

Grace United Methodist Church

Monthly Newsletter

August 2026



Sunday Worship Service
is at 10:00 AM

Communion is offered on the
1st Sunday of the month.



"BYOD" Meeting on Tuesdays at 9:00 AM
Pastor Stephanie & Beth Buettner at ICD Training on Tues. & Wed., Aug 11th and 12th all day.
Church Office Closed on Tues. & Wed., Aug. 11th and 12th.
UWF Meeting on Thurs., Aug. 13th at 10:00 AM.
Stewardship Retreat at Pine Lake on Fri. and Sat., Aug. 14th and 15th.
Pastor Stephanie at Heartland House on Thurs., Aug. 20th at 10:00 AM.
Seniors on the Move Trip to Rawhide Youth Services on Thurs., Aug. 27th. Meet at the church at 8:30 AM.

SPECIAL PRAYERS FOR BACK TO SCHOOL

A Prayer for Children Going to School

Dear Jesus, you who promise to be with me always, I pray that you would be with me today as I go to school. Bless my going and my coming. Bless my learning and my playing. Please protect my heart from fear. Please keep me safe. Please give me good friends. Give me joy this day and thank you for loving me from head to toe. In your name. Amen.

A Prayer for High School & College Students

O Lord, you who promise to be with me always, be with me this day as I begin my schoolwork. Keep me in health, I pray, and keep me from harm. In all that I do and say, may I love you with all my heart, mind, soul and strength, and may I love my neighbor as myself, so that I might fulfill your purposes for me and your calling on my life as a student. In Christ's name. Amen.

A Prayer for Parents

O Lord, you who promise to guide us through the wilderness and to protect us through the storm, we ask that you would make us wise where we cannot clearly see the way forward, make us brave where we feel afraid, make us strong in the face of our weakness, and make possible what to us seems impossible, so that we might joyfully entrust ourselves and our children into your tender care in these trying and troubling times. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A Prayer for Teachers

O Lord, you who have called and equipped the teachers in our community, we pray for them today. Watch over them, provide for them, guide them, sustain them. May you be their sun and shield, so that they might do the work that you have entrusted to them and sense your care in these uncertain times. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A Prayer for School Administrators

O God, you who have promised wisdom to all who would ask it, we pray today for school administrators, that you would grant them clarity of mind, unity of spirit, strength of will, a heart of wisdom and the gift of your truth-bearing Spirit, so that they might be enabled to make decisions that lead to the flourishing of their teachers, staff, and students and to the wellbeing of the whole community. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Missions



Dear Grace Methodist Church Members,

Thank you for being part of the 7th Annual Golf for Hope Charity Event! Because of your incredible support, TreeHouse Central can continue providing a safe and welcoming place for teens through weekly programming, mentoring, group outings, activities, retreats and FREE transportation for those who need it most.

The energy, generosity, laughter, and support of the course this year was absolutely unforgettable. From our golfers and sponsors to volunteers, donors, and every person who helped spread the word—Thank you for believing in this mission and making this event one of the biggest and best yet.

With gratitude,

Bridgett Henschel
Area Director
920-385-6683
director@treehousecentralwi.org



Grace also received the following thank you from Jade, a member of the TreeHouse group: *“Dear Methodist Church, Judie Batterman. I want to thank you for being here in this world. You are a really great team to make us food in your own time. Thank you for being you.”*

Thank you also to Sara S, Liz S, Cindy W, Crystal C, Shelley R, and Heidi B for preparing the July 21st meal for our Treehouse Kids.



25th Annual Back to School Bash is being held Friday, July 24th. Over 400 children will receive a backpack filled with school supplies.

Thank you to Grace for your generous donation of \$375.00.



“BLESSING BAGS” IS OUR NEXT BIG MISSION PROJECT COMING SOON!

We need to raise \$1000 to join our area churches for another fun day of rice packing. This year the Wild Rose Methodist Church will host the event. We will also be looking for about 12-14 worker bees... 4 of the line work duties can be done while sitting in a chair. Please join us for a fun, heart-filled day of giving our hearts and time to give God's people a nutritious meal.

(\$2 makes 1 blessing bag that feeds 6 people). Our \$1000 donation will feed 3000.

Let's do that and more!

Becoming the Church God Is Calling Us to Be
Part 1: More Than a Building—What Kind of Church Are We Becoming?

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

Acts 2:42, 47

Dear Friends,

If someone asked you to describe Grace United Methodist Church, what would you say?

Perhaps you would mention our beautiful sanctuary, our long history, our caring congregation, our worship services, or our many ministries. All of those are wonderful gifts from God, and they are certainly part of who we are. But there is something even more important that defines a church.

- * It isn't the building.
- * It isn't the denomination.
- * It isn't the music.
- * It isn't even the programs.
- * It is something less visible, but much more powerful.
- * **It is called culture.**

Culture is simply "the way we do things around here."

It is the **atmosphere** people experience the moment they walk through our doors. **It is how we greet visitors, how we speak to one another, how we pray, how we worship, how we forgive, how we serve, and how we care for people during life's joys and sorrows.**

Every church has a culture. The question isn't whether we have one. The question is: **What kind of church is God calling Grace Church to become?**

When I read Acts 2, I see a church with a remarkable culture. They were devoted to learning God's Word. They enjoyed genuine fellowship. They prayed together. They shared generously with those in need. They worshiped with joy and sincere hearts. Their faith wasn't confined to one hour on Sunday morning—it shaped the way they lived every day.

Notice something important. Those weren't simply church programs. They were habits. They were values. They were the natural way followers of Jesus treated one another. That was their culture.

As I pray about the future of Grace Church, I believe God is inviting us to cultivate that same kind of culture. I pray we become known as a church where:

- * Prayer comes before planning.
- * Love comes before judgment.
- * Welcome comes before assumptions.
- * Compassion comes before criticism.
- * Hope overcomes discouragement.
- * Mission matters more than maintenance.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if people in our community described Grace Church by saying:

"Those people truly care about others."

"I felt welcomed the moment I walked in."

"They really pray for one another."

"There is something different about that church."

"I experienced the love of Jesus there."

From the Pastor's Desk

Here's the encouraging news: church culture isn't created only by pastors or church leaders. Every one of us helps shape it.

- * Every smile. Every handshake.
- * Every prayer. Every invitation.
- * Every encouraging word.
- * Every visit. Every act of kindness.
- * Every conversation after worship.
- * Every time we choose grace instead of criticism.

Every member contributes to the atmosphere others experience.

Over the coming months, I hope we'll continue talking about the kind of church God is calling us to become. **Together, let's pray that Grace Church becomes a place where people don't simply attend worship—they encounter Christ, discover hope, experience authentic community, and find a place to grow as disciples.**

I'd like to leave you with one final thought. **Someone once observed, "People may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel." I believe that's especially true in the Church.**

Years from now, people may not remember every sermon that was preached, every hymn that was sung, every announcement that was made, or every church event we held. They may not remember the flowers on the altar or the order of worship.

But they will remember how we made them feel.

- * Did they feel welcomed?
- * Did they feel accepted?
- * Did they feel noticed?
- * Did they feel valued?
- * Did they feel loved?

Most importantly...Did the people who came today encounter Jesus through us?

That is the kind of church I believe God is calling Grace Church to become.

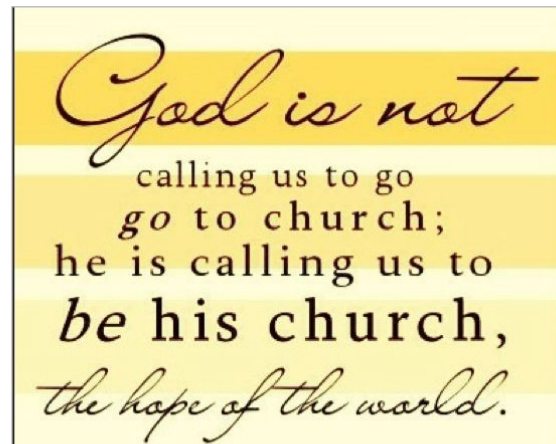
My prayer is that every person who walks through our doors leaves saying, "I felt loved." Because when people experience the genuine love of Christ through His people, they begin to discover the One who loves them even more than we ever could.

May Grace Church always be known as a place where the love of Jesus is not only preached—it is experienced!

Grace and peace,

Pastor Stephanie

Rev. Stephanie J. Taylor





RaiseRight™

For those participating in RaiseRight, thank you. It has helped tremendously in meeting our Apportionments.

There are several folks who have asked how to set up an account on-line so they will be able to shop for cards anytime. If you have a computer, tablet or smart phone, it is very simple. Allie and I are willing to do a quick show and tell either before or after Sunday service. I also have a print out with the directions; just stop by the table on Sunday or send an email to gumctreasurer@yahoo.com and I can email a copy to you.

Having an on-line account tied to your bank account means you can send egift cards to friends and family for any occasion. It is also convenient when you are shopping and you find something you like or need. You can open the app, buy the ecards, and in 2 or 3 minutes check out with the ecard. The church gets the rebate, because when you set up your account, you will get our PIN # and all purchases are credited to our account.

More Questions? Just ask Al Erdman, George Louthain or me. We are happy to welcome you to the RaiseRight on-line group.



THRIVENT FINANCIAL®

**Good News if you are a Thrivent Investor!
Thrivent has changed their Choice program.**

Thrivent Choice is their grant program that makes funds available to charitable organizations. If you are an investor, the funds do not come from your account but from Thrivent's Choice account. Funds received from the Choice program in your name are not tax deductible.

Thrivent has now upgraded the program to make it even easier for Thrivent members to give generously. In the past, only select members could access Choice funds. Now all members can receive Choice dollars. Members are now able to get the full amount available to them at the start of the year. As a result, members can direct the funds anytime through December 31st.

Grace United Methodist Church is a participating organization which means you may direct your Choice funds to the church, if you wish. For those of you who have directed your Choice funds in the past, thank you, and for those who now have access to these funds, thank you for considering Grace Church.

Stewardship

DO NOT FEAR

Lyle and I have been on the road a great deal lately. Which is why we haven't been in church.

Our most recent trip was to visit our son and family in Houghton, Michigan. It's a long way up there folks! We happened to be there over the weekend, and our son mentioned that there was a Methodist church downtown if we wanted to check it out. ICD suggests we visit many houses of worship to see how other congregations worship; so we attended Grace United Methodist Church of Houghton. It was the first church in the area and has been designated a state historical building. Beautiful church, very welcoming people, and a very spiritual service.

On the front of their bulletin was the Bible verse Isaiah 41:10 "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." I am a Christian and believe in God and Jesus Christ as my Savior—and I still fear. We hear the news, read the papers, and talk among ourselves about what a scary and crazy place our world is. As a disciple I have a rock to lean on during those scary, dark times of fear and doubt. What do the non-believers do when they are suffering and scared and do not know how God can give them strength and hope?

Stewardship is about sharing the love of God with others, not in a "preachy" way but in an authentic and caring way. When you are in the store and the clerk is having a bad day do you have the courage to ask that person if you can pray for them? Simple, helpful acts of kindness are a way of spreading the love of God and potentially encouraging someone to seek God by attending a house of worship.

I am reading another book for ICD by Ken Willard titled BEACON OF HOPE. He says "Our churches must become lighthouses. Showing the way. Welcoming others home. A true beacon of hope in a world desperate for hope and healing."

Every day presents each of us opportunities to share God's love, and I pray that you seize these opportunities to give struggling, hurting, and fearful people a peek into the love and peace of Jesus Christ.

Beth Buettner
Stewardship Chair

YOU ARE WHERE YOU NEED TO BE

"You got hammered at the bar on Saturday but came to church on Sunday....You can sit with me. You're right where you need to be.

You're a drug addict but came to church on Sunday....You can sit with me. You're right where you need to be.

You're divorced, and the last church you attended condemned you for it....You can sit with me. You're right where you need to be.

You've had an abortion and it's slowly eating away at your heart, but you came to church on Sunday....You can sit with me. You're right where you need to be.

You've been unfaithful to your spouse but came to church on Sunday....You can sit with me. You're right where you need to be.

Here's the thing, people don't come to church on Sunday for you to sit in the pew and quietly judge them because you feel that you're somehow better than them.

"People come to church because in their deepest, darkest, most painful moments they heard about a man named Jesus who could save their soul and they'd like to know Him."

Mark 2:17

On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

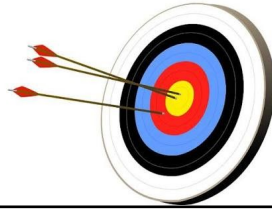


You belong in
God's household
with every
other Christian.

Ephesians 2:19 TLB

Seniors on the Move

GOAL SETTING



LET'S MAKE IT OUR GOAL.....

**PAY 100% OF OUR APPORTIONMENT
FOR THIS YEAR!!**

**ONLY 4 MONTHS LEFT TO
ACHIEVE THIS GOAL!!**



SENIORS ON THE MOVE

We will be visiting Rawhide Youth Services in New London on Aug. 27th. This business provides residential and outpatient services for at-risk youth and their families. The campus focuses on mental health, emotional and behavioral challenges through therapy, education, and job training.

This bus-guided tour will be about one hour long. After that we will visit the Bart and Cherry Starr museum which is located on the same site as Rawhide. Lunch will also be there at their upstairs café. The cold buffet will consist of ham and turkey sandwiches, fresh fruit and lettuce salads, potato chips, coffee, tea or milk and a cookie for dessert. There isn't any cost for the tour but the lunch will be \$12.00 per person.

Upon arrival, each of us will be given a packet which will be filled with information about Rawhides history-past, present, and future including ways on how to donate to its many programs that it provides to troubled youth.

Please be at the church by 8:30 so that we can be in our cars for a 8:45 departure. The tour begins at 10:00

A sign up sheet will be in Fellowship Hall by Aug. 2nd. Please pay the \$12.00 at the time of sign up and also indicate if you are willing to drive and to take passengers with you. Deadline for sign up is Aug. 24th.

Thank you.



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
						<i>1</i>
2 10:00 AM Worship <i>Communion</i>	3 .	4 9:00 AM Men's "BYOD"	5	6	7 Church Office Closed	8
9 10:00 AM Worship	10	11 9:00 AM Men's "BYOD" Pastor Stephanie at ICD Training Church Office Closed		13 10:00 AM UWF Mtg.	14 Church Office Closed Stewardship Retreat at Pine Lake Camp	
16 10:00 AM Worship	17	18 9:00 AM Men's "BYOD"	19	20 10:00 AM Pastor Stephanie at Heartland House	21 Church Office Closed	22
23 10:00 AM Worship	24	25 9:00 AM Men's "BYOD"	26	27 8:30 AM Seniors on the Move Trip to Rawhide Youth Services. (Meet at the church.)	28 Church Office Closed	29
30 10:00 AM Worship	31					