

Grace English Lutheran Church
384 Oak Street, Berlin, WI 54923

*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America*

Rebekah Tarras, Pastor

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THIS NEWSLETTER PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR

Sunday Worship:

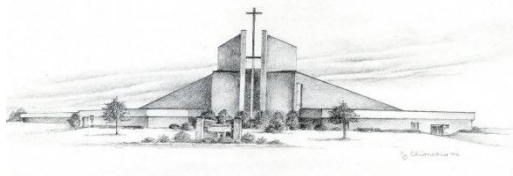
8:30 AM

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday 9:00 am – 12:00 noon

Hometown Broadcasting: Sunday at 9:45 am

WRPN AM 1600 at 12:00 PM



Worship Services

Facebook: www.facebook.com/gelcberlin

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLbOerRk5PMk1QWI9qtZ5_g



October 5 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)

October 12 - Joint Worship Service at First Lutheran at 10:00 am (In person and online)

October 19 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)

October 26 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)

Grace Lutheran's Mission:

We Gather to Worship, Grow, Care, and Share
“All Are Welcome In This Place”

Letter From the Pastor:

A few weeks ago, I read a fascinating blog post by Rev. Anne Russ on her blog, Doubting Believer. Rev. Russ wrote about Edward Locard, a French pioneer in forensic science, who developed something called the Exchange Principle: “Every contact leaves a trace.” (You can read it here: <https://resources.doubtingbeliever.com/blog/ce0dd542-8590-4a9c-bd5d-77f646336450>)



In forensic science, this means that a criminal always leaves something behind at the scene of a crime and always takes something with them. Even with gloves, masks, or protective suits, something is left and something is taken. Trace evidence is inevitable.

Rev. Russ suggests that this principle doesn't just apply to crime; it's true for all of life. Every interaction we have with another person leaves a trace, whether we intend it or not. The words we speak, the smiles we share, even the way we listen. We all leave marks on each other's lives, whether it is the cashier at the store, a friend in need, or a stranger on the street. And sometimes, the marks we leave can lift someone's day, strengthen their spirit, or remind them of God's love. Other times, the traces can weigh people down.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be intentional about the traces we leave behind. Colossians 3:12-14 reminds us to clothe ourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, and to forgive and love one another. If every contact leaves a trace, what better evidence of our faith could there be than love reflected in our words and actions?

At the same time, Rev. Russ reminds us that we must also be mindful of the marks we pick up from others, like hurt, worry, judgment, or negativity, that aren't meant to stay with us. God invites us to release what doesn't serve life and love, to let Christ's mercy wash away what we need to let go of.

This month, I invite you to consider your traces. What are you leaving behind? What are you taking with you? May every encounter reflect God's grace, and may the traces we leave be ones that bless, encourage, and draw others closer to Jesus.

Blessings,
Pastor Rebekah Tarras

Joint Worship & Potluck Sunday, October 12, 10:00 a.m. at First Lutheran

Let's worship as one church family! First Lutheran and Grace will gather Sunday, October 12 at 10:00 a.m. at First Lutheran (W2314 Prospect St., Poy Sippi) for a joint service, with a potluck meal right after.

Grace Sunday School students are warmly invited to join First Lutheran classes at 9:00 a.m.—new friends, same Jesus. “In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.” (Romans 12:5, NLT)

Bring a favorite dish to share, and come ready to sing, pray, and linger around the table. God keeps knitting us together—let's show up for it.



**Grace English Lutheran Church
Congregational Council Meeting
August 11, 2025**

Call to Order by Linda Reetz at 6:57 pm

Roll Call- Attending: Linda Reetz, Terry Wallace, Bob Prellwitz, Sandy Peschke, Heidi Schramer, Anita Lind, Bonnie Kline, Pastor Rebekah and Tim Koch

Absent: Sue Shemanski

Terry provided Opening prayer.

Approval of Agenda – Bonnie moved to approve the agenda as presented. Tim seconded. Motion carried.

Secretary's Report – Anita moved to approve July Minutes as printed. Bob seconded. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Bonnie moved to approve the Treasurer's Report as presented. Second by Anita. Motion carried.

Officers, Pastor and Standing Committee Reports

President's Report – Polka and Pie sign-up sheet was circulated for all present to sign.

Reminder: August 17th congregation meeting after worship service. Commitment from council members to be in attendance to help with the voting process. Ballot will be used for outcome of vote. Because of printer issue, blank piece of paper will be supplied to write YES or NO.

August 25th Parish Council meeting (officers only)-1st Lutheran hosts, meeting at 6:30 pm August 31st church service – council members to help. Mali Beine from First to supply sermon.

Pastor's Report –

Accomplishments/Activity Highlights:

Preparation for First Lutheran's 150th Anniversary

Attended the Global Leadership Summit for continuing education

Took a week of vacation

Attended various meetings and church activities

Priorities:

Confirmation preparations for the upcoming school year

Completing online Continuing Education

Vacation over Labor Day weekend (August 27-Sept 2)

Provided extensive and detailed information from the ELCA Churchwide Assembly that met July 28-Aug 2 in Phoenix, AZ. This is the primary decision-making body of the ELCA. Listed highlights and key actions from the assembly and also provided a link for more information.

Committees –

Fellowship and Caring – Bonnie: Meeting date changed from 8/17/25 (too much going on) to September 14, 2025 after service.

Building and Grounds – Bob: Written report provided. Work completed: Salt added to the water softener, lawn & shrub bed maintenance, shrubs trimmed & shaped, grinding done on east entrance door/minimal effect, will paint to prohibit rust. Future needs: continue lawn care, "Outside Cleanup Day" planned for 9/15/25 starting at 9:00 am. Heidi will write info. ad for the September newsletter, paint roof access hatch. Next meeting: October 2025.

Christian Education- Anita: Committee met 7/21/25, Sunday School will start Sept. 7th Christian Ed committee will host fellowship with a "donut & bagel bar", registration materials have been sent out to the families of all Sunday School age (K-5), discussion was held about First Communion-possible ideas to bring youth & adults together, and ideas for a Christmas program. Next meeting: 8/24/25 following the service.

Worship and Music – Heidi: Summarized upcoming worship schedule & events. 8/17/25 Bev Chadwick's Vets-Roll, Choir practice starts 8/20/25 @ 7:00 pm, Choir Sing dates set thru December further dates TBD, 8/24/25 Polka & Pie social-council to provide pies, Pastor on vacation 8/31/25 Mali Beine from First to do the sermon/council to do balance of service, Jessica on vacation 8/31/25-Janna Zornow to fill in at the piano, 9/3/25 Praise Team to start, 9/7/25 Sunday School starts, 10/19/25 Eric Beine from First will conduct the lay service-Pastor attending Continuing Education, Ecumenical Service hosted by the Methodist church 2025, the Narrative Lectionary to begin at Christmas, Possible Christmas program-"A Paper Bag Service", 12/21/25 @ 6:30 pm Blue Christmas service, 12/23/25 Cantata service.

Mission and Outreach – Tim: Outlined calendar for the balance of the year-9/14 Fellowship of Christian Athletes, 10/12 Funds for Leaders in Mission, 11/9 Good Samaritan Fund, 12/14 Good Gifts, Bulletin Board updated, next meeting 10/12/25.

Finance Committee – Terry: Provided written report, no dollars needed to be taken out of RBC for general expenses, Financial Best Practices document tabled for next month, RBC auxiliary acct. in healthy shape, main order of meeting-copy machine replacement-discussion of all pertaining details, next meeting 9/16/25.

Investment Committee – Terry: Written Report provided.

Outside the Box Outreach Committee-Heidi: Summarized monthly projects-money allocated vs. money spent and action to be taken to complete each project, Jeff Tarras brought idea of "Mission Trips" to the committee-discussion raised some questions-Jeff to do some fact finding and revisit at our next meeting, Jeff also requested a financial donation for FCA to cover some expenses incurred-subheading of "Missions" to be created to cover those costs as it meets the requirement of serving children in the BASD geographical area. Next meeting: 9/10/25 @ 1:00 pm

Unfinished Business

GFL contract update – GFL matched the proposal of Waste Management (\$31.54/month with a 5% increase annually over 5 years), we are still under contract with GFL so we will be staying with GFL.

New Business

Copier bids & decision for August 17th congregation meeting.

4 different proposals were presented to the council-extensive discussion was held listing details of all. After all discussion Terry made a motion and Bob seconded to present to the congregation - **\$5,480.00/machine (funds from Capital Improvement fund) \$48.53/maintenance (funds from General fund)**. Motion carried.

Closing Prayer – Pastor Rebekah

Tim moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Bonnie. Motion Carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm

Respectfully Submitted by:

Heidi Schramer
(in Sue's absence)

Linda Reetz – President		920-279-7899	linda.reetz0726@gmail.com
Terry Wallace – Vice President		920-344-1523	tw9696@outlook.com
Sandy Peschke – Treasurer		920-290-1551	kspeschke1950@gmail.com
Sue Shemanski – Secretary		920-361-4506	shemanski5@yahoo.com
Heidi Schramer– Music/Worship		920-361-4097	schramer@charter.net
Anita Lind – Christian Education		920-290-1374	anita_lind@charter.net
Bonnie Kline – Fellowship/Caring		920-570-2787	razn6mom@yahoo.com
Tim Koch – Mission Outreach		920-789-8358	koch6@charter.net
Bob Prellwitz – Building and Grounds		920-361-0669	bobprellwitz@yahoo.com

Grace Family Night – Wednesday, October 22

Taste and see that the Lord is good! (Psalm 34:8, NLT)

Bring the whole crew for our **Grace Family Event** on **Wednesday, October 22**. We'll share a **simple meal at 5:30 p.m.** (BBQ, chips, veggies, fruit), a brief **devotion at 6:00**, and then jump into hands-on fun at **6:15** so we can wrap by **7:00 p.m.** sharp—home in time for baths, backpacks, and blessed quiet.

Choose your own creative adventure:

- **Pumpkin Cookie Decorating** (sprinkles for days)
- **Pumpkin Painting** (bring your inner Picasso)
- **Make-Your-Own Station** options so kids and grown-ups can pick what fits



All supplies provided. Wear paint-friendly clothes. Friends and neighbors are welcome—let's practice community and "encourage each other and build each other up" (1 Thessalonians 5:11, NLT). God's love is creative, colorful, and way more fun together.

RSVP by calling the office or signing up in the narthex.

Mission of the Month – Funds for Leaders

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Fund for Leaders has been offering scholarships for students at ELCA seminaries who are pursuing rostered ministry in the ELCA since 2000. We seek people who are passionate about Jesus Christ, spiritually grounded, ecumenically oriented, and committed to growing their leadership capacity in an increasingly complex world.

The ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship program supports students of tremendous promise who attend ELCA seminaries. By making seminary more affordable, ELCA Fund for Leaders enables more future ministers to go to seminary and helps them graduate with less debt, empowering those whom God calls into rostered leadership to serve the church wherever they are needed most.

We've come a long way since the ELCA Fund for Leaders was established over 25 years ago, but we still have a way to go. Reaching \$100 million in endowment funds would permit us to award \$4 million in scholarships every year, supporting nearly 50 new students! In just the last five years our distribution of funds has grown from \$2 million to \$3 million. With your help we can grow that figure by another million dollars.

We are a thriving church, and each of us has a unique role to play in helping the mission and ministry of the church. Your gifts to the ELCA Fund for Leaders not only support students now but also invest in our church's future.

Did You Know??

The Outside the Box Outreach committee recently invited representatives from the Tri-County Boys and Girls Club, Berlin site to inform them about their organization. Committee members were surprised about the very real need of area children and impressed by how the club personnel attempt to meet the needs.

Ashley Bartol and Madyson Main, representatives from the Tri-County Boys and Girls Club located in Berlin, were then given time to make a presentation about their organization.

The new club in Ripon will serve birth-18 once all requirements connected to infant care have been met. Berlin's club serves ages 5-summer after high school graduation or age 18. Berlin's club provides after school care, non-school day care, and summer care. Children are fed as soon as they arrive after school. There is a cook on site. During the school year the club partners with the Berlin Area School District so their meals meet similar dietary requirements as the school district.

Fees right now are \$25.00 a year per member. There is also a \$200.00/semester fee that will cover non-school day care for families. Scholarships are available to help cover costs if parents have qualified for free and reduced lunch through the school district. The Berlin site sees approximately 200 children. They also have an employee at the middle school and high school checking in with identified students.

One of the main programs run through the Berlin site is named Unmet Needs Program. This particular program is available for community help and participation.

- Operation Backpack provides school supplies for children and a hygiene bag is available for teens. There were over 470 backpacks given to youth in August 2025. Donations were provided by individuals or businesses.
- Coats for Kids targets ages 3-18. Coats, gloves, mittens, hats, boots are provided. Every child needing a coat is guaranteed a coat. The remaining items are donated and are dispersed while supplies last. Community members can also donate to this program.
- Thanksgiving meals are offered through Crossroads Market. In 2024, 91 meals were donated to area community families. In 2025 100 meals will be provided to families who are members of the boys and girls club. If transportation is a problem, an employee of the club will pick up and deliver the meal.
- Adopt a Family depends on community participation. 250 youth were able to have a Christmas with gifts in 2024. Donors will adopt a family, receive a list for a child and purchase all items on that list. Volunteers are always needed to wrap gifts.

Some of the smaller programs available to youth include the Traveling clothes closet coming from Menasha every other month. Families can come "shop" for clothes at no cost. Feeding America provides non-perishable food and Kwik Trip coupons for perishable items every 2 weeks. For teens with a job but no transportation the club will help to get that individual to the job site.

There is also personal health support available, especially for dental and vision needs. There are no dental providers in Berlin accepting Medicaid patients and limited vision appointments for those on Medicaid. The club employees may have to transport as far as Waupaca to meet those needs.

August Income

Weekly Income	8,312.73
RBC Earnings	3,154.00
Bulletins/Radio Ministry	250.28
Thrivent Choice Dollars	121.00
Shared Ministry	4,315.12

TOTAL	\$ 16,153.13
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Missions (In/Out)	3035.28
Good Samaritan Fund	0.00
Soul Food	10.28
Women of Grace	0.00
Men of Grace	34.00
Christian Education/Youth	0.00
Scholarship Fund	0.00
Endowment Fund	0.00

Beginning Balance January 2025

Investments:

Leonard Jones Fund	\$ 1,361,456.39
Capital Improvement Fund	\$ 321,917.64
Endowment Fund	\$ 123,890.51
Auxiliary Fund (Started in April	\$ 29,841.29
Scholarship Fund (Started In June)	\$ 5,903.55

August Expenses

Wages and Payroll Expenses	\$15,813.26
Building & Grounds /Utilities	1,340.23
Special Event – Polka Service	500.00
Radio Ministry	300.00
Worship Licenses/Supplies	812.80
Supply Musician	150.00
Outside the Box - Outreach	1,518.68

TOTAL	\$ 20,812.09
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Missions (In/Out)	\$ 1,830.00
Good Samaritan	0.00
Soul Food	0.00
Women of Grace	0.00
Men of Grace	0.00
Christian Education/Youth	0.00
Scholarship Fund	0.00
Endowment Fund	0.00

Ending Balance August 2025

Investments:

\$ 1,466,360.22
\$ 333,682.09
\$ 131,670.14
\$ 30,485.32
\$ 5,938.26

Lutheran World Relief Kits

This year we packed:

106 School Kits
81 Personal Care Kits
75 Baby Kits
56 Quilts

This wouldn't be possible without everyone's help, our members who donated items, and the members who packed the kits, **Thank You!**

In 2024 we packed:

87 School Kits
65 Personal Care Kits
65 Baby Kits
68 Quilts





The Grace Book Club has chosen **“He Should Have Told the Bees”** by Amanda Cox as their read for October. Beekeeper Beckett Walsh was living her dream, until her father's death sent her world into a tailspin. She suddenly finds she must deal with a new part owner of the family apiary--one who is looking to sell the property--and she cannot fathom why her father would put her in the position to lose everything they built together.

When Callie Peterson is named in the trust of a man she's never heard of, she's not sure what to do. Her fledgling business has just taken wing and her mother has reentered her life asking for help, making Callie's financial situation rather . . . precarious. She's sure she has no right to someone else's farm, but the money from the sale could solve her problems and give her the stability she's always craved. With an entangled past behind them and an uncertain future ahead, Beckett and Callie must discover why they've been thrown together before all is lost.

We will meet to discuss “He Should Have Told the Bees” on Tuesday, October 14th at a location to be determined. If you would like to read this book, please contact Cindy Wallace for a copy. If you have already read it and would like to discuss it, please join us. We would love to have you.

Grace-Filled Conversations This Holiday Season

It may only be October, but the holiday season is just around the corner. Holidays often bring us together with people we love, but also with people we don't always agree with. Family gatherings, workplace parties, and community events can sometimes make us anxious about how conversations might unfold. What if there was a way to approach these conversations with more grace, less stress, and even a bit of hope?

This fall, pastor Rebekah will facilitate a book discussion on *I Think You're Wrong (But I'm Listening)* by Sarah Stewart Holland and Beth Silvers. Written by the co-hosts of the *Pantsuit Politics* podcast, this book is a guide to engaging in political and personal conversations with kindness and curiosity, rather than fear and division.

Over six sessions, we'll explore together how our identities shape our views, how to listen with empathy, and how to live out our faith in the way we speak and respond. Each week will include Scripture, practical tools, and space for honest reflection.

Details:

- Beginning October 7 at 7 pm
- Grace Lutheran library
- Books are available online or at your favorite bookstore

As we enter a season of family gatherings and community celebrations, this is a perfect time to practice the art of grace-filled conversations. Imagine walking into Thanksgiving dinner or a Christmas party with more peace in your heart, ready to listen well and speak kindly—even when opinions differ.

Come join us. Let's learn together how to disagree without dividing, to listen with love, and to live as people of hope in a divided world.

Schedule:

- October 7 Chapters 1–2 (Identity and why it matters)
- October 21 Chapters 3–4 (How our stories shape us)
- October 28 Chapters 5–6 (Family, friendships, and navigating tension)
- November 4 Chapters 7–8 (Church and community conversations)
- November 18 Chapters 9–10 (Politics in action—what grace looks like in public life)
- December 2 Wrap-up + What practices will I carry forward?



Flowers

- October 5 - In Honor of Doug & Bonnie Kline's Wedding Anniversary
- October 12 - Worship at First Lutheran
- October 19 - Open
- October 26 - In Honor of Ryan & Grace Dobb's 11th Wedding Anniversary by Jeff and Anita Lind

Radio Ministry

- October 5 - In Honor of Doug & Bonnie Kline's Wedding Anniversary
- October 12 - In Memory of Roy Chadwick by Bev Chadwick
- October 19 - In Honor of Bev Tarras's Birthday
- October 26 - In Honor of Ryan & Grace Dobb's 11th Wedding Anniversary by Jeff and Anita Lind

Bulletins

- October 5 - In Memory of Roy Chadwick's 95th Birthday by Bev Chadwick
- October 12 - Worship at First Lutheran
- October 19 - In Honor of Pastor Appreciation
- October 26 - In Honor/Memory of Lavern & Mary Pomplun's Wedding Anniversary

Fellowship

- October 5 - Kline's
- October 12 - Worship at Poy Sippi
- October 19 - DeAnna Lueptow
- October 26 - Roggow's

Greeters

- October 5 - Bonnie Kline
- October 12 - Worship at Poy Sippi
- October 19 - Open
- October 26 - Mary Lou Neubauer

October Events

- October Craft Day will be at First Lutheran on October 11
- October Men's Breakfast will be at Grace Lutheran on October 11
- Joint Worship at First Lutheran on October 12
- Grace Family Fun Night on October 22
- Polka Worship & Potluck—Oct 26, 10:30 a.m. at First Lutheran with the Albright Polka Group. Potluck to follow. Bring a dish and a friend—let's make a joyful noise!



Happy Birthday

October Birthdays

- 1 Scott Zabel
- 3 Londynn Pribnow
- 4 Joshua Strebelinski
- 5 Macallen Gerth
- 10 Patrice Magdanz
- 10 Jerry Weigand
- 11 Mary Fredrickson
- 12 Cynthia Laudolff
- 12 Colton Schenk
- 14 Donald Peschke
- 15 Dawn Bludau
- 16 Victor Dretske
- 16 Dylan Gravunder
- 20 Jan Krebs
- 20 Beverly Tarras
- 21 Sophia Lehr
- 22 Barb Bellmer
- 25 Sara Evans
- 26 Zander Beck



Happy Anniversary

October Anniversaries

- 4 Doug & Bonnie Kline – 45th
- 6 David & Becky Olsen – 35th
- 6 Bill and Sue Bartlett
- 11 Mark & Kristine Labbus
- 11 Dale & Emma Schroeder
- 13 John & Mary Lou Neubauer – 35th
- 14 Tom & Carrie McCarthy – 25th
- 15 Jon & Sabrina Pierstorff – 20th
- 18 Karl & Sarah Guenther
- 21 Scott & Kelly Zabel
- 24 Ross & Alexandria Johnson – 10th
- 24 Scott & Darlene Wolfe
- 25 Ryan & Grace Dobbs

If any birthdays or anniversaries were missed, please let the office staff know.

DivorceCare Support

A DivorceCare support group for people walking through separation or divorce is starting soon.

At a DivorceCare group, you'll watch a weekly video with counsel and insights from respected divorce and recovery experts, as well as reliable personal stories...followed by a time of sharing and support. Session topics include anger, loneliness, finance, and legal issues and navigating the relationship with your former spouse.

Please join us at River Shores Church, 253 South Church Street in Berlin, on Thursdays from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm, starting October 9th. Please enter through door #3 and follow the signs inside.

For more information, contact Becky at the church office (920-376-5877 or visit divorcecare.org



2025

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1 8:30 am Chair Yoga Class 6:00 pm Praise Team 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Choir Practice	2 11:45 am Soul Food Grace Hosts	3	4
5 8:30 am Worship with Communion and Sunday School	6 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 4:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	7 9:00 am Staff Meeting 9:00 am LWR Quilting 3:00 pm Bible Study at Grace 7:00 pm Book Discussion	8 8:30 am Chair Yoga Class 6:00 pm Praise Team 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Choir Practice	9 11:45 am Soul Food River Shores Hosts	10	11 8:00 am Men's Breakfast at Grace Lutheran 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Craft Day at First Lutheran
12 9:00 am Sunday School at First Lutheran 10:00 am Joint Worship at First Lutheran 11:00 am Potluck	13 1:30 pm No Bible Study at First Lutheran 7:00 pm Council Meeting	14 9:00 am No Pastor Conference 12:00 pm Book Club 3:00 pm No Bible Study at Grace 7:00 pm No Book Discussion	15 8:30 am Chair Yoga Class 6:00 pm Praise Team 6:30pm No Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Choir Practice	16 11:45 am Soul Food All Saints Hosts	17	18
19 8:30 am Worship - no Communion, there will be Sunday School	20 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	21 9:00 am LWR Quilting 9:00 am Investment Committee Meeting 10:00 am Finance Committee Meeting 3:00 pm Bible Study Grace 7:00 pm Book Discussion	22 8:30 am Chair Yoga Class 5:30 pm Family Fun Night 6:00 pm Praise Team 6:30 pm Confirmation 7:00 pm Choir Practice	23 11:45 am Soul Food St. John's Hosts	24	25
26 8:30 am Worship with Communion no Sunday School	27 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	28 9:00 am Staff Meeting 3:00 pm Bible Study at Grace 7:00 pm Book Discussion	29 8:30 am Chair Yoga Class 6:00 pm Praise Team 6:30 pm Confirmation Class 7:00 pm Choir Practice	30 11:45 am Soul Food Grace Hosts	31	