

GATHER PONDER SHARE

STORIES MEANT TO BE TOLD

Vol. 3, Issue 2
Second Quarter 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

Grow with Jesus

*Prayer By Pastor Brooks,
Page 2*

Rejoice in God

*The Joyful Sound By Erin
Hodge, Page 3*

Answer with Hope

*By Chris Wethman,
Pages 4-5*

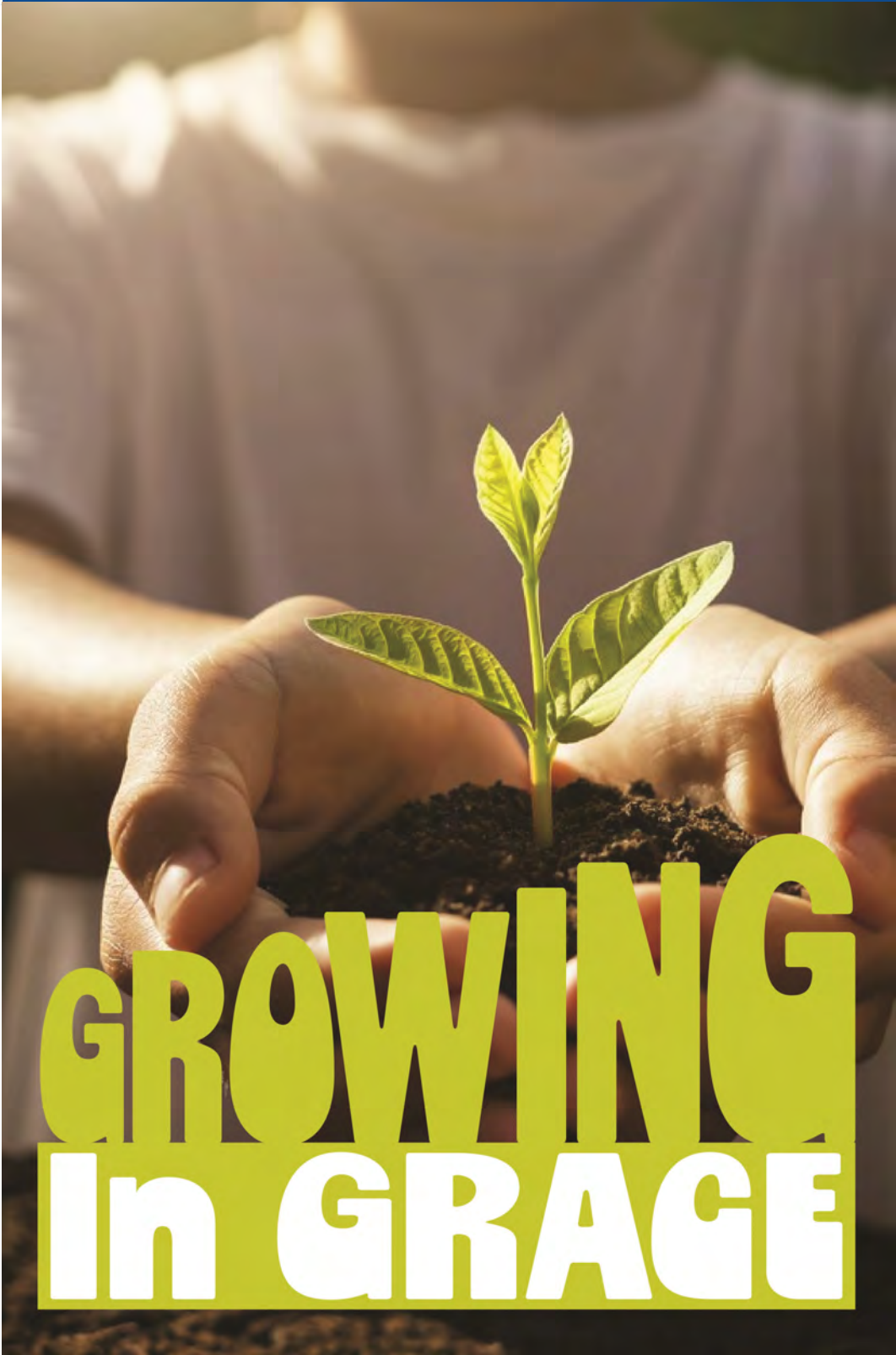
Care for the Neighbor

*Articles By Chris
Wethman & Care
Ministry Participants,
Pages 6-9*

Embrace Community

*Nurturing Roots By
Whitney Kolba and Duke
Graduates By Pastor
Amanda Highben,
Pages 10-12*

*Grace Governance Made
Simple By Chris
Wethman, Pages 13-15*



**GROWING
In GRACE**



Grow with Jesus

I will tell you as best I can what I do personally when I pray. May our dear Lord grant to you and to everybody to do it better than I! Amen.

These words begin a remarkable, wonderful book by Dr. Luther to his friend and barber, Master Peter Beskendorf. As best as we can tell, Peter the Barber quizzed his customer Martin Luther in the barber's chair between lather, shave and rinse (hopefully not during the actual shave!) about the best way to pray. Luther gave an in-the-moment answer, and then promised to do a better job by writing about it.

In the book Luther produced, titled *A Simple Way to Pray*, Luther admitted his own struggles with prayer and pointed to his habits regarding daily prayer. Prayer can be hard, humanly speaking, and Luther is honest about this point. Our hearts are cold, or restless; our tasks always intrude; life always seems to be demanding something of us and the habit of prayer can be put aside—but, for many of us, rarely picked up again.

As Luther points out, a consistent habit of prayer is important. Even when we might say that our “hearts” are not in it, our bodies are! And, as part of our Core4 discipleship habits, prayer keeps us connected with God and *with one another*. We pray to God, who hears our prayers and answers them as his Fatherly wisdom directs, but we pray for one another, which means that we stay alert and involved in each other as brothers and sisters in Christ.

Many of you indicated that you would like to grow

more adept and comfortable in your prayer life, and so the Discipleship Board will be providing chances for exploring prayer as a Core4 habit. Watch our e-news for announcements and more information this summer.

Mentioning the Discipleship Board also gives me a chance to highlight the ministries that our boards do.

Our **Discipleship Board** focuses on helping individual men and women grow in their lives as disciples through study and practice of prayer, of Scripture study, of regular and generous giving, and of confession & forgiveness. Our **Servant Board** works with our small groups, supporting them in their life and work as participants minister to each other and share ministry out beyond our walls. Our **Resource Board** works on the congregation's behalf to steward the resources God has provided us, including our parish's income, our physical plant/facilities, and the various vendors with which we work. Their work is vital for the success of our mission and ministry, and would welcome you to be a part of what they are doing. If you'd like to know more about our boards and how to become a part of what they do, let me know and I'll be glad

to share more with you.

Most of all, I ask you to be in prayer for our leaders as they continue to seek our Lord's guidance and will, and work to ensure that each of us grow in our ability to glorify God and bless our neighbors in our daily lives. Watch for the chance to grow in prayer this summer!

~Pr. Dave Brooks

GPS is a quarterly publication of GLC – The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
GPS is published in four times per year.



Rejoice in God

Have You Heard **THE JOYFUL SOUND?** **There's a New Children's Choir at Grace!**

Since January, Gail and Brooke have worked tirelessly to build a children's choir at Grace Lutheran Church. In April, the kids sang during the service, using hand gestures and brave voices to remind the congregation that our "God is so big!"

Several congregants have voiced their support of the new venture, including Kathy Peterson: "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord!" She shared with the me that she was pleased to see "the team takes each child where they are and helps them participate in group worship."

What are your thoughts on our newest choir? Send feedback to Erin Hodge at music@gracelutheranchurch.net.

Pictured below (L to R): Mia, Etta, Stanley and Holden

"The children are charming little singers. They are learning to raise their voices as preachers of the Gospel - we give thanks for those who teach them." - Marie Hammond



Answer with Hope

Hope for the Future...

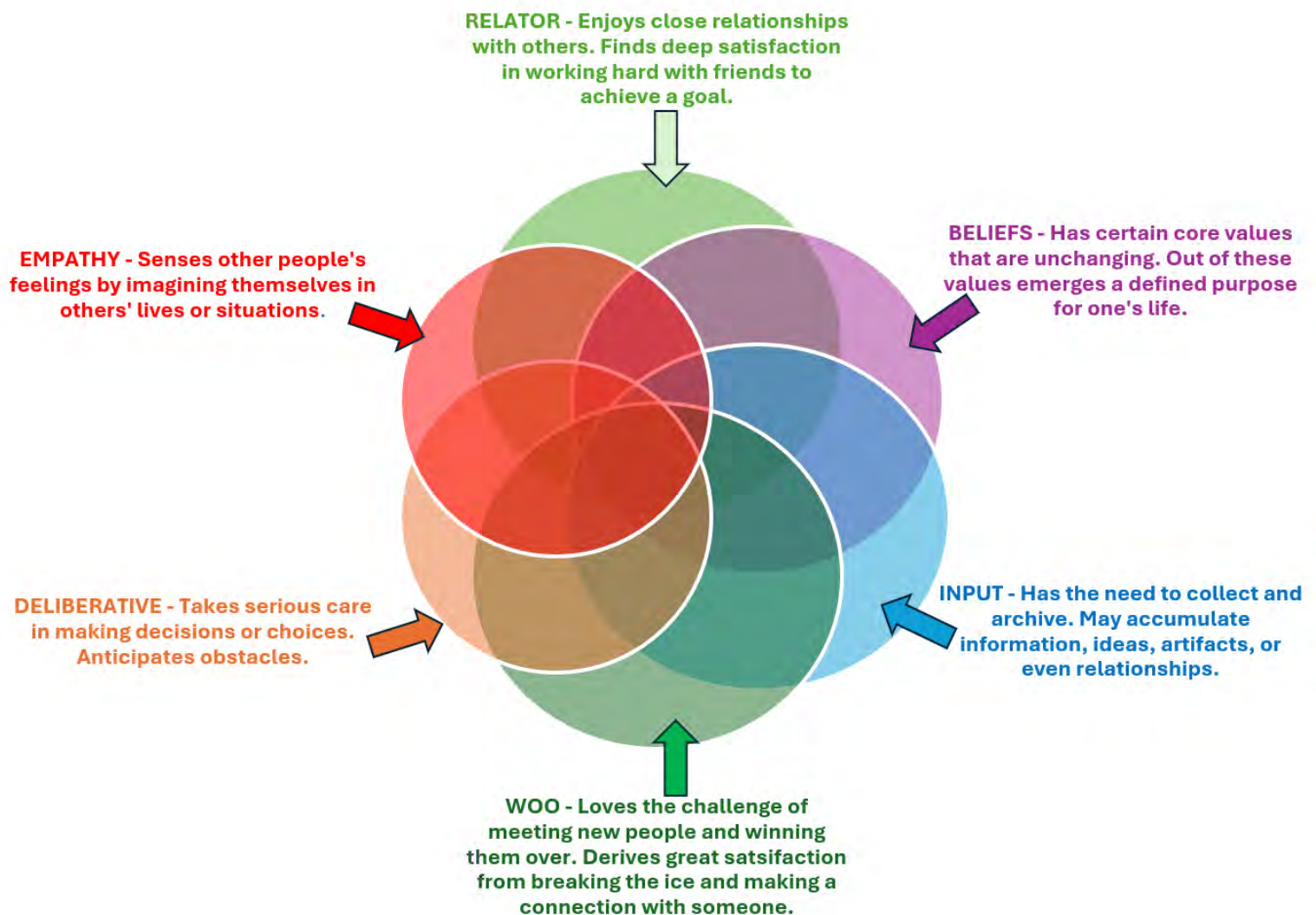
On Friday and Saturday – May 17th and 18th – Grace leaders met with Rev. Dr. Travis Guse, Executive Director of Wellness and Coaching from the Southeastern District of the LCMS. Travis is an International Coaching Federation (ICF) certified life and executive coach and a Gallup Strengths Coach. In 2022 he completed his doctorate in coaching from Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon. Travis lives in Williamsburg, VA. His passion is helping people know how to harness their unique Gifts, Passions and Strengths to make a difference in the lives of others – to live the life God is calling them to live.

His newly published book, Called 2B, takes the reader

on a journey of discovery. The book helps you deepen your awareness of your *authentic identity*, shaped by your *ultimate identity* in Christ, which serves as your “true north” – your *unique identity*.

FRIDAY NIGHT - Members of the Grace Advisory Board (GAB) shared their results of the CliftonStrengths Assessment. This Assessment reveals one’s Top 5 strengths representing how each one is uniquely talented. Travis explained how knowing these strengths helps us collaborate and function effectively as a team and how each member of GAB can best contribute.

So, here’s a brief summary of some of the strengths that were discovered in GAB members:





For example, during a meeting, the person with the strength of **input** may give people too much information or so many resources that they can overload and overwhelm. On the other hand, this person is the most likely choice to research options to assist in wise decision-making.

The **deliberative** person takes time to think carefully before making a decision and might be perceived as forgetful, slow, or afraid to act. Conversely, this person is thorough and conscientious and through careful thought knows how to reduce risks and prevent problems from arising.

Finally, having an understanding of who we are and how we, as individuals, can live more authentically isn't enough. We need to understand how we can impact those around us in what Luther called the four stations, or domains, of life: Family, Church, Lifework and Society. In the coming months, GAB members

will take this newfound information and work towards being more effective with each other to make a lasting impact on the world for Christ.

SATURDAY – The focus this day was on answering the question:

“What are the unique needs and opportunities where God has placed us?”

We learned that the answer to this question is referred to as Grace's **Local Predicament**. Understanding what our Local Predicament is having an intimate grasp of the soil where God has called us to minister. Much work lies ahead of us in discerning the answer to this question and others that are related to it.

Drawing on the concept from the book, **Church Unique, How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement**, Travis posed some additional questions to the group:

**WHAT ARE WE ULTIMATELY SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?**

- This is Mission Defined

**WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO AT OUR CHURCH?**

- This is Values Defined

**HOW DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?**

- This is Strategy Defined

**WHEN ARE WE SUCCESSFUL?**

- This is Mission Measures Defined

As an exercise, we reviewed our current Mission Statement and had some fun comparing it to what we just learned about Mission - Values – Strategy – Measures. That discussion will be continued over the next several months.

Why are we doing this?

It's all about creating a visionary plan and articulating it in a way that's compelling, measurable, and marked by clarity. More specifically, to gain new tools to

inspire people and focus our Congregation – Hope for the Future.

The Goal: To create a powerful picture of our future and crystal-clear steps on how to get there.

What can you do?

Right now, be a person of prayer and student of God's Word.

~ Chris Wethman

- TO GOD BE THE GLORY -



Care for the Neighbor

Who is my neighbor?

If you were able to ask Jesus this question, his answer would reveal his belief. Simply put – everyone is a neighbor. Jesus held a simple and unfiltered belief — everyone is a neighbor. Everyone. Not just people in our circles whom we have something in common with. It's also those we don't:

- Notice
- Value
- Welcome

Okay. So, every day it's not always on your mind to notice people who aren't family, friends, or neighbors. In our digital world the tangible gets obscured. Our ability to connect is shrinking every moment. Every day it seems like we are being pulled into a myriad of directions. In some aspects, Jesus faced similar challenges.

He didn't have the distraction of a smartphone, but he had crowds following Him. They sought his attention, and he took the time to attend those who rarely received attention. He comforted those who were ill with leprosy. They were people who were ignored by everyone else, but not Jesus. He displayed love toward them.

For a moment, try to think about places you go. Are there people in your life you just don't notice? Maybe they live around the block, brush past you in the aisle at the local supermarket, or even live right across the street. Next door?

JESUS WANTED US TO
USE OUR DIFFERENCES
AS A CATALYST
FOR CONVERSATIONS
THAT CAN INVITE
EACH OTHER IN
RATHER THAN
KEEPING
THEM AT BAY.

We need only look to Jesus' behavior as a simple yet powerful reminder that to him, everyone meant **every one**.

Even though in the time of Jesus women were relegated to subservient roles in a male dominated society, Jesus didn't conform to the status quo. Despite the

social taboo he spoke to women in public and stood up for women during moments of injustice. He involved them in ministry also by treating them equally and valuing them beyond their traditional roles.

It's easy in today's world to value those who share the same values as us or belong to the same groups. As Christians we must be inspired by Jesus' willingness to break away from that trend.

Did you ever notice that Jesus was inclined to welcome others? His disciples were strangers when he met them. He built his ministry alongside of them, trusted them, and welcome them into his life. He did not turn to family or others he knew from his town. He sought after people who were different from him and brought them together.

What does it mean to love your neighbor?

Have you heard "Love your neighbor" so often that you tune it out? Do you think it's lost its meaning? That's really too bad. Why? This mandate was a powerful one. So powerful in fact that Jesus was not vague at all about what it meant.

First of all, he didn't come up with it. He confirmed its importance but what he was saying was not new to those around him. Love Your Neighbor was written into Jewish law long before Jesus' time. What was most unsettling to others was how he suggested we love our neighbor and who he said our neighbor was. Some would consider these views radical.

When someone asked him "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus responded with a parable that answers that question and even more:

A Jewish man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers attacked him. They took his clothes and beat him up. He was almost dead, and the robbers left him there. A priest went down the same road. A priest's job is to help people live to make God happy. Do you think a priest should stop and help someone who needs help?



A Levite went down the same road. When the Levite saw the man, he passed by on the other side of the road. A Levite's job is also to help people live to make God happy. Do you think a Levite should stop and help someone who needs help?

A Samaritan came down the same road. Samaritans did not get along with Jews. They were not friends. Do you think a Samaritan should stop and help someone who needs help, even if they do not look like each other?

When the Samaritan saw the man, he felt sad for him. He went to the hurt man and helped him. He cleaned the man's wounds and wrapped him up. He put the hurt man on his own donkey and took the man to a hotel.

The next day, he gave the man in charge of the hotel some money. "Look after him," he said, "and when I come back I will pay you for any cost you may have."

After he told the parable, Jesus asked, "Which person do you think was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by robbers?"

The man who knew a lot about the law said, "The one who felt sad for him and helped him." Jesus told him go and do the same.

neighbors -- our duty of care. It focuses on relationships and what it means to love. We are to set aside our prejudices and selfish concerns and give generously without expectation of return.

The priest would have known God's law, but failed to live it by failing to love. The Levite put the law above compassion. Both the priest and the Levite would have been unable to enter the Temple if they had contact with a ritually unclean person. Here, Jesus is drawing a strong contrast between those who speak God's law with their words and those who actually follow it in their conduct.

The Samaritan did not consider the injured man's ethnicity or religion. He only saw a person in need of assistance, and he assisted him above and beyond the minimum requirement. The Samaritan's heart was free of the constraints of law and differences in theology. Jesus is telling us that these things are irrelevant at the core of what it means to be human. The Samaritan, an impure heretic, was truly the righteous man.

The innkeeper, too, was a good neighbor. He accepted the word of Samaritan that he would come back and pay the expenses for the injured man. Without question he joined with the Samaritan in his act of kindness.

Through his final instruction to the lawyer, Jesus is also telling us to 'Go, and do the same'.

What does the parable teach us?

The parable identifies our neighbors as all people, even those with whom we would not normally associate. It defines what our relationship should be with our

*How can we follow
Jesus' instructions to
go and do the same in our
everyday lives?*

~ Chris Wethman



Care for the Neighbor - Continued



The Home-Centered PALS facilitation group has been meeting together for the last 15 months with the emphasis on study, prayer and reaching out to our older members who are not able to be at Grace on a regular basis. Members of this PALS group are Judy Barnes, Tom McGill, Scott Gesell, Joyce Rea, Joe Wethman and Barb Tippin. We are always happy to welcome new members to the group who have a heart for our older members. Here are a few thoughts from the group about what they feel the impact of this ministry is.

“Since Home Centered PALS group (H-C PALS) started, it wasn’t long until I think it was evident that our population was different from a lot of other PALS groups at Grace. But this difference was unique, and therefore precious to me..

We have a tendency to forget the people that we don’t see regularly. This isn’t intentional forgetfulness, but probably just human nature. Because the H-C PALS face more physical challenges, they typically are unable to be at worship and church activities regularly. These beloved folks are our brothers and sisters in Christ, and being a part of the H-C PALS facilitation group reminds me to regularly reach out to those who are unable to physically be with us at Grace.

Lately I have received so many “thank yous” from the H-C PALS members that I feel blessed to have served them. I certainly didn’t consider that I did anything out of the ordinary but it apparently meant a lot to them. This made me thank God for being a part of this group.”

~ Judy Barnes

Our PALS group, that is Home Centered PALS Group, is a group of folks here at Grace who desire fellowship, communication and prayer for each other. As the aging process seems to often limit our ability to make it to church or do outside the home activities we once all had the ability to accomplish with ease, we find that life is easier to just stay at home whether we choose to voluntarily do so or are so limited that we can’t do these things anymore so must stay at home.

So what is home? I have often heard over the years that "HOME IS WHERE THE HEART IS!" As we think of the word home, I would imagine that each of us would relate “home” with our childhood life with a with a God centered family environment. We as a PALS group are at home here at Grace and what we are doing is reaching out to one another whether by this publication or by phone or by prayer to love care and cherish one another with God’s grace as a "Family in Grace". And that is good for each of us to know.

~Scott Gesell

What is the Home-Centered PALS Group?

We are a group of six persons who have chosen to make life a little more comfortable, a little less boring for some of our members whose mobility has been decreased to a point of becoming problematic.

Some of the things that I personally have done are taking communion to the Home-Centered, delivering “to go” boxes from events such as our Lenten dinners or the prayer breakfasts and, most importantly visit or call the home-centered. I have even taken some of the home-centered members to doctor appointments or other appointments.

Of all the things that we do, the most important is to make sure that none of our people of Grace are forgotten.

~ Tom McGill

Things happen. Then we have to deal with them. Things happen to all of us—after all, we’ve been through Covid, and our lives have changed. Sometimes those changes expand our lives as we move to unfamiliar places and ways of doing things. Sometimes those changes restrict our movements, and we need to adjust to smaller, easier ways. That’s the case with the people our Home-Centered PALS group serves.

Some are dealing with ill health, chronic pain, or limited ways of getting around. They may be home most of the time, and some live alone. That can get very lonely. So this group tries to let them know we remember and value them. Each member of the team stays in contact with a few people. This can be by phone, email, card, visit, etc.



We find this is rewarding for both the people we serve and ourselves. This is one way we seek to “build up the body of Christ” as Paul instructed in Ephesians, chapter 4.

~Joyce Rea



What is Stephen Ministry?

Stephen Ministry is grounded in Jesus’ command to love one another. Through one-to-one caring relationships, those who are hurting receive the love and care they need. For example, those who are overwhelmed with problems of all kinds, in poor health, suffering with poor relationships, illness, job loss, the death of a loved one—all these people can benefit from a relationship with a Stephen Minister.

What is a Stephen Minister?

A Stephen Minister is a child of God who walks beside a person who is hurting, a caring Christian friend who takes the time to really listen. Each one has completed at least 50 hours of training. However, a Stephen Minister is not a therapist or a counselor, a casual visitor, or a problem solver. We believe God is the curegiver; our part is to care. Each Stephen Minister is called to be a caregiver. We match women with women and

men with men. Usually they meet for an hour a week. Grace’s Stephen Ministers are Barb Tippin, Jenna Young, Elmo Walston, and Darryl Bloch. Coordinating this ministry are our two Stephen Leaders, Joe Wethman and Joyce Rea.

Some of the needs we serve include helping those who are hospitalized, terminally ill, bereaved, in a job crisis, disabled, homebound, lonely, undergoing divorce, in a spiritual crisis, and so on.

Once a need has been identified, one of Grace’s Stephen Leaders will be in touch to let the person know about this ministry and answer any questions. The Stephen Ministry relationship is completely confidential; the person who is being served can tell others about it, but the Stephen Minister cannot. Our supervision is aimed to help the Stephen Minister serve more effectively.

If you know of someone who could benefit from a caring relationship with a Stephen Minister, please let Joyce or Joe know. We’re looking for more men and women to serve.

~Joyce Rea



Growing thru Grief

The loss of a loved one can be really devastating. Everything falls apart and you don’t know what to do or how to proceed. This is

where Growing thru Grief can help. This is a coalition of 11 churches, three synagogues, one funeral home and the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Duke. Ever since the fall of 2013 this group has been offering small group support and education to those who have lost a loved one.

What’s different about Growing thru Grief is that meetings are held every week, year round, except for major holidays. Many other groups run for six to eight weeks and that’s all. However, the need continues.

Meetings begin with a presentation about a part of the grieving process. Speakers usually change each week. Then the meeting breaks into small groups, led by two trained facilitators, for conversation and sharing. At the end, everyone returns to the large group for announcements and a closing.

Twice a year, in the spring and fall, Growing thru Grief offers a six-week program with one presenter with the overall theme of “Introduction to Grief.”

Over 1,000 people have been served over the years; some come for a few meetings and others, for many. Duke Bereavement Services has supporting this ministry in many ways; they have trained all the facilitators. Grace is a founding supporter of this ministry, and a number of church members have used this service. Three members of Grace serve on the six member Executive Committee that runs the group: Kathy Pittman, Vivian Harris, and Joyce Rea. Joyce also represents Grace on the Board of Directors. Each organization in the coalition pays an annual stipend to cover expenses; there is no charge to those attending the meetings.



Embrace Community

NURTURING ROOTS:

GRACE COMMUNITY FARMERS' MARKET

By Whitney Kolba

Within Trinity Park, nestled between the bustling streets of Duke University and the historic corners of Walltown, lies a beacon of community spirit and nourishment—the Grace Community Farmers' Market. What started as a seed of an idea is gradually blossoming into a thriving hub of fellowship and fresh produce, sowing the seeds of love and camaraderie within the local community.

It all began with the Racial Reconciliation Group as they initiated and welcomed an open dialogue among one another, navigating the tumultuous waters of racism with faith as their compass. "We began during the pandemic [and the] George Floyd murder as a way to talk through our concerns and fears about racism from a Christian perspective," explains Dan Heuser. "Most of the first years were us studying different books and having different speakers to educate ourselves and others."

As the Racial Reconciliation group continued to look for opportunities to foster positive change, Pastor Brooks pitched the idea of a farmers' market, which in turn sprouted a vision that could utilize a passion for gardening and a desire to bridge divides and promote community. "[I] recognize the power of healthy food and that all people don't have access to it," Dan explains. "I thought that this would be a good way to share God's love...."

The group decided upon three goals for the market:

1. Share God's love with our neighbors, many of whom are suspicious of Christianity.
2. Provide \$2,000 in free vouchers to support the clients of Walltown Ministries.
3. Build bridges with farmers of color.

"We're a primarily white congregation and aren't necessarily exposed to the viewpoints of people of color," Dan acknowledges, underscoring the importance of empathy and understanding in this mission.

The stakes felt high, but with their goals set and their devotion strong, the Racial Reconciliation Group and

members of Grace prepared for the inaugural Grace Community Farmers' Market.

Beneath sunny skies on the afternoon of April 13th, the market launched to great success. It was truly a testament to the power of collective action and the hunger for connection within the community. Dan recalls the mix of nerves and excitement as he and his wife Jane awaited the first visitors. "Jane and I were very nervous the morning of the market. We had no idea if anyone would show up. Instead, there were so many people there; it was a great relief and blessing."

From local black farmers to eager patrons from Duke School, Duke Lutherans, Grace, and beyond, the market buzzed with energy and goodwill. "It was great to get to know the farmers and vendors. One of our goals is to build relationships with them by investing in them and treating them with respect and love," Dan shares.

The first market received around 200 visitors, and despite the competition of Mother's Day and local college graduations, the second market took place on May 11th with just as much enthusiasm and popularity. In addition to the great multitude of offerings from local black farmers, visitors also had the opportunity to enjoy delicious vegan food from a local food truck, snack on tasty NC strawberries, and participate in some fun and engaging family-friendly activities.

The journey doesn't end here, however. With the support of Grace and the Mitchell Fund, the Grace Community Farmers' Market is set to flourish, offering monthly gatherings of community and commerce. In the spirit of unity and abundance, together we can ensure that the fruits of the market reach far beyond its physical boundaries. Through partnerships with organizations like Walltown Ministries, the market extends a hand of support to those in need, embodying the true essence of community care and compassion.





So, how can you help? First and foremost, lift up your prayers—they're always needed and appreciated. Consider volunteering for a future market or plan to check out the market for yourself. Shop and mingle with local vendors while you snack on some of the best food around. You can also share the news on social media and don't forget to tell your friends, neighbors, and coworkers.

With each harvest and each interaction, the Grace Community Farmers' Market will continue to sow the seeds of reconciliation by nourishing bodies and spirits. Together, we can cultivate a legacy of love that transcends barriers and blooms in the hearts of all who partake.

The next Grace Community Farmers' Market is scheduled for June 8th from 1-4pm. You can find additional information about the community market on

Grace's website and Facebook page. You can also find information through the Grace Community Farmers' Market website at <https://www.instagram.com/gracefarmersmarket/>.

Please take the opportunity to get to know some of our farmers and vendors who help make the community farmers' market a success:

Sankofa Farms: <https://www.sankofafarms.com/>

Faithful Farms: <https://www.facebook.com/faithfullfarmsnc>

Jireh Family Farm: <https://www.jirehfamilyfarm.net/>

Triangle School of Holistic Living: <https://www.triangleschoolofholisticliving.com/>

Spreadable Delights: <https://www.spreadabledelights.com/>



Celebrating Our Duke Lutheran Graduates!

Dear Siblings in Christ at Grace,

We may have been rained out from worshipping in Duke Gardens as we always do for our last Sunday Evening Prayer service of the year, but we still had a Spirit-filled gathering on April 14 at the Duke Lutherans Center.

We blessed our 6 graduates and wished them God-speed, while also wrapping them in colorful quilts to remind them of God's everlasting embrace and our sheltering friendship.

We also thanked God for our brilliant field education student (and pastor-to-be) Max Miller, our student leadership team, and our dedicated Duke Lutherans Committee...all of whom are servant-leaders at heart. Of course, we also sang Holden Evening Prayer, prayed the Prayer of Good Courage, cried tears of sadness and joy, came to the Lord's Table of grace and peace, and praised God for blessing our beloved

community throughout this year.

It was a very full night. And indeed it was very good.

As we now head into the summer, I am grateful as ever for the myriad ways you support our students. Thank you for serving as one of our beloved partner congregations together with St. Paul's and for making it possible for Lutheran Campus Ministry at Duke to shine the light of Christ in Durham and beyond. We are blessed to share in life together with you!

Grace and Peace, Pastor Amanda Highben

Celebrating Our Duke Lutherans Graduates!

Congratulations to beloved Duke Lutherans **Anya Varanko**, now Dr. Varanko, who successfully defended her dissertation on May 7 in Biomedical Engineering, titled: "**Avidity as a Tool for Cancer Drug Delivery Systems.**" We are so proud of Anya and so thankful for all researchers and scientists who perse-

Continued next page.



vere in bringing health and healing to the world.

Senior **Christina Sigler** joined the Duke Lutherans her freshman year, but had to do so from the laptop in her dorm room because it was the fall of 2020. The faith, resilience, and courage she demonstrated then are even stronger now, and we have been blessed to know and love her. **Majoring in Economics (Finance) with a History minor**, Christina is moving to New York City where she will work as a Fixed Income Research Analyst at Morgan Stanley.

On April 12, senior **Catalina Lopez** (who became an active member of the Duke Lutherans this year!) presented her thesis titled "Temporal Variation in the Standard Metabolic Rate of Juvenile Atlantic Killifish." Graduating with a BS in Marine Science and Conservation and Biology, Catalina also received the **Maggie Schneider Award in Marine Biology**. This award is given each year by the Marine Lab faculty (where Catalina spent many hours!) to the biology major who demonstrates the love of learning and service in marine and conservation biology. We are so proud of Catalina and her dedication to caring for the earth and all God's creatures great and small!

Lutheran students aren't in the majority of students at Duke Divinity School, so it made a great difference to **Max Miller** and **Avery Johnson** when they found one another to befriend and support as fellow candidates for ordination in the ELCA. They have been buddies since the beginning (not to mention, head graduate student ushers for the Blue Devils!) and we're so excited to see the good things God has in mind for them as pastors-to-be! Max will next complete his Lutheran year of study at **United Lutheran Seminary** and Avery will complete hers at **Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary**. A special thank you to Max as well for serving alongside Pastor Amanda as our dedicated field education student this year.

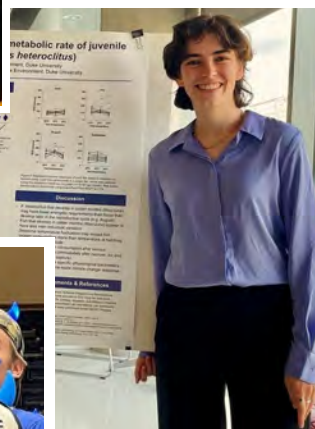
Congratulations to **Andrew Kelbley** (Juris Doctorate, Environmental Law) who received the **Duke Symphony Orchestra Conductor's Award!** This award recognizes the graduating senior who has consistently displayed the highest level of musical excellence, exemplary service, and thoughtful leadership in the Duke Symphony Orchestra. Andrew is moving to New York City where he will join a law firm to work on renewable energy projects. Andrew's compassion, musical talents, and love for God's earth have been gifts to our Duke Lutherans community!

Anya Varanko

Christina Sigler



Catalina Lopez



Max Miller & Avery Johnson



Andrew Kelbley





GRACE GOVERNANCE MADE *By Chris Wethman* SIMPLE

+In July it will be three years since we adopted our new Constitution and By-Laws. Even though three years have gone by, I believe (from what I've seen and heard) it would be beneficial to explain these documents in more detail. There is a story here that's meant to be told.

TYPES OF GOVERNANCE

There are five types of Governance in the The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). Here's a brief glimpse into all of them. Can you recognize the type of governance Grace has?

Voters' Assembly	Parish Planning Council	Parallel Boards	Managing Board	Governing Board
• Voters meet to set direction and solve problems. • One a month meetings • No other councils or boards	• Known as the Abdon model • Officers and chairpersons from each board meets monthly. • Voters meet once or twice a year	• Two or more boards to handle the workload • Boards have equal authority • Accountability nearly impossible	• Single Board of Directors • Oversees ministry, staff and finances • Board Members selected for their giftedness	• Boards oversee congregation through written policies • Requires Senior Pastor with leadership gifts • Board members must want to do work

Grace has the Parish Planning Council governance. The Voters are the governing body of the Congregation. Here are the details how the Voters function at Grace now compared with their function in our 2012 governance:

	Voters 2012	Voters 2022
Has the authority to arrange, direct, and adjust the spiritual and material affairs of the congregation	X	X
Does not have the authority to order, enact, or decide anything contrary to the Word of God and symbols of the Evangelical Lutheran Church	X	X
Has the final authority in managing the internal and external affairs of Grace Lutheran Church		X

Within the realm of Voters' Assembly meetings, several changes have been incorporated with respect to Voting Membership and attendance at meetings:

PROXIES	
2012	2022
Proxy voting shall be allowed for adequate reason, i.e. illness or other requirements that prevent attendance.	Proxy voting shall be allowed for extenuating circumstances, i.e., illness or other requirements that prevent attendance and should be signed and submitted in writing...72 hours prior to the Voters' Assembly. Submission of a signed proxy does is not a guarantee of acceptance.



REMOTE PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS	
2012	2022
-Not included-	Voting members may participate in any meeting of the Voters' Assembly by means of remote communication to the extent that the Grace Advisory Board authorizes such participation.
VOTING MEMBER STATUS	
2012	2022
Voting membership shall be forfeited by those who have not attended any of four consecutive or regular meetings of the Congregational Assembly. Reinstatement may be achieved by again signing the constitution and attending a meeting.	Voters who do not renew their voting membership annually will revert to confirmed membership and be ineligible for voting on congregational matters until their commitment is renewed and they are received at the next voters assembly.
It shall be considered the responsibility of all members to: - Attend worship services regularly - Partake frequently of the Lord's Supper - Accept fraternal admonition and correction - Participate in and support the work of the church and its offices according to their spiritual gifts and abilities - Support the educational practices of the church, to include provision for the proper training and instruction in the Christian faith and doctrine - Lend talents, time and other faculties to assist in furthering the purpose of this congregation	Voting membership is renewed annually through commitment to grow as a disciple, participate in a ministry, and give financially. 

While there have been minimal changes in the authority of the Voters between the 2012 and 2022 governance, the major changes lie in the Officers and Boards of the Congregation.





The most recent governance change reduced the number of elected positions from 12 to five. In the 2012 Bylaws, those in elected positions comprised the Parish Ministry Council. However, in 2022 the Grace Advisory Board (the equivalent of the Parish Ministry Council) was designed differently in that it included elected positions (represented by green circles) and non-elected positions (represented by blue circles).



The three new boards were created for different purposes as outlined in Pastor Brooks' article on page 2.

It is important to note that the Discipleship Board and Servant Boards have combined due to a vacancy in leadership and lack of board members. In light of that, I wish to leave you with some important principles of church leadership. I believe our most recent governance change reflects these principles...

Principle #1: Every member is a minister.

A healthy church consists of the people of God functioning as the priesthood of believers. Ministry should not be restricted to the hands of a few but the Body should function together and embrace the work of God.

Principle #2: Every member is ministering based on their spiritual gifts.

Each member has the responsibility to use their God-given gifts in love for the building of the church and the extension of God's kingdom into the world.

Principle #3: Members primarily minister to one another and together to the world.

The people of God can and should minister to one another. The unity of the Body should mark the world in a transformative way.

Principle #4: Church leaders exist to empower and equip members for ministry.

The role of leadership is to help mobilize and release the people of God into the world so that men, women, and children will come face to face with the gospel of Jesus.

**"THROUGH THE LIBERTATING
MESSAGE**

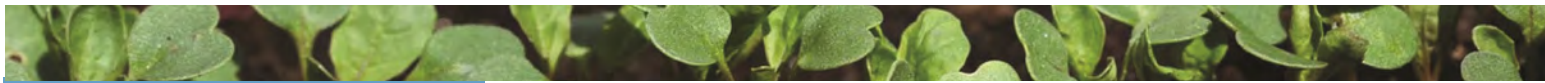
OF JESUS,

**ALL BELIEVERS
ARE TRANSFORMED
INTO THE ROLE OF PRIESTS,**

UNITED AND COMMISSIONED

**IN MINISTRY
TOGETHER ON BEHALF
OF A HURTING,
BROKEN WORLD."**

– Sue Nilson Kibbey, *Ultimately Responsible:
When You're in Charge of Igniting a Ministry*



Grace Notes is a publication of
Grace Lutheran Church.

Sunday Service at 10:10 AM
824 N. Buchanan Blvd.
Durham, NC 27701-1572
919-682-6030
www.gracedurham.org

Pastor:
The Rev. Dr. David H. Brooks



Visit us on our Facebook Page:
Grace Lutheran Church -
Durham, NC



Scan QR code
for Grace website



Grace Lutheran Church

Our new logo tells a story. It reflects our purpose and our goal: we are walking the way of **GRACE** that we might share God's blessing in our **HOMES**, our **NEIGHBORHOODS**, our **CITY**, and our **WORLD**.

The four points of the cross remind us of the first four parts of **GRACE**:

We **GROW** with Jesus
We **REJOICE** in God
We **ANSWER** with hope
We **CARE** for our neighbors

Each of these points moves us to the circle where we **EMBRACE** community. When Jesus calls us to life with him, it is not alone or solitary, but rather a life with and among others.

Our paths may be varied, winding, wandering and twisting, but as we walk the excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31) we find Jesus who is the heart of life. The circle and the heart work together to mark out the four areas where we practice the way and find the Lord: in our homes, among our neighbors, around the city, and out in the world.

The cross in Duke blue and the heart in Carolina blue reminds us of our commitment to be God's People in the Durham/Chapel Hill area, "between the Blues."

*³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts.
And I will show you a still more excellent way.
~ 1 Corinthians 12:31 ESV*

Mission Statement: We are called to *Welcome Everyone to Walk the Way of GRACE*, and walk in that way in our individual lives, in our shared life in our various communities, in our common life with our neighbors, and even to the world at large as God sends us. The *Way of Grace* is to: **GROW** with Jesus, **REJOICE** in God, **ANSWER** with hope, **CARE** for the neighbor, and **EMBRACE** community.

Vision Statement: God has a plan **FOR OUR LIVES**, and so we teach how to walk in the path of Jesus Christ; **FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS**, and so we work to build healthy and strong communities; **FOR OUR CITY**, and so we share life with our neighbors in Walltown, Trinity Park, Duke, and the Triangle; and **FOR OUR WORLD**, and so we go with Good News.

Core Values: Because God loves us first, we value worship rooted in Scripture and Sacrament, service to all people, and being a welcoming community that loves and forgives one another.