

# The Light

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OAK RIDGE, TN

September 2025



Our Mission Statement:





## A MESSAGE FROM PASTOR ROSY

*<sup>1</sup>In you, O LORD, I seek refuge; do not let me ever be put to shame; in your righteousness deliver me. <sup>2</sup>Incline your ear to me; rescue me speedily. Be a rock of refuge for me, a strong fortress to save me.*

Psalm 31: 1-2

I don't know about you, but lately, I long for refuge. A place where I can go freely to commune with nature, without having to think about being around too many people. I've shared this in my Bible study class that I feel closest to God when I am in nature. I love watching the wind blow through the trees. Leaves falling on the ground as a fall brisk breeze rolls across my face. I often think that if I really had to live off grid, with no cell phone, no electricity, I think I could survive. But for many, living without the luxuries of home would be a nightmare and there would be lots of people crying, "refuge"!

This psalm of David begins in a similar way to many of his other psalms – with a declaration of trust in God in a time of trouble. We do not know the precise nature or time of the trouble, other than it severely afflicted David and made him despair of life. Nevertheless, David proclaimed his trust in the LORD.

David's bold declaration of trust showed that he was not ashamed to call upon the LORD. He considered it appropriate that God answered by **never** allowing His servant to **be ashamed** before his enemies and adversaries. Because David trusted in God, he asked God to act righteously on his behalf, and to **deliver** him. He asked that the **righteousness** of God work on his behalf.

Luther taught through Psalms, verse-by-verse, at the University of Wittenberg. In his teaching he came upon this statement in [Psalm 31:1](#) (31:2 in German). The passage confused him; how could God's **righteousness** deliver him? The righteousness of God – His great justice – could only condemn him to hell as a righteous punishment for his sins. One night up in a tower in the monastery, Luther thought about this passage in Psalms and also read [Romans 1:17](#): *For in it [the gospel] the righteousness of God is revealed.* Luther said he thought about this day and night, until he finally understood what the **righteousness** of God revealed by the gospel is.

## Pastor Rosy's Message Continued

It is not speaking of the holy righteousness of God that *condemns* the guilty sinner, but of the God kind of **righteousness** that is *given to* the sinner who puts his trust in Jesus Christ.

Luther said of this experience: "I grasped the truth that the righteousness of God is that righteousness whereby, through grace and sheer mercy, he justifies us by faith. Therefore I felt myself to be reborn and to have gone through open doors into paradise..... This passage of Paul became to me a gateway into heaven." Martin Luther was born again, and the reformation began in his heart. One great Lutheran scholar said this was "the happiest day in Luther's life."

There is no doubt that difficulties will arise and our faith sometimes seems to be tested. Clearly, David was counting on God to see him through whatever danger or difficulty was driving him to his knees and pushing him to prayer. And like David, we can depend on God to see us through whatever danger or difficulty comes our way. That doesn't mean bad things won't happen, but it does mean that we go with a dependable God who promises to be our refuge and strength. Thanks be to God.

Always a servant of Christ,

Rev. Rosalina Rivera (a.k.a. Pastor Rosy)



## THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

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.

Not to steal Stewardship's thunder, but I came across a blog written by my parent's former pastor, Wayne Kofink. Below are some of his words to ponder.

"I see stewardship as encouraging gratitude, generosity, and commitment among people. It's about the kind of people we are. It turns out there is something somewhat selfish about my working with stewardship. I find that I am happier among people who are grateful, generous, and committed. It builds up rather than tears down.

Volunteering with the Stewardship team turns out to be a blessing for me. It makes a difference in me. My life is better because I'm making a positive contribution to something that benefits others.

I think that should be the case however we volunteer our time and talents to our church. It's not a matter of keeping an institution running, but of being blessed and being a blessing. How do you volunteer at the church? What does that do for you? What difference does it make in your life? And if you don't volunteer, maybe you're missing something valuable. Give it some thought."

1 Peter 4:10 – Each one, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others the special gift he has received from God. (Good News Bible)

Many blessings,

Valerie

## MUSICAL NOTES



Hi all!

As of Wednesday August 27th, all music rehearsals are officially in Fall swing: Ringspiration at 5:45 pm, Chancel Choir at 7 pm. We have an enormous number of exciting projects we are undertaking, as well as ample room for new volunteers. Please join us!



## SYNOD NEWS

At the 2025 Churchwide Assembly in May, Pastor Yehiel Curry was elected Presiding Bishop of the ELCA. Presiding Bishop-elect Curry is a graduate of the Theological Education for Emerging Ministries program at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and was Bishop of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod.



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](http://www.seswelcasisters.com)**



Mark Your Calendars for:

## **Guatemala Gathering**

*A friend-raising and fund-raising event  
to benefit MiLAGRO, the women's education center in Guatemala*

**Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>**

5:00 - 7:30 pm

Messiah Lutheran Church

6900 Kingston Pike, Knoxville

*(Recommended: \$20 donation, plus an opportunity to give more, as you are able.)*

Pastora Karen Castillo, the pastor/president of our companion synod in Guatemala, will join us to share updates on ILAG (the Lutheran Church in Guatemala) and MiLAGRO (the young women's educational center).

Here's the plan for the evening:

5:00 - 5:45	Mingle, meet and greet activities
5:45	Official welcome, opening prayer
5:50	Dinner & Program
	Pr Karen, featured speaker
6:50	Invitation to Give
7:00	Evening Prayer

To register, contact:

Nancy Friedrich: 865-659-0161

[Nancy.o.friedrich@gmail.com](mailto:Nancy.o.friedrich@gmail.com)

Questions, ideas, opportunities to support, contact Nancy.  
Hope to see you Wednesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>!

# STEWARDSHIP



*“Therefore, be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil.”* Ephesians 5:15-16 New American Standard Bible

As you have read in the last two issues of *The Light*, our stewardship theme for this year is “Stewards of God’s Love.” We continue our stewardship emphasis on IN by looking at one of the gifts God has given us which is TIME. God has given us 24 hours in each day to live, work, serve, and praise. We often wonder what happens to that time. It seems to fly by. How are we using our time? How can we be good stewards of the time with which God has entrusted us? How might we use our time to serve and love God and neighbor?

In her book, *Living a Chocolate Life*, Deb Burma writes “when we fail to use our time wisely or choose to use it only for selfish purposes, we neglect to use God’s gift as he intended. We praise Him for His great gift of grace that continues to pour down over us, even when we’ve misused any of His good gifts (treasures, time, or talents). And we look to His strength to lead us and enable us to give again.”

How might you use God’s precious gift of time in this congregation? Could you find time to serve on Altar Guild or serve as a teller for a couple of hours a week once every six months? Could you find time to help put school kits together on God’s Work, Our Hands Sunday? Could you find time to serve on a commission for a two-year term? The list of ways you can use your time at Grace is long and many of those ways don’t require a large amount of time. By His grace, you can choose how to make the best use of your time to serve God and our neighbors. God will use you to make an impact on the lives of others.

In closing, I will use the first verse of a well-known hymn. *“Take my life, that I may be consecrated Lord to thee; take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.”*

Grace & Peace

Donna Hoglund for the Stewarding Commission

## The September Love Offering is for the Ecumenical Storehouse

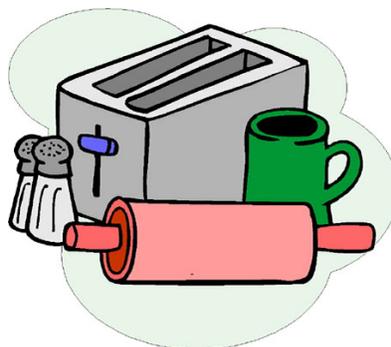
<http://www.thestorehouseinc.org/>

The Ecumenical Storehouse is one of the rare non-profits that has no paid employees. Yet with a small budget they make a big difference in the lives of those they serve.

The Storehouse accepts, stores, and distributes almost every type of household good - essentially everything a person would need to set up a small living quarter. Many of the clients served are from among the poor or disenfranchised living in the area; others have lost everything in a fire or storm; still others find themselves in abusive situations and need emergency assistance to establish a new home. **The Ecumenical Storehouse provides its services only by referral from area churches and recognized area support agencies**

The continued success of the Storehouse would not be possible without all of the volunteers who staff the office and select household items for the clients from 10:00 a.m. to noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays and the drivers and crew who pick up the donations mostly on Saturday mornings. Volunteers from eleven participating churches now operate the Storehouse on a rotating basis. Grace Lutheran is fortunate to share a month with Kern Memorial Methodist. Our next month to volunteer is March 2026.

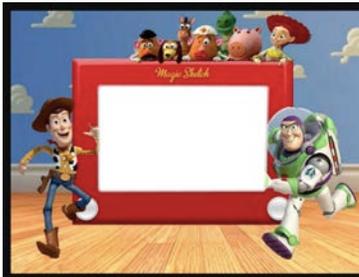
**Household goods can be donated by bringing them to the Storehouse, 134 East Division Road, on Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday morning between ten and noon. Most pickups are made Saturday mornings after 9:00 a.m. Call 865-481-0274 to schedule a pick-up.**



# SEPTEMBER EVENTS



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



## 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.



The adult Sunday School class is 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.** Grace is starting a preschool Sunday School class this year. There will also be classes for elementary children and youth.

## GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS SEPTEMBER 7, 2025

Grace members will be stuffing school bags to send to Lutheran World Relief for distribution. A list of needed supplies can be found at <https://lwr.org/kits/school-kits/instruction>. Our goal this year is 84 kits; your help is appreciated.

We will also be making dog toys from old t-shirts for the local animal shelter as part of this event.

Bins to donate to both projects are in the narthex.





 A poster for 'Free Movie Night' with a red and white polka-dot border. It features a clapperboard and popcorn icon. The text includes:
 

- 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.

 A heart logo with a cross and the text 'CJ BONE SHARON SEEBORN' is also present. At the bottom, it says '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 your lunch.

 An icon of four interlocking jigsaw puzzle pieces in blue, green, yellow, and red.

**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 for more information.

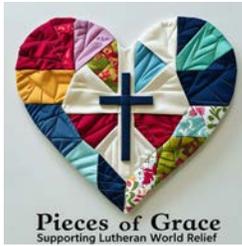
 A circular logo for 'Via de Cristo' featuring a cross in the center, surrounded by the text 'VIA DE CRISTO' and 'LUTHERAN SERVICE CENTER'.


 A logo for 'Theology on Tap' featuring a glass of beer and the text 'THEOLOGY ON TAP' inside a circular frame.
 

Have you ever had a burning theological question you didn’t feel comfortable asking in church? Do you wrestle with basic theology? Then we’ve got a ministry for you!

Beginning in October, we will be meeting at a local brewery to wrestle with deep theological questions. Pastor Rosy will be leading the discussion. More information coming soon!

# MINISTRIES OF GRACE



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.



## FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry served 122 families in August. There were 271 individuals in those families with 53 being under 17, 84 being over 60, & 134 ages 18-59.

## 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 to everyone who contributed in any way. It is all appreciated.

The Food Pantry is still in need of 1 lb. bags of pinto beans. Donations can be placed in the bins in the narthex and at the back entrance.



Grace offers beginner, early intermediate, intermediate and advanced classes. There are am and pm classes available. See the Grace Lutheran website for further details.



Calling all knitters and crocheters!

The Prayer Shawl Ministry will resume in-person sessions on September 6<sup>th</sup> and meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of each month. We will 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!

## THANK YOU

I wish to thank those who sent cards, emails, texts, and calls of get-well wishes after my knee surgery. Your support was so appreciated and I felt your love. - Donna Gurecki

The prayer shawl arrived to brighten my day. I've never seen a more beautiful combination of colors. And to know that there were prayers ascending has given me much comfort. Thanks - to you and the knitters of Grace for your creative and meaningful gift. – Ina Berkey, cousin of Ruth Smiley

## LIFE EVENTS

Flora Cumberland, daughter of Riley and Margaret Cumberland, was baptized on Sunday, August 24, 2025 at the 11:15 service.



## Life Events con't

Condolences to Stan Long and his family on the death of his brother Wally.

Our sympathies to Joyce Fox and her family after the loss of her sister Adrienne Boyle from Wichita, Kansas.



Kara Bafford	1 <sup>st</sup>
Marianne Johnson	8 <sup>th</sup>
Larry Sparks	8 <sup>th</sup>
Hannah Mustaffa	11 <sup>th</sup>
Janie Hiserote	13 <sup>th</sup>
Paul Williams	14 <sup>th</sup>
Kennedy Weber	16 <sup>th</sup>
Kristina Moua	19 <sup>th</sup>
Pamela Williams	20 <sup>th</sup>
Cyrus Martin	25 <sup>th</sup>
Robert Stewart	26 <sup>th</sup>
Judy Goans	27 <sup>th</sup>
Kristin Stone	29 <sup>th</sup>
Brianna Weber	29 <sup>th</sup>

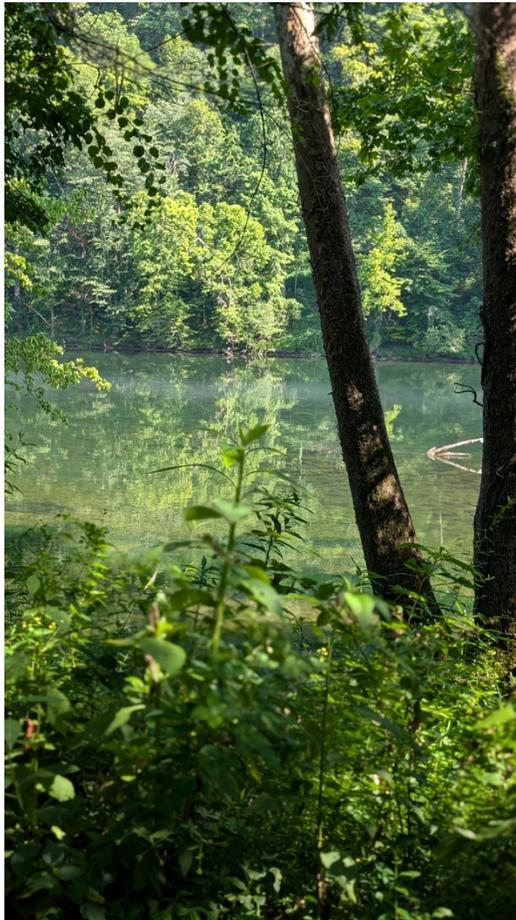
# RECENT EVENTS

## Grace Hikers at Norris Dam

The last event for the Grace Hikers was on July 5<sup>TH</sup>. We had a great group, with the Dagleys bringing a friend and the Cumberlands, including young Flora, joining us. It was hot, hotter than had been for a few weeks. By the river, close to the dam, it was cooler and right next to the water on the trail were chilly spots where the wind brought the cool from the water onto the land. We saw herons and by the time we reached the meadow farther inland, the heat had settled in. We went the entire length of the Songbird Trail, then met at Golden Girls for some Southern comfort food. All in all, it was a nice hike.

Due to the heat mentioned above, **our next adventure will be October 4 at the UT Arboretum**. The season will just be turning, and the woods should be fabulous to visit. Join us then.





## Troop 224 Summer Camp

Boy Scout Troop 224 has been a part of Grace for many years. This summer they went on a trip to the Boundary Waters in Minnesota. Scout Gene Frazer wrote about their trip for *The Light*.

Every scout who was going on the trip met at the Knoxville airport and boarded the first plane. This then took them to the Chicago airport, and finally the Duluth airport. The scouts were then picked up and driven to the outfitters who supplied packs, food, canoes, and shelter. The troop stayed the night in a few cabins provided and got up early to leave (around 7:00 am), and were transported by motor boat to the first portage. The troop was now split into two separate groups, and they stayed separate for most of the rest of the time in the wilderness. The first troop portaged fast and set out at a steady pace, portaging three more times before reaching their first campsite, where they set up camp and had steak and potatoes for dinner. On the second day, the group set out early and portaged around 4 times before finding their second campsite around lunch time. Two of the boys decided to build a sailboat around this time, using an aluminum canoe and large dead logs they had found, the reason for the dead logs being that people exploring the boundary waters were not allowed to cut

down live trees. The first attempt they did consisted of a triangular sail design and a small mast of no more than five feet high. It failed. The second attempt they used larger sticks to make a mast and boom (roughly 6 feet high), but when they went out the central crossbeam broke and they were disheartened. This was also the day that the second group stumbled upon the first group and were displeased to find that the first group had beaten them to the campsite.

The typical days continued on, setting out early after breakfast, portaging a few times, stopping at the campsite to make lunch, and then lounging around until dinner and the bugs came. This went on for two days until on the fifth day, the first group decided to stay at their campsite for two days, allowing a day of rest. It started out with pancakes for breakfast and then the same two boys decided to have another go at making a sailboat. This time they decided to use an A-frame for the mast. This mast reached about fifteen feet in height and it used all of the sail (a rainfly for one of the tents). It took about five tries to work, but when the sailboat worked, it worked well! Everyone in group 1 was happy for the rest of that day. On the sixth day (and the third to last day) the sky grew smoky and the first group had trouble going the right way, but they eventually got back on track after having to eat lunch on a rock in the middle of a lake. The day continued normally after that. On the second to last day, the first group came upon large cliffs with water for falling underneath, so the boys in that group decided to jump. But just as they were leaving group 2 came upon them but decided to stay a bit for the jumping rocks. On the last day, everyone was tired, the lunch and dinner were half-hearted and two of the first group boys decided to visit the second group. They were also sent to steal group 2's toilet paper, but they failed miserably. On the first day back in civilization, everyone went back to the first portage and was boated back to the outfitters where everyone showered and eventually were picked up and taken back to the Duluth airport. The flight to Chicago was delayed so that made the troop wait a long time before eventually heading back to Knoxville with a connecting flight through Chicago. The troop arrived in Knoxville around 1:00 am.





The annual Grace Lutheran Church Women's Tea was held on Sunday, August 31, 2025 in the Fellowship Hall. Everyone enjoyed good food and great conversation.



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You can donate once, weekly or monthly.



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