

# The Light

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OAK RIDGE, TN

November 2025



Our Mission Statement:





## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ROSY

*<sup>13</sup> May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Romans 15:13

Hope is not a flimsy wish or a vague optimism. It is a fierce, Spirit-given gift—a holy defiance against despair. In this verse from Romans, Paul doesn't just offer a gentle encouragement; he proclaims a promise. God is not merely the source of hope. God is the God of hope. And this hope is not rationed—it abounds.

Martin Luther, ever the theologian of paradox and promise, understood hope as essential to the Christian life. "Everything that is done in this world is done by hope," he wrote. It's hope that gets us out of bed, that nudges us toward reconciliation, that dares us to imagine resurrection in the rubble. Luther also said, "By faith we begin, by hope we continue." Faith plants the seed, but hope waters it through seasons of drought and downpour.

In Luther's words, hope is a soldier—fighting against despair and tribulation. It's not passive. It's active, resilient, and stubbornly joyful. When grief threatens to overwhelm, when change feels like loss, when the world groans under the weight of injustice, hope stands its ground. Not because we are strong, but because the Spirit is.

And perhaps most beautifully, Luther wrote that "hope changes the one who hopes into what is hoped for." What a stunning image: hope doesn't just point us toward the future—it transforms us in the present. To hope for peace is to become a peacemaker. To hope for healing is to embody compassion. To hope for resurrection is to live as if death does not have the final word.

This is especially true in times of tragedy and crisis. When the ground beneath us shakes—whether through personal loss, communal grief, or global upheaval—hope is not a denial of pain. It is a declaration that pain will not have the final word. The cross does not erase suffering, but it reframes it. And the empty tomb does not ignore death—it defeats it.

And here is where sacred renewal begins.

## PASTOR ROSY'S MESSAGE CON'T

Sacred renewal is not a return to what was. It is the Spirit's invitation to become something new. It is the holy work of rebuilding—not just structures, but relationships, trust, and purpose. It is the grace to imagine a church that is more hospitable, more transparent, more rooted in resurrection than ever before.

Hope is the heartbeat of sacred renewal. It allows us to see change not as threat, but as threshold. It gives us courage to ask hard questions, to let go of what no longer serves, and to embrace what the Spirit is birthing among us. Renewal is not easy—but it is sacred. Because it is God's work in us, through us, and sometimes in spite of us.

In this season—whether it's one of transition, grief, or quiet renewal—may we be a people of hope. Not naïve, but rooted. Not escapist, but expectant. May our congregation be a place where hope is practiced, preached, and passed on. And may the God of hope fill us, again and again, with joy and peace in believing.

Because by faith we begin. And by hope, we continue. Later this month as we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving, may we be ever thankful for the hope and sacred renewal that is made possible through the hope found in Christ our Lord. Wishing you a blessed Thanksgiving to you and your families!

Always a servant of Christ,  
Rev. Rosalina Rivera (a.k.a. Pastor Rosy)

## MUSICAL NOTES



It is hard to believe that November is upon us! New Creation welcomes the month by sharing a new song called "Christ, Be Magnified." May that be the prayer of our whole church.

Ringspiration just finished celebrating Reformation Sunday with a rousing arrangement of "A Mighty Fortress." They now work diligently on a number of works to share at Christmas time, including a part in David Ensley's cantata which the Chancel Choir and New Creation will share at the 11:15 service on December 21.

Thank you all for your continued love and support for worshipful music.





## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Highlights from the October Council meeting include:

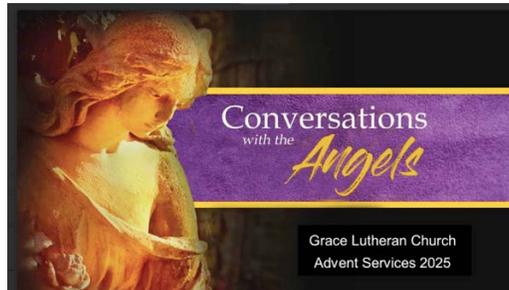
- Council elected officers for the coming year: President – Mike Lorenz, Vice-President – Nick Martin, and Secretary – Pamela Asher. Thank you for agreeing to serve and lead our congregation during the coming year! We give thanks to Mike Lorenz and Ruth Smiley for serving as Vice-President and Secretary for the last two years!
- Council approved the renewal of the contract for the Contemporary Worship bass player for one year for an amount up to \$8,500. Council approved, after receiving input from the Endowment Task Force, that the Endowment will cover 80% (\$5,600) in the second year of a new ministry. The Endowment amount is based on the original year-one request of \$7,000. The balance of \$2,900 will be included in the operating budget.

Please remember to put your 2026 Estimate of Giving form in the designated box in the narthex. The entire box will be blessed on November 9. We trust that God will multiply our blessings.

The last few weeks have been tough for our church family. We remember and celebrate the life of our dear sister, the kind and generous Candy. We also hold Susan and Rafael in prayer for comfort as they and their families navigate the next steps. Lord, hold our church family together in Your grace. In our sorrow, give us hope; in our fear, give us faith and in all things, remind us of Your steadfast love that never lets us go. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Valerie  
Past President

## Worshipping News



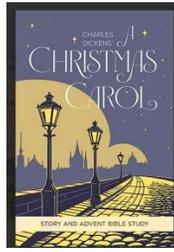
Wednesday evening Advent services will have the theme "**Conversations with the Angels.**" Come join us Wednesday evenings at 6:15pm, beginning December 3, as we hear imaginary conversations between Pastor Rosy and the angels found in the Advent and Christmas story.

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Children's Sunday School meets at 10:00 am on Sundays. Children meet in Jacob's Ladder for music and then go to their classes. We have both a Pre-school class and a class for children in grades K-5. Youth in grades 6-12 meet upstairs. If you have any questions, please contact Joanne Daly.

Adult Sunday School: On October 19, we began a 3-week study on stewardship using the theme Stewards of God's Love. We are exploring how God reaches out (or down) to us, how we respond to his loving actions, and then how we put this love to work in our lives. This will be a participatory class, so feel free to bring your own bibles, or we have a good number available at Grace. Adult Sunday School meets in room 101, so please join us. I guarantee we will all learn something new! These sessions are led by Mike Lorenz. All are welcome!



Join us for Wednesday evening Bible study before each Wednesday service at 5pm in room 101. We will begin on December 3, 2025. This year's theme: **"A Christmas Carol"** Bible study. This is based, of course, on the famous book (& movies) by Charles Dickens. Don't be a Scrooge! Come join us for learning and fun!

## SYNOD NEWS



**SOUTHEASTERN SYNOD**  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Elias Tours is offering a "Best of Egypt with Southeastern Synod – ELCA" tour January 11-21, 2027. If you are interested in this trip, more information can be found at [https://www.eliastours.com/tours/best-of-egypt-with-southeastern-synod?fbclid=IwY2xjawM4Y-tleHRuA2FibQIxMQABHn3cp4Qj3EyMagEeY9cDnj0PQwZyaVhQ6QEFyFMqrlJygHPxq4p-qRGRjS37\\_aem\\_gAIZI5TYszLFpAHkqf6swg](https://www.eliastours.com/tours/best-of-egypt-with-southeastern-synod?fbclid=IwY2xjawM4Y-tleHRuA2FibQIxMQABHn3cp4Qj3EyMagEeY9cDnj0PQwZyaVhQ6QEFyFMqrlJygHPxq4p-qRGRjS37_aem_gAIZI5TYszLFpAHkqf6swg).



## STEWARDSHIP



Church: The company of all Christians regarded as a mystic spiritual body.  
—*American Heritage Dictionary*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982

A church is many things, as everyone knows. It is mostly a center for worship and spiritual teaching. But it can be a refuge of sorts, even to those who are volunteering there.

Our church really does run on volunteers. Volunteers keep activities and charitable services going. Typically, there is a timeframe where commissions are filled and volunteers requested.

We invite you to look at what you are doing at Grace Lutheran Church. When we hire a new pastor, it is called a Calling. We on the Stewarding Commission also believe that God calls each of us into His service. We may not hear it or want to hear it. But if we look, we can see it in the small things. The activity with kids that lighten hearts. The cleanup to some fun music after a coffeehouse. A conversation with someone at a church meal. We invite you to look at the way you spend your time and your skills and how you would like to spend your time and skills. What makes you happy to see? What brings you satisfaction or a lighter heart? Where are you present to God? Where are you present to serve God? Is there a new area in which you would like to serve?

This year we are only providing a list of possible volunteer positions, not a survey. You can continue to do the activities you do, or you can look at what fulfills you, what is an area that you haven't explored, what are you willing to take a risk to do. Where, in this church, would you like to contribute as a way of honoring God and our Savior? This is a time of prayerful reflection and listening.

If you have questions about volunteering opportunities, contact Stacey Garrick at [sjgarrick@gmail.com](mailto:sjgarrick@gmail.com) or (614) 374-7529.

Stacey Garrick – Stewarding Commission

# NOVEMBER EVENTS



Grace's Family Movie Night will be Saturday, November 1, 2025, at 6:00 pm. This month's movie will be the 2019 live action *Aladdin*. All movies are free and open to the public.



## PUZZLES, PUZZLES, PUZZLES WITH JUDY JOY

Join Judy Joy at her home to work on jigsaw puzzles on the second Thursday of each month from 10:00-2:00. Bring your lunch.



## Thanksgiving Dinner

Grace's annual Thanksgiving Dinner will be held on Sunday, November 16, 2025, at 4:30. A sign-up sheet will be placed in the narthex. Nurturing will provide the turkey and mashed potatoes. Nurturing also needs help with set up and clean up; please contact Betty Anne Domm, Donna Gurecki or Lisa Sipes if you can help.

Come enjoy an afternoon of great food and fellowship.



## Holiday Fun!

The annual Hanging of the Greens to decorate the church will be Saturday, November 29, 2025. Decorating will begin at 9:00 am. A light soup lunch will be served around 11:00.

While members are hanging the greens, young people and their families are invited to Cocoa, Cookies and Christmas Fun. Come decorate a tree, enjoy a Christmas story, join us for lunch (thank you, Nurturing!), and complete a Christmas craft to take home. We will begin at the entrance of the church and finish downstairs around 1 pm. This is the third year we have held this activity. Young people in our church and community are invited to participate. We celebrate Jesus – and have a great time!





 A poster for "Family Movie Night" with a red and white polka-dot border. It lists a "Movie Line Up" for August through January 2026. It also mentions "Free Movie Night" and "First Saturday of the Month From 6-8pm". The church name "Grace Lutheran Church" is visible in a heart logo.
 

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT**

**Free Movie Night**

**Movie Line Up**

August 2- Moana 2  
 September 6- Toy Story  
 October 4- Little Mermaid- 2023 live action  
 November 1- Alladin 2019 live action  
 December- NO Movie Night  
 January 3, 2026- Monsters Inc.

131 W. Gettysburg Ave. Oak Ridge, TN 37830

**First Saturday of the Month From 6-8pm**

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
 131 W. GETTYSBURG AVE.  
 OAK RIDGE, TN

**New Members Reception**

There will be a reception for new members who are joining Grace Lutheran Church on Sunday, December 7, immediately after the Contemporary service. Come and welcome the newest members of our Grace family.

**MINISTRIES OF GRACE**

 A heart-shaped quilt made of various colored fabric pieces with a blue cross in the center. Below it is the text "Pieces of Grace Supporting Lutheran World Relief".
 

**Pieces of Grace**  
 Supporting Lutheran World Relief

Those who attend Pieces of Grace (Blanket Workshop) make quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The group meets on the first, third, and fifth Thursdays of the month from 10 am to 2 pm. Everyone is welcome to join in, or just stop by to see what is happening. Sewing skills are not required. Bring your lunch.

 A graphic showing various food items like rice, cereal, and a can of soup, with a "FOOD BANK" label and a heart symbol.
 

**FOOD PANTRY**

The Food Pantry served 114 families as of October 24. There were 279 individuals in those households.

Any and all donations are welcome.

Don't forget to link your Kroger card to Grace Lutheran Food Pantry. This is an easy way to support our Food Pantry.



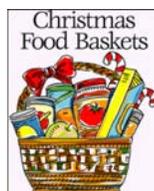
Calling all knitters and crocheters!

The Prayer Shawl Ministry resumed in-person sessions on September 6<sup>th</sup> and meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month. We meet in the Fellowship Hall from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. We will be working on prayer shawls, hats and various other projects. All are welcome, so invite friends to join us!

## CHRISTMAS FOOD BASKETS AND ANGEL TREE

Helpful hearts and hands are needed! Christmas Food Baskets and Angel Tree gifts will be distributed to 30 families on Saturday, December 20. Volunteers are needed for Christmas Baskets to help unload non-perishable food at the church after 3:30 pm on Wednesday afternoon, December 17 and place it on tables in the Fellowship Hall. Volunteers are also needed to unload perishable food at the church on Saturday morning December 20 from 8:30-12:00, to fill baskets and place the baskets in families' vehicles. If you have questions or would like to help, contact Phil Stumbo at (865-482-3048) or [pstumbo@comcast.net](mailto:pstumbo@comcast.net).

We will follow a similar schedule for the Angel Tree gifts. The Angel Tree will be set up in the narthex with the children's name tags attached. You may select the tags and purchase gifts. The gifts are due back to the church and placed under the tree by the end of the day on Thursday, December 18. The gifts will be placed in the families' vehicles along with the food baskets on December 20.





## NOVEMBER LOVE OFFERING - ANGEL TREE

The members of Grace are invited to participate in the Angel Tree ministry this year. We will receive the list of children's names, ages, gift wishes, and clothing sizes by mid-November and will have the Angel Tree set up in the narthex soon thereafter. Each child will have two tags on the tree: one for clothes and one for toys. You are welcome to choose either or both tags for a child. Please write your name in the notebook on the stand by the tree in the space corresponding to the tags you've adopted. You are asked to spend \$40-\$50 per tag (so \$80 - \$100 if you have chosen both tags for a child). Gifts need to be returned under the tree in the narthex by Thursday, December 18th so that they can be distributed along with the Christmas Food Baskets on Saturday, December 20th. If you have questions, please contact Ingrid Busch. If you want to participate in the ministry, but would rather not shop yourself, you can contribute to the angel tree fund, and we will do the shopping for you. Thank you for sharing God's love with the children in our community!

## LIFE EVENTS

Congratulations to Rachel Johnson on her marriage to Scott Switzer. They were married on October 25, 2025.

Congratulations to Sam Meyer on his marriage to Kaitlin Wilkerson. They were married on October 11, 2025.



## WITH DEEPEST SYMPATHY

It is with great sadness that we express our condolences to the family of Candy Yugo. The memorial service for Candy will be Saturday, November 8, 2025. The visitation will be at 1:00 pm and the service will begin at 2:00 pm, with the interment in the memorial garden immediately following the service. For anyone wishing to spend more time with the family, there will be a gathering at the home of Beverly Bauman from 4:30 – 5:30 pm.



# NUTS! NUTS! NUTS!

The Clinton Lions Club is selling a variety of nuts again this year, they are Plain pecan halves, Plain pecan pieces, Praline covered pecans, Cashews, Mixed nuts (no peanuts), Milk Chocolate Amaretto covered pecans, Chocolate covered peanuts and English Walnuts. These are all one pound (16oz.) bags. The cost per bag is \$12.00. You may contact Neal Vaughan by e-mail at [neallion@comcast.net](mailto:neallion@comcast.net).



*"MILAGRO is more than a school. It is a miracle. A miracle that changes lives, gives dignity, and breaks the cycle of poverty."*

Dear Grace Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your love, prayers, and support. I am grateful for all you do for MILAGRO especially your gift to the 40-40-40 campaign this year.

We are using the money that you gave to educate 18 young women this year and we continue to see transformation in their lives.

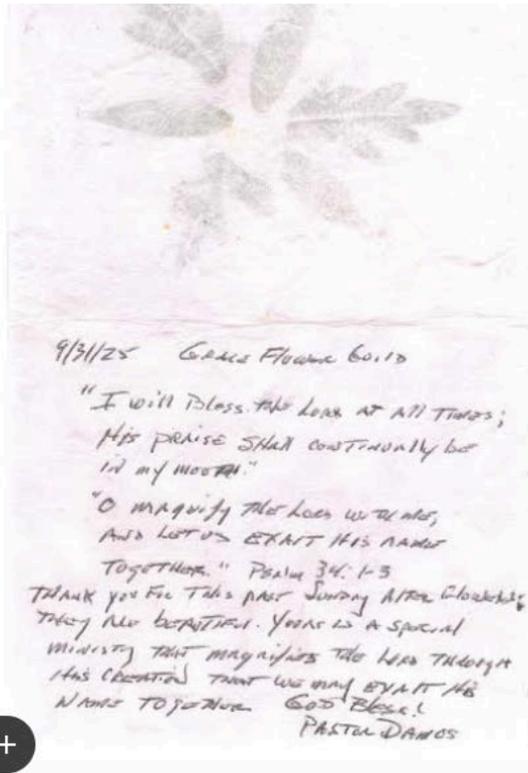
One student said, "Before MILAGRO, I had no path. Now I can see where I am going." Another shared, "Here at MILAGRO, I discovered God's love."

Your gifts help to make this possible. And as you know the transformation overflows to their families, their siblings, and their communities!

Many blessings,

*Karen Castillo E.*

Revda. Karen Castillo Echeverria  
Presidenta Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala



The Reformation – An Elevator Talk  
Judy Goans

We just recently celebrated Reformation Sunday, an important day in our church's life. Perhaps someone you know may wonder about the Reformation, so here's an elevator talk.

The Protestant Reformation was a theological movement that challenged the positions and authority of the Roman Catholic Church. It is most often associated with Martin Luther's posting of his 95 theses (arguments) on the church door in Wittenburg on October 31, 1517. Martin Luther, a monk and professor of theology, was offended by the church's sale of indulgences, or advance forgiveness of sins. This was undertaken to fund the building of St. Peter's in the Vatican. Luther responded by compiling a list of arguments, or theses, against practices that he felt needed to be reformed in order to purify the church. Naively, Luther believed that the church would welcome his arguments. During about the same period, reform efforts occurred in Geneva, led by French theologian John Calvin, and in England, where theological reform occurred at the same time that the very Catholic Henry VIII needed support for the annulment of his first marriage.

Reform did not spontaneously erupt in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The environment for reform was built during the previous two centuries, throughout Europe and the British Isles. One of the earliest reforms was translation of the Bible into the common language of the people, rather than in Latin. The Roman Catholic Church opposed putting the Bible into the common language because they feared it would undermine the church's authority on the meaning of Scripture. Early translators of the Bible did not fare well. John Wyclif (ca. 1330–1384), who translated the Bible into English from Saint Jerome's Latin Vulgate, "only escaped prosecution by dying just in time. His Oxford colleagues however were all burned alive."<sup>1</sup> A century later, "William Tyndale translated scripture directly from Hebrew and Greek into English,"<sup>2</sup> and was "strangled and burned at the stake"<sup>3</sup> at the direction of Henry VIII. Later, James I and VI of Scotland (1603-1625) authorized the publication of another translation, the Authorized or King James Version of the Bible.<sup>4</sup> Jan Hus (c. 1370–1415), a Czech priest and reformer who helped create a Czech Bible translation, was burned at the stake in 1415. John Rogers (c. 1500–1555), an English priest who collaborated with William Tyndale and later published the "Matthew Bible," burned at the stake under the reign of Queen Mary I. Martin Luther himself translated both the Old and New Testaments into German.

The Reformation involved a number of issues, including conducting the mass, or worship service, in the language of the people; the interpretation of Scripture, especially the nature of Holy Communion and whether Jesus' words, this is my body, this is my blood, were to be taken literally as the Catholic church then taught; that no belief can be required unless it is consistent with Scripture; and most importantly, the nature of salvation, with reformers embracing the idea that that salvation is based on grace and does not depend on good works.

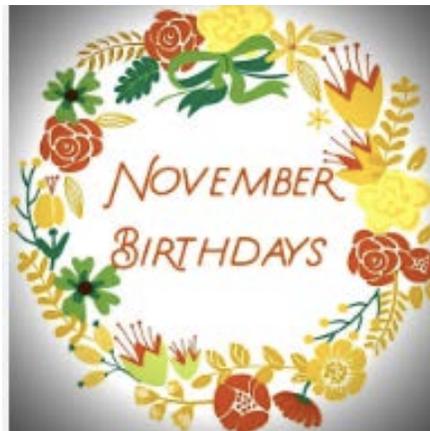
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<sup>1</sup> Willis Barnstone, "The Bloody History of Bible Translators," *Los Angeles Review of Books*, <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/the-bloody-history-of-bible-translators/>.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> Ben Johnson, "Kings and Queens of England & Britain," *Historic UK History Magazine*, <https://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/KingsQueensofBritain/>.



Carol Donath	4 <sup>th</sup>
Riley Cumberland	7 <sup>th</sup>
Kim Lorenz	10 <sup>th</sup>
Alicia Rudat	11 <sup>th</sup>
Elaine Mueller	14 <sup>th</sup>
Judy McMillan	15 <sup>th</sup>
John Gunning	17 <sup>th</sup>
Gayla Cutler	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Mary Ann Damos	22 <sup>nd</sup>
Heston Moua	23 <sup>rd</sup>
Julia Stockstill	28 <sup>th</sup>
Lorraine Huynh	29 <sup>th</sup>
Jacob Stewart	29 <sup>th</sup>
Rick Rawl	

## RECENT EVENTS

On October 4, Grace Hikers hiked at the UT Arboretum and then enjoyed refreshments at Bud's.



Grace Coffeehouse was held on October 11, 2025.



Grace's annual Trunk or Treat was on October 25, 2025.





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You can donate once, weekly or monthly.



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