

# Equippier

Equipping God's people as we celebrate, teach, and share God's Grace.



## August 2023

### Pastor's Message

***"God's Word: You Can Trust It"***

*"10 As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, 11 so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it. 12 You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands."*  
(Isaiah 55:10-12)

There are a lot of words being thrown around today. It seems like everyone is talking, but very few people are making real sense. On top of that, very few people are speaking words that really do bless us. Most words today aim to divide and conquer. Most words today are used to grab or grant power, rather than to direct and bless. The movements in our country which concern me the most are those which are intolerant of God's moral word in Holy Scripture. For without hearing God's Word which brings us to repentance, one can't even comprehend the need for God's good news of life and salvation in Christ alone as a gift. Words matter, but the Bible is the only Word from God that can save and give life.

Thank God we still hear God's Word today. It gives us direction. It defines ethical and moral boundaries. It disciplines, rebukes, and corrects. It judges, forgives, empowers, and blesses. God's Word still holds. Even more wonderfully, God's Word of promise holds us. And that's especially good news today because we live in a society that is confused, a culture whose answers to its perceived problems merely cause more confusion and destruction. Who would have imagined that sexual libertinism, which used to be thought of as an immoral or at least an amoral way of life, is now not merely tolerated, but put forth to be celebrated and embraced? Intact families and monogamous relationships which pledge *"till death do us part"* are ridiculed. Children are put at risk. Families don't even try to stay together. Loneliness and despair are on the rise. In all of this, we are falsely advised to find comfort in our own selves, our own words, and our own wisdom outside the foundation from God's enduring Word.

*Continued next page*

That's why I laugh a bit inside when people ask me, Pastor Taggatz, do you think that the message of the Bible is still relevant today?" It's not only relevant. It's necessary. We need God's Word like never before. Of course, I'm not referring to some watered-down type of word manipulated to pander to cultural whims, but a concrete word from God that has the power to bring life and salvation where there is only despair, death, and destruction. We need a message from God that comes all the way to us because we can never find our way back to God. We need His Word because it brings real joy, peace, and change amidst all of the noise of useless words that distract us from a meaningful relationship with God and with each other.

God's Word in the Bible gives us God's "No" and God's "Yes," God's Word of Law & Gospel, not a message of *"tolerance of sin,"* No, a message of redemption and reconciliation! His Word gives life and makes life worth living now and forever. His is the only Word powerful enough both to condemn justly and to create faith graciously, to judge and to save. The Apostle Peter reminds us that there is no other name under heaven given among all of humanity by which we might be saved (Acts 4:12). The name? The "Word made flesh," Jesus the Christ (John 1:14). Amidst all the challenges of today, get back to God's Word! It holds and it upholds you like it always has and always will.

**Prayer:** *Dear Lord Jesus, give me confidence in Your Word in all things, especially now. Amen.*

See You in Worship,

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Pastor John M. Taggatz

Pastor's Office Hours:

**Monday – Thursday 8:00 am -1:00 pm Friday Pastor's Day Off**

**Visitations: Monday-Thursday afternoons**

**For appointments, call Grace Lutheran's church office or Pastor's cell phone. For emergencies, call Pastor Taggatz at 715-467-1231.**

### **"Defending the Faith Sermon Series for the Summer of 2023"**

This summer we are having a special sermon series on, *"Defending the Christian Faith."* Have you ever wondered how to answer someone for the hope you have in Christ Jesus and to do so with gentleness and respect, as St. Peter calls us to do in 1 Peter 3:15? Well, this sermon series is for you.

Please join us as we will be answering certain objections to the Christian faith with the help of the Holy Spirit from God's Word.

8-6-23—Not Denial, but the Good News, Romans 1:16–20

8-13-23—God's Great Big True Story, 2 Peter 1:16–21

## Please Note

### Call the church office at 414.762.8990...

- When a member of your family is admitted to the hospital, so a visit can be made by Pastor Taggatz.
- When your address, email, or your home or business phone number have changed, so church records can be corrected.
- When you are planning to move either out of town or locally.
- When you know you are pregnant so that we will be able to assist you in any way we can with prayers, encouragement and support.
- When a new baby arrives in your family and/or in the family of another church member.
- When you are planning a wedding, baptism or funeral.

**REMINDER:** If you have any announcements and/or additions you would like printed in the monthly *Equipper* please forward to the church office at [church@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org) by the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### ONLINE GIVING AT GRACE

You can now give to our Church online. It's easy, fast, and secure. If you're able, we also encourage you to set up recurring giving. Thank you for supporting our ministries here at Grace!!! Text the word: [graceoc](https://www.graceoakcreek.org) to 206-859-9405, use this [QR Code](#) or head to our web-site: [graceoakcreek.org](https://www.graceoakcreek.org). You may give a one time gift or set up your regular weekly/monthly offering. Thank you for your generosity and support of the ministries at Grace!!!



**FURNACE/BOILER REPLACEMENT** We are currently in need of funding for our aged furnaces at our school and at our church. This fundraiser is to replace the 7 remaining furnaces at our school and the boiler at our church. All units are over 20 years old. The goal is \$50,000. Please prayerfully consider donating above and beyond your general offerings. There will be offering envelopes in the narthex and a donation box for your offerings. Thank you for your ongoing support of our ministries at Grace! God bless you! **Currently, we have raised over \$7,940!!**

# Christian Education Sunday & Church Picnic

Please join us for Christian Education Sunday and our church picnic on September 10th. We will have our Worship Service at 10 am in our church sanctuary. Then, the picnic will start at 11:30 am at the school campus. We will be recognizing our new members we have received at Grace over the last year as well. **Please register by Sunday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.** There is a sign-up sheet in the church narthex, or by contacting the church office via email [church@graceoakcreek.org](mailto:church@graceoakcreek.org), or calling 414-762-8990. Please note that food and beverages will be provided for this event. Feel free to bring lawn games such as ladder toss and bean bag toss for you and your fellow parishioners to enjoy. As you sign up, please indicate the number of people attending and if you can help with set up, serving, and/or clean up. We are looking forward to seeing you there!!!

## **ATTENTION 6<sup>TH</sup> – 8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE PARENTS:**

Please mark your calendar for this upcoming meeting for Confirmation Classes with Pastor Tagatz!

**Monday, September 11<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.**

Art/Science Room

8537 S. Pennsylvania Avenue

Confirmation classes will begin Monday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. for public school students located at the school building.

# SCRIP at Grace Lutheran Church, School & ECC

Grace Lutheran participates in a fundraising program called Scrip, where you can purchase gift cards for over 1,000 retailers, entertainment, grocery and more. Each card is assigned a percentage that is given back to school, church and/or ECC. And the best part...you get to decide where it goes! It can be applied to your tuition payments at Grace, Martin Luther, daycare fees or Sponsor-A-Student account to help families receive financial assistance. Please consider purchasing those cards through our program instead of directly at the vendor or retailer!

Gail Nowakowski is our Scrip Coordinator. If you would like to take a look at what Scrip cards are available to buy to help support the ministries of Grace, please reach out to Gail or grab a Scrip form on the table in the narthex. Gail's contact information is as follows:

➤ 414.791.4075 and/or: [gnowakowski@att.net](mailto:gnowakowski@att.net)



## USHERS FOR SUMMER MONTHS

We are in critical need of ushers for both Thursday and Sunday services. If you have thought about being an usher but are concerned about the duties, please don't be. Here are some of the main duties:

- Arrive 20 minutes before service
- Pass out bulletins
- Collect offerings
- Usher people for communion
- Clean up after service

Please contact Eric Kamprath via email at [ericZ@kamprath.net](mailto:ericZ@kamprath.net) if you would be available to help

## Portals of Prayer Devotional

Over the years the church has provided the Portals of Prayers devotional book to our members. Throughout these years the church has carried this expense. To help offset that burden we now have envelopes available in the narthex for our members to designate funds to this devotional book. It is our goal to continue to provide this amazing tool to our members in their faith journey.

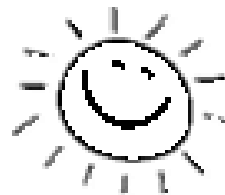
# Grace Ladies Guild

## RISE & SONSHINE BIBLE STUDY

August 12 – at school-Fall Planning

ALL dates start at 8:00am

Ladies you are ALL welcome to join us!



## LWML South Wisconsin District-Fall Retreat

September 29-30, 2023

Clarion Hotel & Suites – Wisconsin Dells

*“Comforted to Comfort Others”*

Retreat Speaker: Author Michelle Diercks

Michelle is a speaker, podcast host, Bible teacher, and Women’s Ministry Retreat Leader. She is the author of *Promised Rest: Finding Peace in God’s Presence*.

Registration is OPEN-[www.lwml-swd.org/events/retreat](http://www.lwml-swd.org/events/retreat)

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## Ladies Bible Study

Please join us on Wednesday mornings at church beginning, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 9:30 am for the Ladies Bible Study. We are studying, *“Measured by Grace”* by Sharla Fritz. We will begin our study in on the life and ministry of John the Baptist. In this Bible Study, readers are invited to re-evaluate their lives through the lens of God’s Word. The world speaks a lot about success, but readers will find peace in the knowledge that God measures them by grace, mercy, and love, not worldly glory. We look forward to seeing you!

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## Sunday School begins September 17<sup>th</sup>

Sunday School at Grace begins on Sunday, September 17<sup>th</sup> for people of all ages! Children preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, a group specifically for our high school students and an adult bible class! Sunday school is held at our school campus, with Adult Bible Class taking place in the school library. This will be from 9:15-10:15 am on Sunday mornings. Please note that adult bible class will be every Sunday of the month and Sunday School will be on the 1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of the month.

## Stewardship Corner

EACH OF YOU SHOULD USE

whatever **GIFT**  
you have received  
to **SERVE OTHERS**  
AS FAITHFUL STEWARDS OF  
**God's GRACE**  
IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS 1 PETER 4:10

We benefit a great deal from discipline. Just as discipline benefits us when we eat right, exercise regularly, and save, we often benefit as stewards from our disciplined giving. God promises to bless us through our faithful and generous giving. When we sow generously, we will reap generously (2 Corinthians 9:6) Jesus said, "For with measure you use, it will be measured back to you." (Luke 6:38) When we honor God with our tithes and offerings, God said that He will "pour down for [us] a blessing until there is no more need" (Malachi 3:10). Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35)

### Blessings on your stewardship journey!

#### *"Crown Him Lord of All"*

One of the greatest hymns of the Church is "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," and each stanza of that hymn ends with the refrain: "Crown Him Lord of All." What a joy it is to sing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name..." Jesus, Who has secured our forgiveness and salvation, deserves to be crowned Lord of all. Someone has correctly pointed out that, unless we crown Christ "Lord of all," we can't crown Him Lord at all.

But, because of our sinful nature, we refuse to crown Jesus Lord of all. Instead, we believe that we are the ones who deserve to wear the crown. Most of us have heard the phrase "We have met the enemy, and he is us." We live in opposition against God, and we have this inborn desire to do things our way and for ourselves. We are the king and master of our lives. G.K. Chesterton wrote, "Of all horrible religions the most horrible is the worship of God within." The Holy Spirit's on-going work is to rescue us from ourselves. Through the help of the Holy Spirit, we see how foolish and wrong it is to make ourselves the god of our lives, and we are led to repentance.

In speaking to His disciples and now to us, Jesus said, "If anyone would come after Me let him deny himself and take up his cross" (Matthew 16:24). Denying ourselves is an essential part of crowning Jesus Lord of all. The Pocket Bible Dictionary defines self-denial as, "Voluntary limitation of one's desires, a requirement of Jesus of His followers. Paul also urged Christians to make an offering of themselves to God (Romans 12:1)." As followers of Jesus, we are called to reject our natural inclination to follow our will rather than God's. With God's help, we can overcome the persistent demands from our carnal selves and bring them into submission to God's Word. In the words of Paul, "And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Galatians 5:24). Only by God's grace and the power of the Holy Spirit can we learn to deny self.

When the Holy Spirit helps us to crown Jesus Lord of our lives, we will use our time, talents, and money in ways that honor Him. We are enabled to understand that our lives, gifts, and blessings are from God, and we express our gratitude to Him for making us part of His kingdom by using what we've been given in service to others.

We close with the final stanza of "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name."  
*Oh, that with yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song  
And crown Him Lord of all.*

## Other ways you can serve God's people:

### **Giving Tree**

The Giving Tree from our Board of Stewardship is up in our church sanctuary. Please consider making a donation to our ministries to help us to continue the mission work of our Church, School, and Early Childhood Center. The needs of our ministries are on the Giving Tree for you to take a look at. Thank you for your ongoing support of the ministries here at Grace! If you are giving a monetary donation to one of the ministry needs for Grace please write checks payable to:

*"Grace Lutheran."*

### **Greeting Card Ministry**

There are cards, stamps, names of shut-ins, prayer lists for anyone to take and send cards to shut ins and those on the prayer line, especially those on the long term prayer list, on the table in the narthex. Pauline Parker has applied to Thrivent Action Team and they will give us \$250 for stamps and cards. Thrivent has approved this project.

Please feel free to take the cards, stamps and list of names and a copy of the prayer list, send out the cards even if you don't know the people just to let them know they are being prayed for and that we at Grace care.

**Please Support Your Local Thrift Store!**—Lutheran Counseling and Family Services operates five thrift stores which help to support services for adoption, mental health, family counseling and substance abuse. Each store is run by amazing volunteers and support their communities by providing an outlet for clothing and household items to be reused and repurposed, offering affordable prices and by donating surplus items to local homeless or veteran shelters. All stores are now open with new safety and sanitation policies for donations and shopping. Please consider supporting these essential stores and the mission they support. Volunteers are in need at each store for a variety of tasks and services.

Hours and additional information can be found at [www.lcfswi.org](http://www.lcfswi.org). [The Economy Center](#) - 7814 W. Burleigh, Milwaukee, WI (414) 442-2272





# LUTHERAN COUNSELING & FAMILY SERVICES

**Tele-health (virtual) counseling now available** - Did you know that the counselors of Lutheran Counseling and Family Services of Wisconsin are available for virtual counseling sessions? For those struggling with any mental health issue such as depression, anxiety, trauma, an addiction or relationship issues, professional help is just a phone call away. Through faith-based Christian counseling, there is an opportunity to model Christian faith and share the promises of the Gospel while utilizing clinical expertise and skill. Speaking with a counselor can help reduce anxiety, monitor depression, control addictive behavior, identify triggers and create solutions to instill hope and faith. Most insurance plans accept telehealth/virtual counseling as a viable option to conduct therapy. Check with your plan in advance to see if this is covered or the staff at LCFS can assist you. Call 800-291-4513 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

# August Calendar

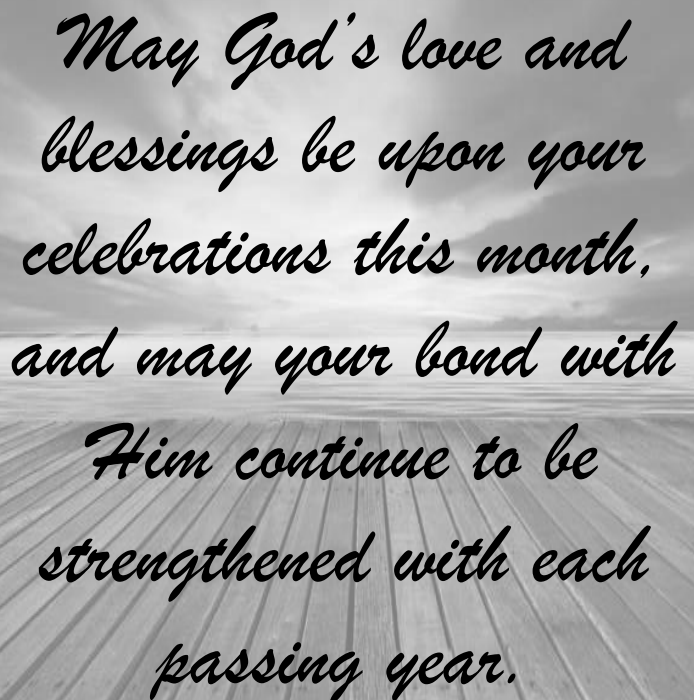
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 9:00am Divine Worship 10:15am Fellowship Fun Time	31 6:30pm Grief Share Group	1 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	2 6:30pm All Board's Meeting	3 6:30pm Divine Worship 7:30pm Fellowship Fun Time	4	5
6 9:00am Divine Worship	7 6:30pm Grief Share Group	8 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	9 6:30pm Council Meeting	10 6:30pm Divine Worship	11	12 8:00am Rise & Sonshine Bible Study
13 9:00am Divine Worship	14 6:30pm Grief Share Group	15 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	16	17 6:30pm Divine Worship	18	19
20 9:00am Divine Worship	21 6:30pm Grief Share Group	22 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	23	24 6:30pm Divine Worship	25	26
27 9:00am Divine Worship	28 6:30pm Grief Share Group	29 7:00am Men's Bible Study & Breakfast (OC Diner)	30	31 6:30pm Divine Worship		

# August Birthdays

Marlene Voss	3rd
Lincoln Heinen	6th
Janine Pieper	6th
Joanne Schaefer	6th
Barbara Praxel	7th
Marlene Leondard	9th
Ricky Roberts	11th
Andrea Szefflinski	11th
Tommy Szefflinski	11th
Deanna Umaske	13th
Greg Nowakowski	14th
Laura Simmons	14th
Kathy Kolb	16th
John Manoil	16th
Robert Morgan	16th
Adam Voss	16th
Craig Frank	18th
Michael Rekowski	18th
Chris Edgerton	19th
Emily Kelley	19th
Alyssa Morrissette	19th
Jeff Schaefer	20th
James Robinson	21st
Stena Miszewski	22nd
Ashlee Koehn	23rd
Ethan Concepcion	24th
Ariel Hagar	24th
Tatiana Concepcion	25th
Phyllis Kraning	25th
Mark Olen	25th
Britta Schaefer	26th
Patricia Groth	27th
Jacob Norton	28th
Harper Heinen	28th
Alex McIntosh	28th
Rodney Novak	29th
Craig Roush	29th
Sarah Anderson	31st

## August Anniversaries

Tom & Lisa Hengst	7th
Michael & Teri Nameth	8th
Gregory & Marlene Voss	11th
Craig & Donna Roush	12th
James & Jean Robinson	14th
Phillip & Susan Herzog	17th
Robert & Gail Olen	22nd
Steve & Julie Thomas	25th
Larry & Sandy Herte	31st



*May God's love and  
blessings be upon your  
celebrations this month,  
and may your bond with  
Him continue to be  
strengthened with each  
passing year.*

## Radio Worship Service

"*The Lutheran Hour*" can be heard every Sunday Morning at 6:00 AM on WGN 720 AM, Chicago or at 6:30 AM on WTMJ 620 AM or at 11:00 am WRRD 540 AM, Milwaukee.

"*The Lutheran Hour*," which began in 1930, is the world's oldest continually broadcast Gospel radio program. This weekly half-hour program, now heard on more than 1,200 radio stations, pro-claims the message of Jesus Christ to a world-wide audience.



## Prayer Hot Line

In order to request prayers by members of Grace, please contact one of the following people. Your request will be made known to all members of our Prayer Line. Prayer requests for worship service should be directed to the church office or Pastor Taggatz.

10AM – 3PM

Carol Thurber, 762-9615

3PM – 9PM

Pauline Parker, 764-5574

### Internet Prayerline

Pauline Parker

[paulinemom@aol.com](mailto:paulinemom@aol.com)

Thursday Worship 6:30 pm  
Sunday Worship 9:00 am

Pastor John M. Taggatz  
PH: 414.762.8990

<https://graceoakcreek.org>

### WEBSITE

SCHOOL & CHURCH OFFICE  
8537 S. Pennsylvania Ave.  
Oak Creek, WI 53154

Oak Creek, WI 53154

3381 E. Puetz Rd.

CHURCH & ECC



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH,  
SCHOOL, ECC