

A picnic-style potluck will follow worship, starting at 11:30 am. The church will furnish hot dogs and hamburgers (and buns). The congregation is to bring the remaining side dishes and desserts.

At 12:30 pm we all chip in to clean up and then move into the sanctuary for a 1 pm "Old Fashioned Hymn Sing" with our favorite hymns and praise music (submitted in advance so we can prepare PowerPoint slides). That service will last about an hour.

We will need a crew to coordinate set up for the meal, one to coordinate cleanup and one to coordinate the hymn sing. We are currently recruiting for each of these teams.

This combined service flows out of the congregational survey conducted in April and addresses the desire to improve fellowship and familiarity among the entire Grace church family.

Grace Choir at the Ballpark



Come out and cheer on our Grace Sanctuary Choir as they sing the National Anthem at our local baseball game!

Everyone is invited to attend the Champion City Half Track (formerly the Kings) game on Thursday, June 11, 2026, as the Half Trax take on the Illinois Valley Pistol Shrimp. Members of the Grace Sanctuary Choir will perform the National Anthem at approximately 5:55 p.m., just before the first pitch at 6:05 p.m. In the event of rain, the game will be rescheduled for a later date.

Bring your family and friends, enjoy an evening at the ballpark, and be sure to arrive early to support our choir during the National Anthem performance!

Long Range Planning Survey Update

A big thank you to those who participated in the recent survey conducted by the Long-Range Planning Committee. Results of the survey were shared as a Temple Talk at both worship services on Sunday, May 17. In the event you were not in attendance on May 17, following are the high-level results:

Thirty-nine (39) people participated in the survey. Five questions were asked focused on two areas:

Education (that included Sunday School, Worship, and Other Ministries)

Relationships & Congregational Connection

After reviewing the feedback, the survey results aligned with the work that the Long-Range Planning Committee did in 2025 using the SWOT analysis method. As a reminder, a SWOT Analysis is a strategic planning tool used to evaluate an organization's internal strengths and weaknesses, along with external opportunities and threats.

Four common themes were identified:

Deepen Biblical and Spiritual Formation: This is the strongest and most consistent theme across the entire survey

Stronger Small Groups and Relational Environments: This is the relational backbone of everything people want

More Fellowship, Shared Experiences, and Congregational Unity: This is the emotional and social glue the congregation is craving

Improve Communication, Care and Accessibility: This is the infrastructure that supports everything else

Where do we go from here? In the short term, we have identified several areas where action is being taken or is already in the works.

Improve Communication – survey results were provided at both services on Sunday, May 17, along with this recap in the June Messenger

Connectedness – on Sunday, August 31 there will be one combined service with a potluck/picnic afterwards. Details will be forthcoming – but please save the date.

Worship & Learning – specifically Adult Sunday School – a microphone is now available for enhanced engagement and participation. Multiple Sunday School options will be offered this Fall with more details to come. Continuous improvements are being made with the online worship experience.

Long-term, the Long-Range Planning Committee will continue to lean into the survey feedback as they make recommendations to Council throughout the year.

If you have questions or additional feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to a member of the Long-Range Planning Committee: Pastor Tom Brodbeck, Steve Garrett, Mark Grimes, Darla Kalifoot, Suzanne Klopfenstein, Steve Piel, Matt Rugh, Jenn Stahl, Janice Welsheimer

Grace Endowment Grants Awarded

Grace continues to be blessed with a growing Endowment Fund. Now surpassing the \$500,000 mark, we are able to extend that blessing to ministries within church and beyond our walls. This year the Endowment Fund was able to offer the following grants:

Fellowship of Christian Athletes, 15 cases of Bibles: \$2,250
Malawi Orphan Care, 22 scholarships for children: \$3,300
H.O.P.E. ministry, repairs to sidewalks: \$5,352
Grace Children's Ministry, church camp scholarships: \$2,400
Grace Children's Ministry, library expansion: \$277.10
Grace Children's Ministry, prayer partner ministry: \$231.01
Grace Nursery, new supplies and ministry enhancements: \$825.38
Grace Property, replacement of hazardous sidewalk: \$6,750.

These distributions total \$21,385.49, the most we have ever been able to distribute. Sadly our requests this year exceeded \$53,000, so many other needs were not able to be fulfilled.

Thanks to the Endowment Team for its careful and prayerful consideration of all the requests, and thanks to everyone who contributes to the Endowment Fund.

Young Adult Gathering

On Sunday, June 7, we are inviting all the young adults of the congregation to join Pastor Tom during the Adult Sunday School hour. The goal of this gathering is for him to hear from you about how best our congregation can serve you and minister to your family.

A light continental breakfast will be served, so RSVPs are appreciated. Please let us know if you can come at 937.399.6257 or by emailing tom.brodbeck@grace-nalc.org.

Christmas In July

Believe it or not, Christmas in July is quickly approaching! This special ministry blesses our homebound Grace family members each year through homemade cookies and friendly visits. We will soon be looking for volunteers to help bake cookies, deliver treats, or both!

Watch for signups at Sign-Up Central beginning in early July. This year's Christmas in July weekend is July 24-26. More details will follow in next month's Messenger. Thank you for helping us share joy and encouragement with our homebound members!

Adult Sunday School

Two exciting opportunities await our Adult learners this summer.

First, on Sunday, June 14, Garrett Piel will share his testimony. Garrett is in his third year at the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs where he has been assigned a key leadership role and where he provides spiritual leadership as well. Garrett, a member of our congregation, is eager to share with us what God is doing in his life and in the lives of his fellow cadets. Welcome Garrett!

On Sunday, June 21 we begin an 8-week study on the C. S. Lewis classic "Mere Christianity." Do you want to grow deeper in your understanding of the Christian faith? This is the course for you! Eric Leeth and Su-Ann Newport will co-facilitate this deep dive into apologetics.

Join us each week at 9:15 am!

Young At Heart Followers!!

We enjoyed La Comedia musical called "Wedding Singer". We fellowshiped in Christian love. The Grace choir will be singing the National Anthem at the Half Track Ball Game. We will also be going to concerts in the park. Well, please join us this summer.

Thank You Note

Thank you for all of the prayers and wonderful cards sent to my husband, Jim. We so appreciate the support during his hospitalizations and recovery.

Diana Stanaway

To my beautiful Ohio friends,

As we celebrate our Lord's resurrection, I'm reminded of another celebration last March when my sweet Robert met Jesus face to face. During the difficult months surrounding that time, your card ministry blessed both of us over and over as you sent your love and lifted us up.

I know so many are touched by your prayers and thoughtfulness, and it's been my pleasure to make these cards for you to use.

This evening my family gathered around these cards and prayed over each of them that those who would send these cards, as well as those who receive them, would feel God's Love and be blessed beyond measure.

Kathryn Estry and family, Brandi, Ryan, Lincoln, Charlie, and Lucy

Fort Worth, Texas

Sisters in Secret, Sisters in Christ: Celebrating Our Reveal!



Thank you to those who participated in our Secret Sister program from February through May 11 this year. Your prayers, thoughtful gifts, and encouraging notes brought immense joy and encouragement to our Secret Sisters over these past few months.

Secret Sister relationships are forged through faith and are designed to provide support, encouragement, and spiritual,

as well as emotional strengthening. Too often it's so easy for church attendees to stick to their usual circle at church. But a Secret Sister program helps you connect with someone new. Sometimes, these matches lead to lifelong friendships even after the program ends.

We appreciate the time, creativity, and love that those Secret Sisters this year invested into lifting up their Secret Sister. Thank you for making this 14-week event plus the reveal party a beautiful success and for strengthening our bonds of fellowship!

Pictured below is from the special reveal party on May 11 when Secret Sisters finally revealed their identify!

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