

The Light

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH
OAK RIDGE, TN

AUGUST 2025



Our Mission Statement:





A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ROSY

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

2 Corinthians 1:3

Comfort is something very important to me. If something isn't comfortable, I won't wear it. It's truly the reason why I don't wear heels anymore! I have my favorite chair in my home. My recliner happens to be my favorite- in fact, as I write this, it is exactly where I am sitting. We all have comfort foods we eat for certain emotions. Comfort matters.

In this text I've selected for this month, comfort is mentioned four times. The word **comfort** in this passage comes from the ancient Greek word *paraklesis*. The idea behind this word for **comfort** in the New Testament is always more than a soothing sympathy. It has the idea of strengthening, of helping, of making strong. The idea behind this word is communicated by the Latin word for **comfort** (*fortis*), which also means "brave." Paul considers the Father a comforter, a paraclete (*paraklesis*). We also know that the Holy Spirit is our paraclete and that God the Son is our paraclete. God, in every aspect of His being, is full of comfort, strength, and help for us.

One great purpose of God in comforting us is to enable us to bring comfort to others. God's comfort can be given and received through others. Often, we never receive the comfort God wants to give us through another person. Pride keeps us from revealing our needs to others, so we never receive the comfort God would give us through them.

Even *spiritual* comforts are not given us for our use alone; they, like all the gifts of God, are given that they may be distributed, or become instruments of help to others. During the various seasons of our lives, we've all had to make adjustments to remain comfortable. Some adjustments have made us feel a little TOO comfortable. There are some things that I've wondered, "why haven't we been doing this this whole time." Then there are others that have made my life a little easier, made life a little more comfortable.

Pastor Rosy's Message Continued

Our God is with us when we experience pain, loss, regret, sadness, and all manner of pain. He is not only with us *but also* promises to bring us the comfort we need when we face troubles. He is with us through all things. "God of Comfort" can also be translated as "God of Compassion." To have compassion is to have concern for the sufferings of others. This first shows us that God recognizes our need to be seen, to receive the empathy and care of others. God is interested in what we are going through. He does not dismiss our current circumstances or minimize our daily stressors as insignificant. He cares about and is there for each and every up and down that we face.

Why write about comfort? Because as a church, we too may have felt too comfortable with the way we have always done things. As we prepare to present the 2026 budget, we are going to possibly review what makes us comfortable and what we can do without. That may mean we get creative about doing things differently. That may include things that make us feel uncomfortable for a little while. This may mean going through some changes we may not like for us to continue to serve our community. Is that something you can handle? It may mean we wrap our minds around abundance thinking instead of scarcity.

It's easy for many of us to think our discomfort doesn't count because others have gone through worse. While we should realize the ways we are blessed, that does not mean God doesn't see your pain as "minimal" compared to others. Compassion and comfort from Jesus is available *whenever* we need it! God's grace is not reserved for our hardest moments; it's available to us on a day by day and even moment by moment basis! Even when you're sitting in your favorite shorts in your favorite comfortable chair. Thanks be to God.

Always a servant of Christ,

Pastor Rosy



THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Highlights from the July Council meeting include:

Council approved that the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, September 28 at 11:30 a.m. There will be one service at 10 a.m. on that Sunday. The 2026 budget will be presented, and new council members will be elected. If a congregation member/commission would like to make a presentation or discuss something at this meeting, please let Valerie know.

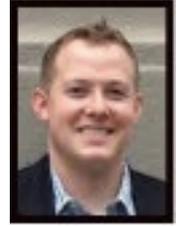
- If you are asked to serve on Council, please prayerfully consider serving in this way. If you are interested in serving on Council, please let Valerie know.
- The budget deficit continues to be a concern, and projections show GLC currently has an \$13,500 deficit thru June.
- The Stewarding Commission (it's not all about money) has been revitalized, and they are excited to introduce a year-round stewardship program - Stewards of God's Love. Be on the lookout for more information.
- Commissions should submit their 2026 Budgets as soon as possible to Valerie.

"The human mind may devise many plans, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established." Proverbs 19:21

Many blessings,

Valerie

MUSICAL NOTES



Reminder: We will be returning to 2 services beginning August 3, 2025. The Contemporary Service will be at 9:00 and the Traditional Service will be at 11:15. Fifth Sundays will be blended format.

Chancel Choir rehearsals will start on Wednesday, August 20, at 7:00 pm. Ringspiration will also start on the 20th; they practice at 5:45 pm. Please come if you would like to make a joyful noise with us.

SYNOD NEWS



The ELCA Churchwide Assembly will be held July 28 – August 2, 2025 in Phoenix, AZ. Our Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, is stepping down from her position and a new ELCA Bishop will be elected at this assembly. Our bishop of the Southeastern Synod, Bishop Kevin Strickland, is one of the candidates. The ELCA will also be electing a new Synod Secretary. If you would like to watch the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, you can find it on YouTube. Go to [ELCA.org](https://www.elca.org) and there is a link.

2025
SYNODICAL
CONVENTION



Dear Sisters in Christ

We are delighted to invite you to the 2025 Women of the ELCA Southeastern Synodical Convention! This year, we gather under the inspiring theme:

"We will be known forever by the tracks we leave." -(Dakota Proverb)

Join us as we explore the profound impact of our faith journeys and the legacy we create together.

Event Details:

WHEN: September 19–20, 2025

WHERE: Scarritt Bennett Center, 1027 18th Avenue S, Nashville, TN 37212-2120

Why Attend?

- Engage in Uplifting Worship: Experience spiritual renewal through shared worship and song.
- Participate in Enriching Workshops: Learn and grow through sessions designed to empower and inspire.
- Foster Deep Connections: Build lasting relationships with women across our synod.
- Shape Our Future: Contribute to discussions and decisions that guide our collective mission.

Register online at: www.seswelcasisters.com

Silent Voices, Strong Advocates: How You Can Change the Future for Vulnerable Children

Children without stable homes, reliable caregivers, or access to proper education and health care often slip through the cracks of society. The most vulnerable—those in foster care, facing poverty, or surviving abuse—depend on others to fight for their well-being. While large organizations do important work, individual advocacy is just as powerful. Whether through direct action or systemic change, there are countless ways you can step in to improve the lives of children who need it most.

Becoming a Mentor for Stability

A stable, trustworthy adult can make all the difference in a child's life. Mentorship programs pair children with caring individuals who provide guidance, emotional support, and consistency. Kids who have a mentor are more likely to graduate from school, develop confidence, and [avoid negative influences](#). Even a few hours a month can help a child develop a sense of self-worth and security, proving that meaningful impact doesn't require grand gestures—just consistency and care.

Building a Career That Changes Lives

If your passion lies in helping children in need, shaping your career around that mission can be incredibly fulfilling. Whether you pursue social work, pediatric health care, or child advocacy law, every role plays a part in creating better futures for at-risk youth. For example, if you already work as an RN, earning a master's to become a family nurse practitioner can prepare you for working with pediatric patients. Thanks to [online FNP programs](#), advancing your education while maintaining a full-time job has never been more accessible, allowing you to gain the skills needed to make a lasting impact.

Opening Your Home and Heart

For children without a permanent home, foster care and adoption can be life-changing. While fostering requires a deep commitment, it [provides children with stability during tumultuous times](#). Adoption, on the other hand, offers a permanent solution for those without families. If you're unable to foster or adopt, supporting foster families—whether through financial assistance, providing meals, or offering child care—can be just as impactful. Ensuring these children feel loved and cared for is a crucial part of advocacy.

Supporting Education and Extracurriculars

Education is one of the strongest tools for breaking cycles of poverty and instability. Many vulnerable children [face barriers to learning](#), whether due to lack of supplies, overcrowded classrooms, or frequent school changes. Donating school materials, tutoring, or funding extracurricular programs can help bridge these gaps. After-school activities, sports, and arts programs provide safe spaces where kids can develop new skills, build friendships, and gain confidence—investing in these areas helps create brighter futures.

Providing Mental Health and Emotional Support

Trauma, neglect, and instability take a toll on a child's mental health, yet therapy and counseling remain out of reach for many. Advocating for [accessible mental health services](#) can change that, whether through fundraising efforts, volunteering at crisis centers, or pushing for school-based support programs. Beyond professional help, simply being a safe and attentive adult in a child's life can offer comfort. Listening without judgment and affirming their feelings can foster resilience and healing.

Using Social Media as a Tool for Change

While often dismissed as superficial, social media is a powerful advocacy tool. Raising awareness about the challenges vulnerable children face can mobilize resources, spark conversations, and influence public policy. Sharing personal stories, fundraising for causes, or [highlighting organizations that do meaningful work](#) can reach thousands—if not millions—of people. Even small-scale efforts, like reposting informative content or participating in online campaigns, contribute to larger movements that demand attention and action.

Volunteering in Shelters and Community Programs

Shelters, food banks, and after-school programs often operate on limited resources, making volunteers essential. Spending time at a children's shelter, organizing donation drives, or helping with homework at a community center are [direct ways to make a difference](#). Even businesses can contribute by sponsoring programs or donating a percentage of profits to child welfare organizations. The more people engage with their communities, the stronger the support network becomes for children in need.

Article submitted by Jason Lewis (friend of Pat Hope)

AUGUST EVENTS



Grace's Family Movie Night will be Saturday, August 2, 2025, at 6:00 pm. This month's movie will be Moana 2. All movies are free and open to the public.



SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

The summer Bible study *Living a Chocolate Life*, will conclude on August 6. The study is led by Donna Hoglund.

Women's Bible Study



Adult Sunday School classes will return from a Summer break on August 3, 2025, at 10:00 am.

The adult Sunday School class will be studying *The Patriarchs: Encountering the God of Abraham, Isaac and Joseph* by Beth Moore. This is an 11-session Bible study. It is recommended that each person purchase their own Bible study book. These books are available through Lifeway, Living Proof Ministries and Amazon.

Children's Sunday School will resume on **Sunday, September 7, 2025, at 10:00 am.** They will be using the Sparks program and materials.

WOMEN'S TEA

The Grace Lutheran Women's Tea has been rescheduled to **Sunday, August 31, 2025, from 2-4 pm.** Please RSVP to the Church office by Sunday, August 24, 2025.





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.

First Saturday of the Month From 6-8pm

131 W. Gettysburg Ave. Oak Ridge, TN 37830

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

Save the Date!

**VIA DE CRISTO WEEKEND
OCTOBER 2-5, 2025**

Would you like to experience an amazing weekend of God's wonderful Grace? Have an opportunity to be fully immersed in His love? Laugh, sing and fellowship with other Christians? Then the upcoming Via de Cristo weekend is the place for you! Talk to Pastor Rosy or Janet Rawl for more information.

FALL PICNIC

Grace's annual Fall Picnic will be September 7, 2025 from 5:00-7:00 pm at the Melton Hill Lake Pavillion. Nurturing will provide BBQ, drinks and paper products. A sign-up sheet will be posted for bringing sides and desserts.

Grace Hikes

The next Grace Hike will be October 4 at the UT Arboretum.

MINISTRIES OF GRACE

BLANKET WORKSHOP



Those who attend 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.



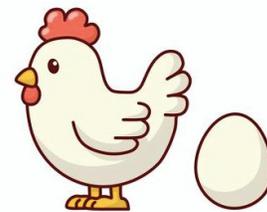
FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry served 79 households on the three Fridays it was open in July.

FOOD ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE FOOD PANTRY

The Grace Lutheran Food Pantry has been asking for help from the congregation to help stock the shelves. Thank you for your help in stocking our shelves.

At this time, the only items needed are 12-count egg cartons for the eggs that have been donated to the Food Pantry by Second Harvest.



August Love Offering

The August Love Offering will go to the Community Assistance Fund. This is a Grace fund that is used to help members of the community who are in need of help, particularly in paying their utility bills.



Love. Grow. Serve.



Most Grace ESOL classes have been on hiatus for the month of July. Most will resume on Tuesday, August 5. The evening classes will be on hold until at least August 19, while the lead teacher, Dorothy DeVan recovers from surgery. The Wednesday and Thursday morning beginner classes are on indefinite hold, but the Tuesday morning class will resume.

We are extremely sad to announce that Pr. Sylvia Countess will be retiring from teaching with our program after many years on involvement. Her background in teaching languages including ESOL has been invaluable and she will be greatly missed. David Miller is also going to be unavailable for over a year; his help has been very much appreciated. We are looking to add a teacher or two, especially so we can resume beginner classes on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. Nancy Munro is the contact person if you know someone who may be experienced and interested.

LIFE EVENTS

Grace extends condolences to Syd Ball and the Ball family on the passing of long-time Grace member Becky Ball. Becky passed away on July 20, 2025. The funeral service will be held at Grace on Saturday, August 16, 2025. The family will receive guests, family and friends at 10:00 am and the Memorial Service will be at 11:00 am with a lunch reception to follow.

Condolences to Slade Trammell, Grace's Director of Music, and his family on the death of his grandfather, Wesley Trammell.

Please keep these families in your prayers.

Kennedy Weber received a Raaen Scholarship. Kennedy will attend Pellissippi State Community College this fall.



AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Chuck Thompson	4 th
Ron Goans	12 th
Marvel Burtis	15 th
Luke Bauman	16 th
April Fritts	20 th
David Olsen	22 nd
Pat Hope	23 rd
Joe Kitts	28 th
Judy Joy	30 th
Ruth Kerchner	31 st

back2school
prayer

"Dear Lord, use my eyes to see new friends.

Open my ears to hear my teacher.

Open my mind to learn new things.

Let my heart remember YOU are near when I'm afraid.

Help me to love others like you do.

I want to shine your light so bright in my school."

Amen.

@Courtney DeFeo

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Email: office@graceor.org

Website: www.graceoakridge.org

You can now donate to Grace with PayPal

Scan this QR code with your phone camera and open the link.
You can donate once, weekly or monthly.



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