

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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Jessica Fritz – Worship and Music Coordinator

Jeremy Fritz – Choir Director

Sandy Peschke – Office Assistant

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THIS NEWSLETTER PREPARED ESPECIALLY FOR

Sunday Worship:

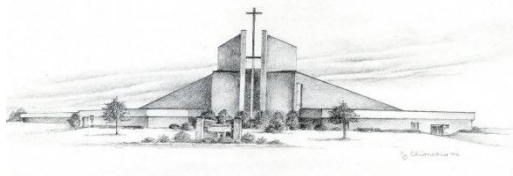
8:30 AM

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



July 6 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)

July 13 - Joint Worship In the Park Service at 10:00 am (In person and online)

July 20 - Worship Service at 8:30 am (In person and online)

July 27 - 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:

We've entered the season after Pentecost, also called Ordinary Time in the church year. While the name might sound simple, this season is anything but ordinary! Ordinary Time is a time of growth, reflection, and deepening our faith. It's the longest stretch of the church year, offering us the chance to live out our discipleship in everyday life, not in a rush to the next festival or major celebration. Unlike the high points of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, Ordinary Time is a time to focus on how we live out our faith day by day. This is the season where we listen to God's voice through the scriptures and allow that Word to shape our daily walk with Christ.



This year, we continue to use the semi-continuous lectionary readings, which give us the opportunity to journey more chronologically through the books of the Old Testament. Our readings this year will be on the prophets, whose voices still have plenty to say to us today.

So, who are the prophets, and why should we care about them?

Prophets were people chosen by God to speak a message from God. It might be a call to repentance, a promise of hope, or a challenge to injustice. They didn't mince words. These messengers reminded people to live in line with God's will, and they weren't afraid to call out wrongs when they saw them. While some prophets foretold future events, their main focus was calling people back to faithful living.

In the coming weeks, we'll hear about prophets like Elijah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jeremiah. These readings will challenge us, comfort us, and remind us of what it looks like to walk humbly with God, love mercy, and do justice. Their messages are far from outdated. They speak to issues like justice, mercy, and faithfulness that are just as relevant today as they were thousands of years ago.

In a world that feels chaotic and divided, where headlines can overwhelm us and make it hard to know what's true, the prophets invite us to pause, listen, and reflect. Their words remind us that God's justice and mercy are bigger than our fears. They challenge us to hold on to hope, and to act with love and integrity even when the world feels like it's falling apart.

And through it all, we remember Jesus, the ultimate fulfillment of God's promises. Jesus didn't shy away from the chaos of his time. He walked right into it, healing, teaching, and ultimately laying down his life to show us the depth of God's love. He is the prophet who speaks truth not just in words, but in the very actions of his life. And it's through Jesus that we find the strength to keep living faithfully, even in the midst of uncertainty and fear.

As we journey through this season of Ordinary Time, let's listen closely to the voices of the prophets and let them shape how we live and love in today's world, following the example of Jesus who calls us to be peacemakers, justice-seekers, and bearers of hope.

Blessings,

Pastor Rebekah

Outdoor Worship

A joint worship service with First Lutheran will be held on July 13th at the Riverside Park North Shelter at **10:00 am**, followed by a potluck lunch. Grace will provide the meat; everyone is asked to bring a dish to pass. Please sign up on the kiosk or call the church office if you are planning to attend.

**Grace English Lutheran Church
Congregation Council Meeting Minutes
May 12, 2025**

Call to Order by Terry Wallace

Roll Call- Attending: Terry Wallace, Bob Prellwitz, Sandy Peschke, Heidi Schramer, Anita Lind, Sue Shemanski, Bonnie Kline and Pastor Rebekah

Absent: Linda Reetz and Tim Koch

Terry provided Opening devotion from Galatians 6.

Approval of Agenda – Bonnie moved to approve the agenda as written. Bob second. Motion carried.

Open Remarks from audience. No one in attendance.

Secretary's Report – Anita moved to approve as sent via email to members. Heidi seconded. Motion carried. Discussed if we need hard copies of the minutes at meetings and decided “No”. Sandy keeps a hard copy in the binder in the office.

Treasurer's Report – Sandy has been learning how to put the RBC Auxiliary Account into Quik Books. The money was transferred from the General Checking to RBC at the beginning of April so this month's report shows less money in the General Account. Once Sandy learns and develops the Quik Book processes she can teach someone else so that she has back-up. Sue moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. Second by Bonnie. Motion carried.

Officer and Standing Committee Reports

- President- no report
- Pastor – Pastor emailed her report to Council members prior to meeting. She has finished Confirmation and working on figuring out how she will do it next year as one student needs to do it virtually. She has worked out coverage for the services she will be on vacation this summer.
- Committees –
Fellowship and Caring – Next meeting June 8th. We discussed this group providing Fellowship for New Member Sunday on June 15.

Building and Grounds – Bob distributed a written report. Lawn care has begun and the roof above altar is being watched for leaks. The Roof Access hatch will be painted. Their next meeting is June 8 following the service.

Christian Education- last day of Sunday School was this past Sunday. Served ice cream for Fellowship. Will be helping to sponsor 3 kids at church camp this summer.

Worship and Music – Jess has the music covered for while she is on medical leave in June. The Choir's last performance was this past Sunday until Fall.

Mission and Outreach – This month's Mission is Vet's Roll and the Honor Flights. Penny Bahn presented regarding this at church this past Sunday. Tim Koch will be the new Council member leading this committee.

Finance Committee – Terry provided the minutes from the last Finance Committee Meeting instead of writing up a separate summary. One special meeting of the Finance Committee was held to discuss the need for a new stove in the kitchen and review quotes. We have 2 quotes, one for \$8675 from Krumenauer's and one for \$9087 from Moriarity's. The present stoves are over 60 years old and it was decided we should probably replace both at this time. (see more under New Business)

Investment Committee – Written Report provided showing a small loss in April in our Investments, but growth overall in the last year.

Unfinished Business

- Outside The Box Outreach Committee- The Congregation approved using ½% of the 5 year average of the Leonard Jones Fund for community outreach. Heidi reported that the meetings have a lot of energy and participants are taking active roles in moving forward to look into purchasing snow pants and boots for kids for the Fall, among other plans. They are also working on developing a budget for the use of this money.
- Data Pro Computer Update -Sandy reported that they are still waiting for Jason to come back and complete the Networking and Data saving portion of installation of the new computer as his assistant did not know how when he came with the computer. Total cost so far is \$1390.
- Pastor's Upcoming Absences and Coverage – All taken care of!
- Medical Leave Dates for Jess – Having surgery June 3 and will be out a minimum of 2 weeks. Music is covered.
- Scholarship Committee- They have decided to invest this fund at RBC vs putting in a CD. They are expecting one more donation and then will move the funds.

New Business

- Stove/oven for kitchen – The Finance Committee recommended replacing both ovens and capping the amount spent at \$12,000. Heidi moved to propose to the Congregation in a Special Congregational Meeting to be held on June 1st that we replace the two old ovens with one commercial 5 tray Convection oven and one commercial six burner stove with griddle, not to exceed a cost of \$12,000. Second by Sue. Motion carried. Heidi and Deanna will write an article for the Newsletter and to be emailed to members regarding the history and need for the new ovens. This will also describe the convection oven for those who don't know.
- New Council Member Approval – Sue moved to accept Tim Koch as our new Council Member replacing Craig Chovanec until the end of his term in January 2026. Tim will also take over the duties of heading the Mission and Outreach Committee. Second by Bob. Motion Carried.
- New Members – Anita moved to accept and approve five new members into our Congregation on June 15, 2025. Individuals requesting to become members are: Tom Zuhlke, Lisa Tagenhorst, Laurence and Kelly Thompson, and Jerry Weigand. Second by Bonnie. Motion Carried. AC

Closing Prayer offered by Pastor Rebekah.

Anita moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Bonnie. Motion Carried.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Sue Shemanski
Secretary

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

Synod Assembly Recap

On June 7, 2025 Linda Reetz and Terry Wallace attended the synod assembly at Calvary Lutheran Church, Green Bay as our congregation's representatives. The 2025 theme was *To Serve All People Following the Example of Jesus*. This annual meeting is where the business of the East Central Synod of Wisconsin is conducted.

272 people participated. Some of the breakdown included 180 lay people and 80 rostered ministers. The keynote speaker was Venice Williams, executive director of Milwaukee's Alice's Garden. Her talk centered on things that blocked people in ministries and relationships. She then helped participants imagine how simple, but important, changes in personal relationships and ministries can make a difference.

Sherrill Kenzel of Meaningful Marks LLC worked to visually capture what was happening in the assembly through her live visual representations. Her drawings were captured in live time while the speakers and business of the assembly was happening.

As for business of the synod – the 2026 budget was approved, the 2026 minimum compensation guidelines were also okayed. There were also resolutions that were discussed and ultimately passed. Elections were held for officers, synod council members, and additional committee members.

Each year's offering is designated to various causes. This year participants saw their donations go to the Bishop's Resource Fund (provides emergency resources to rostered leaders and helps cover continuing education costs). Another portion of the offering went to AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Advocacy) which supports vulnerable children in migration.



First Lutheran Celebrating 150 Years

First Lutheran will be celebrating its 150th anniversary on **Sunday, August 10**. Here's a quick rundown of the day's events:

- 🕒 **9:00–10:00 AM:** Continental Breakfast
- 🎵 **9:30 AM:** Alumni Choir Rehearsal (anyone who sings or has sung in the choir is invited to participate)
- 🏛️ **10:30 AM:** Worship Service
- 🍽️ **12:00 PM:** Catered Lunch (*RSVP required by July 27*)
- 🎤 **1:30 PM:** Afternoon Program

We want to support our sister congregation by helping to serve on that day so their members can enjoy the festivities. If you would like to help out, look for the sign-up sheet on the kiosk. All members of Grace are invited to join them for the day.

Note: Seating for lunch is limited. Please RSVP by calling the church office by July 27.

Mission of the Month – Compassion Child

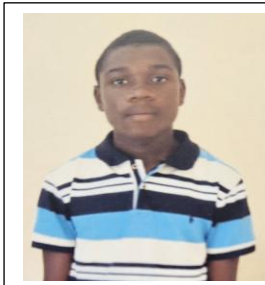
Compassion Child's mission is to release children from poverty in Jesus' name through a holistic approach to child development. Holistic child development means they assist a child in poverty, in some cases, when the child is still in the womb, and it goes through young adulthood with the child.

Holistic child development is tailored to a child's age, gender, health, culture, and family situation.

Compassion Child works with thousands of local churches around the world. In a world where hundreds of millions of children live in extreme poverty, connecting one child with one sponsor is the most strategic way to end child poverty.

To help young people finish well, they provide youth ages 12 and older with customized training and educational paths according to their own unique potential and God-given talents and purpose.

Here at Grace Lutheran we sponsor two boys.



Kelly was born on March 20, 2010. Grace has been providing hope and love to Kelly as his sponsor since January 2021. As a teenager he is interested in art, drawing, reading, drama, soccer and running.

Bryan was born on September 14, 2015. Grace has been providing hope and love to Bryan as his sponsor since April 2022. He enjoys classes and activities at the Pampanitos Student Center.



Our gifts and prayers give Bryan and Kelly the ability to grow spiritually, cognitively, and emotionally.

Lutheran World Relief Kits

As in prior years, the Ladies of Grace will be putting together kits for personal care, school supplies, and baby care. When you are out shopping, whether it be retail stores, garage sales, or flea markets, keep an eye out for the list of items needed. Any item(s) can be dropped off at church, anytime during the summer months.

Thrivent Action Cards can be applied for to purchase items for the kits. If you apply for the cards and want someone to “shop” for you, the ladies of Grace would be happy to do so. Just let the office staff know.

Kits will be assembled in September. If you have any questions, contact Bev Chadwick at 361-0860.

Personal Care

- 1 – light weight bath size towel dark color
20x40 or 27x52
(no larger please)
- 2 or 3 – bath size bars of soap (8 – 9 ounces total in original wrapping)
- 1 – sturdy comb
- 1 – metal nail clipper
- 1 – toothbrush

School Supply Kit

- 4 – 70 sheet notebooks
(wide or college rule)
- 1 – 30 centimeter ruler
(or centimeters on one side inches on the other)
- 1 – pencil sharpener
- 1 – blunt pair of scissors
- 5 – unsharpened #2 pencils
- 5 – black or blue pens (no gel ink)
- 1 – box of 16 – 24 crayons
- 1 – 2 1/2” eraser

Baby Care Kit

- 2 – lightweight cotton t-shirts (no Onesies)
- 2 – short or long sleeve sleepers (without feet)
- 2 – blankets
(between 36 – 52 inches)
- 1 – jacket or sweater (include cap)
- 2 – pairs of socks
- 1 – hand towel (dark color preferred)
- 2 – 3 bars of gentle soap
(8 – 9 ounces total)

May Income

Weekly Income	10,360.96
RBC Earnings	3,154.00
Bulletins/Radio Ministry	450.55
Camp Donation	500.00
Shared Ministry	4,152.83
Building Donations	100.00
Choir Donation	50.00

TOTAL \$ 18,768.34

Missions (In/Out)	\$435.00
Good Samaritan Fund	0.00
Soul Food	37.00
Women of Grace	2,209.26
Men of Grace	0.00
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

May Expenses

Wages and Payroll Expenses	\$16,203.12
Building & Grounds /Utilities	2,808.43
Worship Expenses	148.97
Radio Ministry	300.00
Office/Miscellaneous	551.70
Postage/Advertising	25.00
Christian Education	103.17
Fellowship & Caring	213.70
Synod Registrations	160.00

TOTAL \$ 20,514.09

Missions (In/Out)	\$605.00
Good Samaritan	0.00
Soul Food	0.00
Women of Grace	100.00
Men of Grace	0.00
Christian Education/Youth	0.00
Scholarship Fund	0.00
Endowment Fund	0.00

Ending Balance May 2025

Investments:

	\$	1,414,572.83
	\$	325,703.72
	\$	125,448.99
	\$	29,892.81

Men's Sponsored Brat Fry

I would like to thank everyone that came and enjoyed the Men's Sponsored Brat Fry and Bingo. It was a great time of fellowship.

I would also like to thank the over a dozen people that assisted with putting this together. Sometimes we think that things just happen, but it took a great group to do this event.

Terry Wallace



Outside the Box Outreach Committee Update

At the recent congregation meeting, members approved the amount of \$6500.00 coming from the Leonard Jones fund to be used in a variety of ways supporting youth in the Berlin Area School District. Committee members have been gathering information to help in deciding which projects to tackle first.

There were a variety of reports given connected to potential projects:

1. Patti Batenhorst shared that Fleet Farm has an online donation request form to be used as the committee looks for potential funding sources for projects. Target marks down merchandise at the end of a season and returns the rest to headquarters. Kimberly Clark supports the Eastern Wisconsin Diaper bank. Volunteers package them up for distribution.
2. Jean Dretske talked with Mike Griffin, the head of Berlin Food Pantry. They do not distribute diapers. And, there is a possibility that the food pantry may have to limit how many times a family can access the site. Before COVID, 40 families were served per week. Now the number is 70 families per week – the demand is more than the supply.
3. Madyson Main who is the Berlin Boys and Girls Club site coordinator shared with Jean that everything involving youth flows through the club. They prefer to not do the purchasing but would very much appreciate receiving goods.
4. Karen Schweigert spoke with the manager at Berlin Tractor Supply store. They have last year's boots in the back of the store. She will follow up to find out how many pairs they have and a potential price if the committee purchases large numbers of last year's leftovers.
5. Lands End has snow pants and boots at a reasonable price. They also have a donation program. Jean Dretske will try to get more information.

A tentative schedule for any disbursement and spending the approved money was decided as follows:

August - socks, underwear, personal hygiene products

September - snow pants, boots

October - cooking class and crock pots (Boys and Girls club would provide names of families to invite to the class)

November - gloves, scarves, mittens

December - cookie baking. Thrivent cards could be used for cooking and baking supplies.

A budget was also created in order to spend dollars effectively before the end of the year.

August - \$750.00

September - \$3500.00

October - \$1000.00

November - \$750.00

December/January - \$500.00

Congregation members are welcome to attend any of the meetings. As the group begins to organize for the August project, any donations are also welcome from interested church members. There will be a display area and a donation box when collections begin.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 25 at 5 pm.



Polka and Pie Sunday

On Sunday, August 24, 2025 Grace will again be having a Polka worship service with pie and ice cream to follow worship.



Flowers

July 6 - Open
July 13 - Worship in the Park
July 20 - Open
July 27 - In Memory of Joyce Ziemann by Suzie Ferron and Family

Radio Ministry

July 6 - In Celebration of America's Birthday by the Goettl Family
July 13 - In Honor of Goddaughter Lindsay Bahn's 40th Birthday by Tammy
July 20 - In Honor of Jeff and Rebekah's 20th Wedding Anniversary
July 27 - Sponsored by Mary Lou Neubauer

Bulletins

July 6 - In Honor of Joanna Schmidt's Birthday by her parents
July 13 - Open
July 20 - In Memory of Bill Huck by Shirley Huck
July 27 - In Honor of Granddaughter Flora's Birthday by GeGe

Fellowship

July 6 - Penny Bahn
July 13 - Potluck at the Park
July 20 - Tammy
July 27 - Bonnie Kline

Greeters

July 6 - Sue Shemanski
July 13 - Mary Lou Neubauer
July 20 - Open
July 27 - Open

Scholarship Committee

The Scholarship Committee has met and awarded five scholarships of \$500 each. The recipients for the 2025-2026 school year are: Adian Pierstorff, who will be a freshman attending UW Stevens Points pursuing a degree in Music, Andrew Rozek will be a freshman at Lawrence University studying mathematics, Kaden Fritz is continuing to work towards a degree in electrical engineering at UW Madison, Kara Fritz is continuing her physical education/coaching degree at UW Oshkosh, and Emily Klawitter will complete her master's degree in occupational therapy this year. Congratulations to these students and good luck in the upcoming school year.

We were able to transfer the monies donated to the Scholarship Fund to RBC in Sturgeon Bay, the company Grace uses to invest their funds. A separate account was created so interest could help grow this fund. At this time there is \$5,903.55 invested with them.

Thank you to everyone who donated and made this possible.



July Birthdays

6	Kristine McElligott
6	Amberlee Perry
7	Joanna Schmidt
10	Debbie Krause
13	Katelyn Cox
13	Jake Schroeder
15	David Barbola
16	Brady Krebs
17	Emily Klawitter
17	Derek Retzlaff
18	Timothy Koch
19	Bryce Greening
20	Lisa Lee
22	Bonnie Olsen
24	Aidan Pierstorff
24	Karen Pik
26	Phyllis Luttrupp
26	Linda Reetz
26	Kathy Roehl
26	Mary Sillanpaa
27	Lorraine Groveau
27	Michael Hermanson
30	Mindy Goffard



I would like to thank everyone for the cards, caring thoughts, and prayers. I am doing much better now.

Mary Gropp



July Anniversaries

11	John & Michelle Klawitter
14	Jeremy & Carissa Fritz
14	Edmund & Kathy Roehl Jr. – 35th
15	Jeff & Rebekah Tarras – 20th
23	Robert & Deb Dean
23	Donald & Vicki Konen
28	Robert & Tricia Prellwitz

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

“Can’t Make This Stuff Up: Finding the Upside to Life’s Downs” by Susannah B. Lewis is the Grace Book Club choice for July.



Growing up in a small Tennessee Town provided many experiences for the author. She relates stories that are absurd, but true, and as she does, she delves deeply into the rich culture of the South that molded her. Clinging to the promises of God in times of grief and looking for every opportunity to laugh, Susannah’s stories will inspire you (and make you laugh out loud!) as you explore how interesting and beautiful life can be when you take time to enjoy it.

We will meet to discuss **“Can’t Make This Stuff Up”** on Tuesday, July 8th at a location to be determined. If you are interested in reading this book, please contact Cindy Wallace for a copy. If you have already read this book, please join us on July 8th for our book discussion. We would love to have you join us.

JULY

2025

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
		1 9:00 am Staff Meeting 10:30 am – 5:30pm Community Blood Drive	2	3	4	5
6 8:30 am Worship with Communion	7 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 4:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting	8 9:00 am Staff Meeting	9	10	11	12 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Craft Day at Grace Lutheran
13 10:00 am Worship in the Park Potluck to Follow Worship Service	14 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran 7:00 pm Congregation Council Meeting	15 9:00 am Staff Meeting	16	17	18	19
20 8:30 am Worship – no communion	21 1:30 pm No Bible Study at First Lutheran	22 9:00 am No Staff Meeting	23	24	25	26
27 8:30 am Worship – no communion	28 1:30 pm Bible Study at First Lutheran	29 9:00 am Staff Meeting	30	31		

Women of Grace's Annual Salad Supper - Tuesday, August 5th 6:15 PM

Please bring a salad to share (2 people to a salad)

Plates, silverware, dinner rolls/butter, dessert, and beverages will be provided

We hope you can join us on Tuesday, August 5th for our annual Women's Salad Supper. Our guest speaker will be Cully from the Damascus Road Project. Damascus Road Project, Inc is a nearly 100% specially trained volunteer run 501c3 non-profit organization. Cully will share with us the work they are doing to fight sex trafficking and exploitation and how they are helping the abused.

Also, please remember that our Salad Supper is a baby shower for Lutheran World Relief. Please consider bringing an item (baby blanket, sweater, diapers, etc.) for our LWR Baby Layettes. A list of what is needed can be found in this newsletter.