

Master Plan Update and Next Steps

Proverbs 19:21 states it so abundantly clear, *“Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.”* It has been one year and four months since Grace Lutheran purchased the 3 acres of property on the north side of our campus. Since then we launched the GraceLand Capital Campaign to assist in raising funds needed to pay for the property, our Board of Directors selected an architecture firm (Fuqua and Partners) to help us put together a Master Plan for our campus, and the Board appointed a committee to work with Fuqua and Partners to develop that plan. Our Master Plan Committee worked with our staff and Fuqua and Partners to identify and prioritize our present and future needs, and the plans were developed. The committee shared those plans with the congregation in January, sought feedback from the congregation, and worked with Fuqua to incorporate that feedback into the design. We are now ready to move forward and vote to adopt a Master Plan for our campus.

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On May 18th we will hold a special Voters' Assembly Meeting, where the Master Plan Committee will present the steps taken to arrive at the plan that they are recommending, and seek the approval of Grace Lutheran voters to adopt a Master Facility Plan. Voting members will be receiving a packet of information via email that includes the committee's recommendation. At this meeting the Board of Directors also looks forward making an encouraging announcement regarding the GraceLand Capital Campaign, and will present and make a recommendation to the voters to address some current facility needs for the sake of our present and ongoing ministry. There has been a lot of planning taking place at Grace lately.

When engaged in projects like this, it can be very easy to put your mind to it, take a close look at the needs and the challenges, and determine what “needs” to happen. *“Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.” (Proverbs 19:21).* When you have opportunities like the ones that Grace Lutheran currently has before us, it is more important that we put our prayers to it than our minds. It's the LORD's purpose that will stand, and our prayer is that He would align our hearts and our minds with His purpose. Our prayer is that the plans we make would always be to serve Him and His purposes. As we prepare for this important meeting, join me in praying that the LORD who has claimed us as His own through the water and the Word would guide and direct our ministry, and that we would follow Him as He most certainly leads.

In Christ,

Pastor Russ



My Favorite Bible Story

*But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel.
 Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.*
 -Luke 24:21

Last Sunday we celebrated the faith God granted five young people through their baptism as we observed the Rite of Confirmation. A few days before Confirmation Sunday, we held a light dinner for the confirmands and their families at Grace as we celebrated this next step in their lives of faith. On our tables we had a list of conversation starters, one of which is a favorite question of mine. What is your favorite Bible story?

My favorite Bible story is one that we unfortunately don't read often, and that makes me sad! The Emmaus story is my favorite story, and for the sake of space I haven't printed the whole thing. I highly recommend reading Luke 24:13-35. Right after Luke reports the news of the resurrection, Jesus appears to two travelers who are leaving Jerusalem. What I love about this story is how Jesus takes these travelers (and us) on a journey from disenchantment and distress to one of joy and wonder.

Look at the attitude of the travelers when Jesus first joins them. *"They stood still, looking sad."* When Jesus asks them about the events that had happened in the past few days, one of them shares that "we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel."

We had hoped! The death of a dream. The end of hope. Here are these travelers, disenchanted and in distress because their hope has been snuffed out. In your life, where has your hope become disenchanted or distressed? Perhaps you have prayed something similar to this prayer:

"What I so wanted has not come to pass. I invested my hopes in desires that returned only sorrow and frustration. Those dreams could not sustain me. In my head I know that you are sovereign even over this—over my tears, my confusion, and my disappointment. But I still feel, in this moment, as if I have been abandoned, as if you do not care that these hopes have collapsed to rubble."

(Excerpt, *A Liturgy for the Death of a Dream*, from *Every Moment Holy*, Vol 1)

But see how Jesus takes these travelers on a journey. *“Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.”* Jesus and the travelers find that it’s time for their conversation to end; Jesus is continuing up the road and this is their exit. They urge him, *“Stay with us, for it is evening and the day is now far spent.”* And he does. While he reclines at table with them, he opens their eyes as he blesses the bread. *“Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?”* With joy and wonder, they go and tell the disciples the good news that Jesus is alive, just as the shepherds in the field went into the city on the night of Jesus’ birth!

As we live our lives of faith, there are moments where our hopes are dashed, where our dreams die, and where disappointment seems to win the day. Those are hard days, and they challenge us as we grow in following Jesus. Jesus doesn’t leave us to suffer alone; he reveals himself to us through his Word and the places where he has promised to be. He gives us comfort in his presence as we draw near to him in his Word. In the good gifts and daily bread he provides for us, he renews our faith and strengthens our lives. Our hearts burn within us as we hear the good news that Jesus is living and that he shall never die again. The Lord is risen indeed!

Blessings on your Easter celebration as we declare the wonders God has done through the resurrection of his Son, Jesus.

-Pastor Andrew

PRINCIPAL'S CORNER

May 2025 Edition

April Events

Celebrated Easter – Our students celebrated Easter in the classrooms and with their chapel buddies. Everyone spent time talking about the importance of this festival – the death and resurrection of Jesus. Classes also enjoyed a dress out day, Easter egg hunts, and special arts and crafts. We are so blessed to be a school where we can freely share the message of salvation with our students and our families!



Celebrated Earth Day – Classes celebrated Earth Day with their chapel buddies. Some classes planted plants, made 'dirt' pudding cups, or cleaned up the campus. Grace's Green Team also led activities for students. The student Green Team is a middle school club that works with Huntsville's Public Works Green Team to promote caring for the earth, reducing waste, and recycling.

Dauphin Island – Grace's 7th & 8th graders headed to Dauphin Island to study marine biology. While there, they toured Fort Morgan, explored a salt marsh, worked with underwater robots, dissected a squid, and so much more. We are thankful for Mrs. Sasso, Mrs. Moldenhauer, and Pastor Andrew for making this such a fun learning experience for our students.



Guests in PE Classes – This month, Coach Caty Gilliam, our PE teacher, coordinated a wide variety of special guests and presentations for our PE classes. Students learned about life on a farm when a petting zoo came to visit. Goldfish Swim Club taught water safety to our younger classes. Knights Chess Club introduced the students to life-size chess. Students learned hip hop and dance moves from Element Dance Company. We appreciate all the hard work to introduce our students to such a variety of experiences.

Keeping Busy – The end of the year always means lots of field trips. Our 5th grade class spent the day at Vision Camp doing lots of fun outdoor activities. The 1st grade class got to visit the North Alabama Railroad Museum. All students continue to stay busy with their coursework and projects up through the end of the school year. Finally, our spring sports season continues with T-ball and track.



Looking Ahead:

End of Year – With only three weeks of school left in the 2025-2026 school year, students and teachers are wrapping things up. We are finishing our end of year assessments through MAP testing, completing learning units, and getting ready for final exams. 8th Grade Graduation will be **Wednesday, May 21st**. Field day will be **Thursday, May 22nd**, on the second to last day of school. We are always looking for volunteers to help make this a fun and safe event for our students. On the last day of school, we will have our awards assembly and final chapel.

Please continue to keep the school, its students, families, and staff in your prayers as we finish out the year.

God's Blessings,

Delaine Schiestel

CDC HAPPENINGS

May 2025 Edition

May is here, and while the school side is wrapping it all up and getting ready for summer, at the CDC we are still going strong and it's business as usual! We will continue on with our classes until **July 29th** before closing for 3 days to prepare for our new school year. Our new school year will begin **August 4th**. Being "at school" won't make summer any less fun for us as we still plan to have an AWESOME time full of fun in the sun! We are thankful for bright days ahead, full of activity and Jesus! *"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."* - Romans 15:13

In April, our focus was on Easter! We had egg hunts and did bunny crafts, but most importantly taught the children about Jesus and his sacrifice. That's what Easter is truly about! The CDC was closed for Good Friday and our staff and children got to spend some much-needed time at home with their families. We also planted our CDC vegetable and flower garden, and the kids have been watering, watching, and waiting for growth. They are so excited about eating the first tomatoes that grow!

Looking ahead: We will be celebrating teacher and staff appreciation week **May 5th - 9th**. I love this time of year, as the CDC teachers and staff get spoiled, and they deserve every bit of it! They are so dedicated and work so hard every single day to care for and teach the children! It is also Mother's Day this month, and the kids will be having so much fun crafting gifts for all the Grace CDC Mommies. On Friday, **May 9th** we will have our **Muffins for Moms** event in the Genesis room where Moms can enjoy a muffin and some juice with their child before dropping them off. At the end of the month, we will also be taking a day off of work to celebrate Memorial Day with our families and to remember all those who lost their lives serving our country!

Thanks be to God!

Jessica McGuire



YOUTH ACTIVITIES

EASTER EGG HUNT



COMBINED YOUTH EVENT– KICKBALL



GROW - BIBLE STUDY TOPICS

May 2025 Edition



Bible Studies Topics – May 2025

Sunday Morning Children and Youth

- Infant—Pre-K (Church Nursery) – Joshua and Judges: Land and Loss
- K—4th (Genesis Room) – Joshua and Judges: Land and Loss
- 5th and 6th Grade (School Library) – Bible Characters
- Confirmation (Room 106) – Faith Application
- High School (Youth Room) – Foundations in Personal Finance

Sunday Morning Communities

- Quarter Life Questers (Room 202) - Christian Perspective on Enneagram
- Figuring It Out (Room 203) – Christian Perspective on Enneagram
- Balancing Act (School Band Room) – Day 7: For Work, Rest, or Play
- Tug of War (Room 204) – Attending Adult Bible Study
- Discovering Together (Room 209) – Upper Room Discourse

Sunday Morning Bible Studies

- Myth or Faith? Clearing Up Common Misconceptions about Christianity (Cafeteria)
- Bible Unearthed (Assembly Room)
- Bible for Non-Native English Speakers (Room 208) – Job

Bible Studies During the Week

- Digging Deeper (Wednesday at 6:30 PM in the Assembly Room) – Revelation
- Women’s Bible Study (Monday at 1:00 PM in the Church Library) – 1, 2, and 3 John
- Women’s Bible Study (Tuesday at 9:30 AM in the Church Library) – Promised Hope by Michelle Diercks
- Men’s Bible Study (2nd Saturday at 7:30 AM in the School Cafeteria) – Facing Disaster Like a Man
- Ladies of Grace Circles (3rd Tuesday at 9:00 AM and 9:30 AM; 3rd Saturday at 2:00 PM in the Church Library and Genesis Room) - Topic Varies

OUTREACH CONNECTIONS

May 2025 Edition



LOCAL MISSION ENGAGE CONNECTIONS

Grace Lutheran has developed a relationship with **McDonnell Elementary School** (4010 Binderton Place, Huntsville, AL 35805). We have been advocates for the school and open to responding to needs as they are shared with us. We are still stocking their Little Library with children's books. The library has been moved nearer to the school building as it was knocked down twice recently. **We have a need for children's books, activity books, and basic school supplies.** You can support this project by contributing gently used children's books or providing such items as commercially wrapped individual snacks (examples: Cheez-It crackers, Lance sandwich crackers, Rice Krispy or granola bars). Books and school supplies along with food supplies may be placed in the chest in the church narthex. Thanks for your generous support as you respond in the love of Jesus.



First Stop encounters the homeless where they are, connects them to critical services and support, and empowers them toward independent sustainable living. So far this year, the First Stop team has successfully assisted 53 individuals from homelessness to independent, sustainable living. These are 53 people who are no longer living on the street but are sleeping in the safety and comfort of their own homes.

First Stop relies on volunteer support to provide hot meals twice a day at the temporary facility location – 2820 Governors Drive.

Volunteer Tips for providing meals:

- Meals should serve 80-100 people. Prepare food for 80 people! **3-4 servers** are needed to serve the meal.
- Provide food that is already prepared and only needs to be heated. No cooking, please.
- We serve Breakfast and Lunch, Monday through Friday. Breakfast meals are to delivered to **First Stop** by 7:45 AM and lunch meals by no later than 11:15 AM.
- Breakfast is served from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM.
- Lunch is served from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

For more information, **contact Lorna Menzel or Pastor Andrew!**



OUTREACH CONNECTIONS

May 2025 Edition

ACTS Ministry



ACTS (Actively Caring, Tenderly Serving) Ministry has been redefined. We have a new email address which is **ACTS@gracelutheran-hsv.org** that can be used to volunteer to support **ACTS** activities or to request specific help/support. Please respond to let us know how you desire to participate and help this ministry on an occasional basis.

We now have five coordinators in place to support the ACTS Ministry via Grace Lutheran:

- **Pam Lowe** (Hospitality - Meal trains, potlucks, etc.)
- **Mairlyn Johnson** (Cards - Those ill or recovering/birthdays, etc.)
- **Kathy Cook** (Visits/Calls - Friendly calls, friendly visits)
- **Bill Duncan** (Transportation - Pickups and appointments)
- **Rusty Graves** (House/Yard Work - Technology help, lawn, repairs)

If you know of someone who can benefit, or if you have a particular need for yourself, let us know the need by calling the church office. Call and ask for extension **347** to leave your message. If calling after hours, please select option 7 and you can leave a voicemail.

Volunteer Support:

- Sending cards to homebound and those on our care list.
- Checking in by phone with individuals on our care list.
- Visiting those in need, primarily our homebound.
- Providing meals - Case by case, but normally for an illness or coping with a health condition.
- Errand/driving support - Pick up a prescription or groceries, take someone to a medical appointment.
- Helping someone with a technology equipment issue.
- Miscellaneous - Mowing a yard, shrubbery care, cleaning up a kitchen, or whatever a family member might need.

Help Request:

- I would appreciate a friendly visit.
- I have a need for meals.
- I need help with someone to pick up items (i.e. groceries or prescription).
- I need help to get to a medical appointment.
- I need help with upkeep of my lawn/shrubbery.
- I need help with technology use and equipment.
- I need help with a repair in my home (list): _____

It is our intent to share needs as they arise with the ACTS Ministry volunteers. You choose which activity you want to respond to and help!

Please join us in prayer as together we seek to care to serve one another sharing the love of Jesus!

CONNECT CARD – You are encouraged to invite a friend, neighbor, or work colleague to visit our church's website at www.gracelutheran-hsv.org and complete a **CONNECT CARD**. The link is located on the lower part of the homepage. Persons completing the **CONNECT CARD** are added to our MailChimp list and receive the weekly e-mail from Pastor Russ with a link to our livestream worship service.

Serving Persons Via Facebook: Visit the **Grace Lutheran Church** page on Facebook. Go to the page and “**LIKE**” the page (in the top section at the bottom left side of the cover photo— not below the posted content). Liking the Grace Lutheran page helps us to get information to your Facebook account!

CONNECTION GROUPS

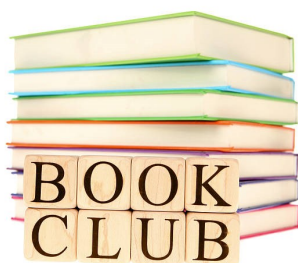
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ARE YOU CONNECTED?

Connection Groups (formerly called interest groups) are a means of “building bridges” to connect with others (unchurched or dechurched) in your neighborhood or our community. It’s about building a group around a similar interest (hobby, craft, fun activity, sport, or just about anything else under the sun). The goal is to help connect persons to Christ, the church, and the community. Dream the possibilities and then explore the opportunity to set up a group that meets at least on a bi-weekly basis. Of course, you can choose to take breaks in the schedule as needed for holidays/summer vacation, etc. Grace Lutheran’s vision is to grow in being passionate servants. Organizing or leading a connection group is a means of being a passionate servant. Have you ever thought that you can be instrumental in connecting others around interests as a means of serving God?

Want to start your own group? Contact Kathryn Bradshaw or the church office. Not in a group? We encourage you to join one of our existing groups.

Here is a listing of the current Connection Groups (Continued on next page)



The Christian Book Club meets in the church library at 10:00 AM on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, May 14th**, and we will be discussing *A Treasury of Miracles for Friends: True Stories of God's Presence Today* by Karen Kingsbury. Our next read will be *The Bride's Room: The Adventures of Mildred Budge* (Book 3) by Daphne Simpkins. If interested in attending, contact Karen Crout or the Church Office with any questions.

Can't come to the Book Club? Books from our reading selections are also available in the church library. They are located on the shelf to the

The Sew 'n Sews meet on Mondays from 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM in the Genesis Room.

We are currently working on various sizes of quilts (for children and adults), walker totes, and kennel quilts for the animal shelter.

No special skills needed! Come and join us! Contact Harriett Kicklighter or the church office for more information.



CONNECTION GROUPS (PAGE 2)

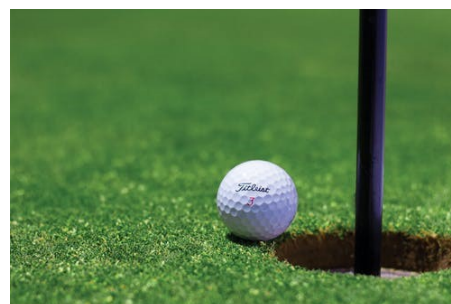
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A Bridge Group meets once a month on the 4th Thursday except in November and December (meeting instead on the 3rd Thursday). This is party bridge – just for fun and friendship. If interested, contact Mary Jane Reumann or the church office for more information.

Friday Afternoon Golf is organized by Dennis Sierk and Phil Nelson. Time and place: The par 3 course at Hampton Cove every Friday afternoon. For more information, contact Dennis or Phil. Please note the following rules:

1. No score keeping.
2. If you don't like your shot, take another one.
3. If you don't like your lie, move it.
4. Refreshments in the clubhouse, afterward.



INTERESTED IN A LWML SMALL GROUP?

Peace Circle
3rd Tuesday | 9am | Genesis Room
Contact: pamjons1@bellsouth.net

Hope Circle
3rd Tuesday | 9am | Church Library
Contact: crout@juno.com

MITES COLLECTED ON 5TH SUNDAYS IN THE NARTHEX

SAINTS ALIVE

May 2025 Edition

Saints Alive is an adult organization within Grace Lutheran Ministries. The group is open to Grace Lutheran members and their friends. The organization hosts two activities each month on the first and third Wednesdays. Always sign up on the sheets on the narthex easel. There is a little change for the sign-up sheets going forward. There will be two sheets, one will be for those riding the bus and the other for those who are planning to drive themselves. This just makes it easier for us to keep track of when the bus is full.

Summer is On the Way!

The Saints Alive group continues to provide opportunities to explore topics and places around north Alabama and southern Tennessee. We welcome all who would like to join us for our experiences.

On **May 7th** the group will visit the new **Signals Museum** on University Drive. Signals is a communication technology museum. It provides a hands-on, immersive experience where guests can explore, interact, and learn about communication technologies throughout history. Visitors will leave the museum with more appreciation for the business leaders and inventors alike who have paved the way for the digital technologies we rely on today. Our tour is scheduled for 10:00 AM, so the bus will leave the Gibson's parking lot at 9:40 AM. Following our tour we will go to **Olive Garden** for lunch. The cost for the museum is \$10. Sign up on the list in the narthex. Karen Crout is the coordinator for the trip.

On **May 21st** the Saints Alive will go to the **Huntsville Botanical Garden**. Nestled in the heart of our community, Huntsville Botanical Garden is an ever-changing experience with a goal of fostering a deeper connection between people and nature. These diverse gardens offer awe-inspiring exhibits including the butterfly house and the new Mother Earth Troll Garden, an enchanting, nature-inspired space featuring **Mama Zelda**, an enchanting sculpture by artist **Thomas Dambo**. This whimsical destination invites visitors of all ages to explore a living maze, connect with nature, and experience the magic of one of Dambo's legendary trolls — crafted with sustainability and storytelling at its heart. Whether you're a seasoned gardener, a curious learner, or simply seeking a quiet time in a beautiful setting, there's something here for everyone. Shuttles will be available at the gardens. Garden admission: Garden Member - Free, Adults - \$20, Seniors (60+) - \$17, Military (with valid ID) - \$17. We will depart from the Gibson's parking lot at **9:15 AM** and arrive at the gardens around 9:30 AM. We will depart the gardens at **11:15 AM** and have lunch at **Melt** in downtown Huntsville. Ann Duncan is the coordinator for this trip.

On **June 5th** (a Thursday instead of Wednesday because the chosen restaurant is not open on Wednesdays) we will travel to Tusculumbia to visit **Ivy Green**, the home of Helen Keller. We will tour the home and grounds then travel to **Rattlesnake Saloon** for lunch. The Rattlesnake Saloon is the watering hole under the rock, where you can enjoy connecting to local history. The restaurant is handicap accessible. More information will be coming on this trip. Jack Hengel is the coordinator.

Think about joining other members of Grace for a wonderful day of fellowship and education at one or all of these activities. Sign up in the narthex.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

May 2025 Edition



Covered

By Merle Trich

With a slight chill, I pull the quilt over my legs and become enthralled with the detail of this piece of art. It is a quilt that has followed me throughout my life. I actually have two very special quilts; one made by my great-grandmother, and one made by my grandmother. They are a little tattered and faded, but the detail of the ties, stitches, and embroidery remind me of their constant love. At times I have packed them away in a trunk, only to find them at a later date when I need to cover myself. I find comfort in these quilts. What do you wrap yourself in for comfort?

God reminds us of His protection, love and comfort in Psalm 91:4-6. Just like these old quilts, God promises:

*⁴He shall cover you with His feathers,
And under His wings you shall take refuge;
His truth shall be your shield and buckler.
⁵You shall not be afraid of the terror by night,
Nor of the arrow that flies by day,
⁶Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness,
Nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.*

God's love and covering never wears out. He is always with us in every intricate detail of our lives. He is our refuge, shielding us from all the worst circumstances. Psalm 121:7-8 says *"The LORD shall preserve you from all evil. He shall preserve your soul. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth and even for evermore."*

So, when I pull out my quilt to comfort me, I also pull out my Bible to comfort me spiritually and cover me with the love, mercy, and grace of my Savior, Jesus Christ.



Grace offers support through Grief Share and Stephen Ministry. If you are looking for comfort and strength during challenging circumstances in life, a Stephen Minister can listen and support you as you look for peace and hope in His Word. No matter the circumstances, always remember that God has you "covered!" Covered in His love, mercy, and grace.

Please contact or speak to Pastor Russ, Pastor Andrew, Dexter & Joyce McClure or Merle Trich if you would like more information on either supportive program.

May God guide and strengthen our Stephen Ministers and Grief Share facilitators as they serve and pray for members of our congregation and the community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition

Congratulations to our Confirmands!



We would like to congratulate our Confirmation class for this year. This year's class included: Jacob Cuny, Ardyn Foster, Miles Gipson, Theo Leno, and Sam Wetherell.

We are proud of everything you have done and of your growing faith. May God continue to be with you as you walk with Jesus throughout your life!

Child & Youth Volunteer Reminder

This is a friendly reminder from the Business Office that if you volunteer at Grace with children or youth you must complete a background check and 30-minute online child safety training video and quiz in order to volunteer. The background check and online child safety training must be renewed once every three years if you continue to volunteer with children and youth. If you are due for renewal, you will receive an email notice from the Business Office.

If you have received email requests to either complete an online consent form for a background check or to complete the online child safety training, please complete those tasks as soon as possible.

Thank you for your commitment to keeping our children and youth safe!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition



LERT Training

Grace Lutheran will host a LERT (Lutheran Early Response Teams) Training on **May 9th & 10th**. The Basic LERT Training will be held **Friday, May 9th** from **5:00 PM - 9:00 PM** in the Assembly Room. The LERT Chainsaw Training will take place **Saturday, May 10th** from **8:00 AM - 4:00 PM**. There is a classroom portion in the morning, then outdoor training in the afternoon. For more details and to sign up to participate, click [here](#). The deadline to sign-up is **May 2nd**!



Upcoming Discovering Grace Class

Are you thinking about membership at Grace Lutheran or seeking to grow in your discipleship of Jesus? Discovering Grace is a class that is designed for those wanting to learn more about our Church, School, and CDC, and learn more about our discipleship process – WORSHIP | GROW | ENGAGE. The next class will meet **Saturday, May 3rd** from **9:00 AM - 12:00 PM** and on **Sunday, May 4th** during the Sunday School/Bible Class hour from **9:30 AM - 10:30 AM**. Register [here](#) or on the Grace Lutheran website.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition



Papa Murphy's GLS Fundraiser

Grace Lutheran School is partnering with **Papa Murphy's** for an extended fundraiser from **April 30th through May 5th**. All orders that mention Grace Lutheran School and enter the code "Care" at Checkout will have 25% of the total purchase donated back to the school. This offer is valid only for **ONLINE ORDERS** at all Madison and Huntsville locations.

Acolyte Training

We will hold an acolyte training session on **Thursday, May 8th** at 4:30 PM in the Sanctuary for those who will be going in 5th - 8th grade. This training session is for new acolytes as well as those who have previously served to go over the basics on how to serve. If you have any questions about being an acolyte, contact Pam Lowe or Jen Roettjer.

2025 Graduate Recognition

If you or a family member is graduating from High School or College, we would like to recognize all graduates. Please submit the following information with a picture to [Kristin Haycock](#).

College Graduates – Full name, College, Degree, Honors/Activities/Interests, Plans after college, Parent Blessing
High School Graduates – Full name, Name of high school, Confirmation verse, Honors/Activities/Interests, Plans after high school, I would like to thank... Parent Blessing

The deadline to submit information is **May 11th**. We will honor our graduates on **May 18th**.

Upcoming Voters' Assembly Meeting

Please join us on May 18th at 12:00 PM in the Sanctuary for a special Voters' Assembly Meeting. At this meeting we will hold a congregational vote on the acceptance of one of the Master Plan proposals.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition



Grace Night at the Trash Pandas

Grace Lutheran will host a fellowship event on **Wednesday, May 28th** at **6:35 PM** as the Rocket City Trash Pandas take on the Biloxi Shuckers at Toyota Field. Grace has reserved 55 seats, which includes your seat and an all-you-can-eat meal. Cost for each ticket is \$35 a person. Please register by **May 14th** so we know if we need to purchase additional tickets. The cost of additional tickets will be \$40 each. The menu for the evening includes: all beef hot dogs, conecuh sausage, pulled chicken, potato salad, seasonal fruit, Frito Lay chip bags, ice cream sandwiches, small cans of Pepsi, and water coolers. We will provide bus service from Grace, leaving at approximately **5:00 PM**. This night is open to members and friends of Grace Lutheran, and it is a good opportunity to get to know others! For questions or further information, contact Mike Ellis. Register [here](#).

Men's Ministry Updates

During the summer months, the men will begin a new study, "**Nurturing Your Faith: Called,**" inspired by the book of Ephesians. Its four sessions explore how we are called by God to faith and, in turn, called to others in lives of outreach and service. Bible passages emphasize key concepts, and reflection questions prompt users to think through the material. The June Men's Group will be moved to **June 7th**. The May meeting remains unchanged on **May 10th**.

Love Packages Ministry Opportunity

In July we will be going to Love Packages in Decatur to help pack Bibles and Christian literature to be shipped to Africa and other places worldwide to impoverished churches. Grace Lutheran has helped support Love Packages over the years with donations of Bibles and literature, as well as volunteering to help pack and ship.

Please help us by:

- Praying for this mission
- Bring Bibles (new or used) and any Christian devotionals, Bible studies, Sunday school materials, children's Bibles, children's Christian books, etc. to GLC for collection. There is a donation bin in the church library.
- Volunteer to come to Decatur to help pack materials for shipment.

For more information, please call or email Steve and Nancy Rice.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition



VBS

June 1st - 5th, 2025

Elementary: 5:30 PM – 8:15 PM

Preschool: 5:30 PM – 7:45 PM

At True North, kids discover what it means to trust Jesus in a wild world! Kids participate in memorable Bible activities, sing catchy songs, play teamwork-building games, make and devour yummy treats, experience one-of-a-kind Bible Adventures, collect Bible Memory Buddies, and test out sciency-fun experiments they'll never forget. Vacation Bible School is open to all children who are 3-years-old as of March 1st, 2025 through those currently in 4th grade. All children must be potty-trained. Register [here](#).

VBS Volunteers

VBS is a great opportunity to tell our children about God's word. Would you like to join us in making a difference in these kids' lives? We are looking for a variety of volunteers, including people to help with crew leaders, games, dinner, and more. VBS runs from **June 1st - 5th** from **5:30 PM to 8:15 PM** each day. You can sign up on the church center app or [here](#).

Red Letter Challenge Invitation

Discipleship is a life-long pursuit. At its most basic level, it simply means following Jesus. Discipleship is not merely knowledge, but it is not void of knowledge either. Discipleship is about putting into practice what Christ has revealed and spoken to us. Jesus modeled a whole life and even told us how to follow Him in HIS OWN WORDS (the red letters found in many Bibles). This summer our Summer Adult Sunday School will be embarking on the Red Letter Challenge (RLC). The RLC is a 40 day challenge aimed at mastering five discipleship targets: Being, Forgiving, Serving, Giving, and Going. The challenge includes daily devotional reading and meeting on Sunday mornings at **9:30 AM**. The class will run from **June 8th through July 20th**. Sign-up to participate [here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

May 2025 Edition

Rocket City Scholarship Donation Instructions

Spring time is scholarship season at Grace Lutheran School. As a community we are blessed to be able to work with several scholarship organizations in addition to our Mamie Adams scholarship fund to help make Christian education affordable for families. Our most utilized external scholarship opportunity is Rocket City SGO. This is a scholarship granting organization which directs donations to students in Madison County who wish to participate in a private school program. The program is funded by donors, like you, who make 100% tax deductible donations to the program, which then offset their personal tax liability. Furthermore, when these donations are motivated by Grace Lutheran School we are credited for motivating those donations which increases the amount of scholarship dollars offered to our students.

For the upcoming school year, we have had 19 students apply for the Rocket City Scholarship. Given the funds we expect to receive, we anticipate that our allocation will cover roughly half of our current scholarship needs. The good news is that donations directed to Rocket City on our behalf will be made available for the 25-26 school year as long as those donations are received by June 30, 2025. We are asking that if you have not already done so, please consider directing a portion of your 2025 tax liability to Rocket City SGO and indicate on an included note that you were motivated to donate by Grace Lutheran School. Instructions for this process can be found on the Rocket City SGO [website](#) or by picking up a donation flyer in the church lobby. If you have any questions please contact Jessica Chartier in the school office. Thank you for supporting the students of Grace Lutheran School!

Child Beyond International Newsletter



We were blessed to hear about Pastor Russ and Pastor Andrew's visit to Child Beyond International earlier this year. We are looking to strengthen our connection to and support of this organization in the future. In the meantime, you can view Child Beyond International's most recent newsletter [here](#) to read about their Children's Home and work in the mission field, and see some familiar faces!

GraceLand Capital Campaign Update

Thank you to all who have been supporting the GraceLand Capital Campaign since it began a year ago. During March we collected around **\$18,000.00**, which brings the total collected for the campaign to over **\$380,000.00!** The more of the principal of our loan that we pay down during this period puts us in a better position to begin executing the stages of the Master Plan, which will soon be voted on by the congregation. You can give online or by check with GraceLand Capital Campaign or GCC in the memo line.

Grace Lutheran Church & School

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E-mail: secretary@gracelutheran-hsv.org

JOIN US FOR WORSHIP

Sundays

8:00 AM

Blended Worship

1st & 2nd Sundays of the Month

Traditional Worship

3rd & 4th Sundays of the Month

10:45 AM

Contemporary Worship
Every Sunday

Communion

8:00 AM	1st & 3rd Sunday
10:45 AM	2nd & 4th Sunday

Check Us Out Online!
www.gracelutheran-hsv.org

STAFF & LAY LEADERSHIP

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Pastor.....Pastor Russ Gipson
Associate Pastor.....Pastor Andrew Frerichs
Principal Delaine Schiestel
CDC Director Jessica McGuire
Director of Christian Education Jen Roettjer
Business Manager..... Laura Muelling
Properties Manager..... Jack Hengel
Event & Facility Coordinator..... Pam Lowe
Office Manager Kristin Haycock
Receptionist.....Laura Ohme

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Mike Banzhoff	im Hartmann
Dick Bradshaw	Jordan Haycock
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Craig Camealy	Kevin Pedersen
Jason Cuny	Dexter McClure
Mike Ellis	Tom Naatz

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