

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

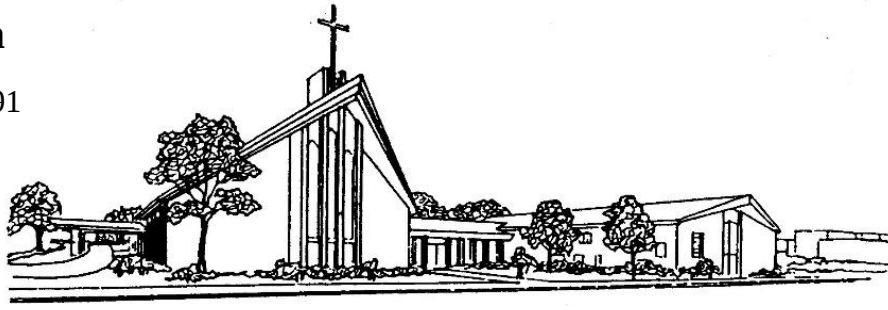
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August 2026 Newsletter

June 8, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes

Attendees Present

Pastor Matt Converse, Joe Freiburger, Maelynn Fries, Linda Grawcock, Deena Hart, Mark Krider, Paul Marken, Beth Moss, Sarah Pearl, Brent Whiteleather

Meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm by President Joe Freiburger

Devotional: Pastor led devotions from Genesis 1. This is the first creation story in the Bible. There were interesting philosophical questions brought up by council. Pastor also shared some of the Babylonian creation story for contrast. This was much more violent. There was also contrast pointed out in the ancient kings claiming to look like God, and verses 26 and 27 with mankind (not the king but all people) being made in God's image.

Minutes from May were reviewed and approved with three typo corrections.

Pastors Report: Pastor gave a verbal overview of his written report. He has some upcoming vacation planned that includes two different Sundays. Pastor also passed out an excerpt from Ryan Burge's latest book *The Vanishing Church*.

Treasurers Report: Deena gave a verbal summary of the May treasurer's report. The May year to date actual number shows there is presently no deficit! The report was approved subject to audit.

Old Business:

- A. Synod Assembly. Joe gave a verbal report. Some highlights include Paul Marken being elected to Synod Council, the ELCA has 2.7 million members in the USA and the Caribbean, the synod is recommending a 2.8% cost of living increase in the coming year, and information was given on Synod Disaster Relief. Our regional gathering will be at Christ the King Lutheran Church in South Bend on October 24th. Joe will start to publicize this.
- B. First Friday recap. We were really busy giving away balloons and wristbands. There was a long line for a while. We handed out 154 wristbands and balloons. Everyone who worked in the tent had fun.
- C. Offering envelopes list was reviewed. Pastor collected the comments.
- D. Service at Hope July 5 and 19. Hope may be coming to Grace on June 28th.

New Business:

- A. Purchase a smart TV. If a cart is available to go with it, we should get a cart also. Mark agreed to explore options.
- B. Old Settlers Day Noodle Dinner is on June 18th. Sign-up sheets are filling up and things are coming together.
- C. Game Night June 23 6:30-10pm. Linda will give a temple talk on Sunday. We will thaw out the ice cream cake and people can bring snacks to share. Everyone should bring their own beverage.
- D. Columbia City Volunteer Hub. This could be an opportunity to allow people to volunteer at our food pantry (and possibly other things.) It was agreed to sign up with the Hub and start by listing our food pantry as a place where people can volunteer.
- E. No July Council Meeting. Mark moved we do not need a July meeting. Second by Deena. Motion passed unanimously.
- F. Beth volunteers as a nurse at the free clinic. This is for people who do not have any health insurance. She asked if we could mention the free clinic on our electronic sign. Council agreed we can put this on the sign as well as put a poster on a bulletin board.

Team Reports:

Property – Mark. Mark gave a summary of his written report. Mark asked council members to notice the mulch around the trees outside. Maelynn volunteered that Tim can donate some fill dirt that is needed. The North Door replacement will be a major expense in the future. The time to do this replacement is getting closer.

Food Pantry – Joe. Sunday morning donations are going great. We are short on meat and proteins. Bread loaf offering collected for the center was \$121.

Fellowship –Mark. Noodle dinner and game night were discussed previously.

Worship and Music – Paul. Bell choir played in May. Rejoice Choir will play once more in June before summer break. We need to have a meeting soon to plan for next season. We will also have a bell polishing party soon before the bells are put away for the summer.

Christian Ed – Linda. Nothing to report.

Stewardship – Linda. Nothing to report.

Permanent Endowment – Paul. Brad is working on a meeting date. We have a tough meeting coming up with more well-qualified candidates than available scholarships.

Altar Guild – Maelynn. A pew cleaning date will be chosen soon.

Staff Support – Sarah. Nothing to report.

Preschool – Council reviewed Kirsten's written report. The question came up why we don't have an all-day Tuesday/Thursday class. This might be something we could explore further.

Parish Nurse – Beth gave a summary of her written report.

Newsletter articles are due by June 26th. (Earlier is better)

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes prepared by Paul E. Marken. 6/10/2026

Our Food Pantry was recognized in the ELCA Weekly newsletter. Thanks to Dave and all of our volunteers for their hard work for making a difference in our community. We do make a difference.

Hunger Grant Spotlight: Grace Lutheran Food Pantry

Grace Lutheran Food Pantry in Columbia City is helping ensure that neighbors facing food insecurity have access to nutritious meals through an innovative and highly cost-effective voucher program.

The pantry was recently awarded an Indiana-Kentucky Synod Hunger Grant, helping strengthen this important ministry.

Through its partnership with Community Harvest Food Bank in Fort Wayne, Grace Lutheran provides vouchers that allow qualified clients to receive food while the pantry pays only a small cost per pound.

In 2025 alone, the program provided more than 82,500 pounds of food to local families at a cost of just over \$10,000, demonstrating how every dollar invested can make a significant impact.

Prayer Request

If someone you know needs some extra prayers through a hard time or sickness, please email the office at Prayers.gracelutheran@gmail.com

Or you can call someone on the Care Team:

Jane Straub: 260-229-1118

Linda Trowbridge 260-229-1815

Linda Grawcock 260-609-5037

Ann Wolfe 260-609-5920

Sandy Whiteleather 260-503-4281

Join us for fellowship hour immediately following the service.

THANK YOU

to all the wonderful people who donated their time and yummy treats each week!!!

Food Pantry needs this month : Cereal

Also food pantry needs Plastic bags (Walmart, Kroger's, ect) and Egg cartons.

Important Email addresses

Church business and bulletin items:

Office.gracelutheran@gmail.com

Newsletter articles (due by the 21th of the month):

Newsletter.gracelutheran@gmail.com

Prayer Chain requests:

prayers.gracelutheran@gmail.com

Purpose statement: Empowered by Jesus to participate in God's work with our community.

Guiding Principles:

- Always growing Relationships with God, one another, and the world
- God is at work in the world and we get to participate
- Trusting that God equips us, we understand and serve the needs of our community and world
- Music and worship are expressions of the Holy Spirit in this place.
- Each one has something to contribute
- All are on a journey, still traveling and searching
- We can walk arm in arm without seeing eye to eye



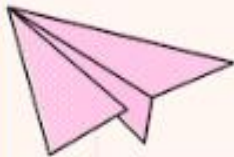
Thank you, Grace & Hope members, serving the Pork Chop dinner at 4-H Fair.

A special thank you to the carry out gang: Mark, Keith, Mike & Ellie.

The 2-4 shift: Paul, Holly & Jim Marken and Sandy Whiteleather, Pastor matt Converse.



BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS



Grace Lutheran Church
204 N Main street, Columbia City, IN
August 30th.2026
10 AM



**Come get your bookbags blessed, and
enjoy refreshments after service.
Everyone is invited - Students,
Teachers, Aides, Bus drivers,
Principals, Lunch helpers.**



GARAGE SALE



6-8
AUG

Grace Lutheran church
204 North Main St Columbia City, In
260-244-7118 ext 1

Join the IN-KY Synod

AT A REGIONAL GATHERING

This is a wonderful opportunity to connect with others from across the synod, share ideas, and grow together in faith and ministry.

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|---------------------------------------|
|  | 9:30 a.m. | Gathering, Coffee & Donuts |
|  | 10:00 a.m. | Opening Worship with Holy Communion |
|  | 11:10 a.m. | Breakout Session 1 |
|  | 12:30 p.m. | Catered Lunch |
|  | 2:00 p.m. | Breakout Session 2 |
|  | 3:30 p.m. | Closing, Spiritual Practice & Sending |



Registration is \$30 per person.
Use code **EARLYBIRD** for 50% off
through August 31.

**REGISTRATION CLOSSES AT
MIDNIGHT ON SEPTEMBER 14.**

**REGISTER
TODAY!**



Indiana-Kentucky Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

We have a great opportunity for worship, fellowship and to meet members of our synod coming in October. During the online synod meeting in May, it was brought to our attention that there would be Regional Gatherings throughout our Synod in the fall. There are 3 different meetings across the Synod and we will be attending the meeting in South Bend on October 24. Look at the attached flyer for details. We will plan on meeting at Grace and leave at 7:45am and car pool up to Christ the King Lutheran Church in South Bend. We will need a couple of drivers. We would like to register anyone who wants to go by August 31 to get a 50% off registration fee. Lunch will be provided. I will be covering this during morning announcements for the next month. Please see Pastor Matt or Joe Freiburger for more details.

First Friday

We have had a great time handing out balloons and wristbands to the kids while promoting our preschool and food pantry. May was chilly and we had a breeze, but the community was out in force and the event was pretty well attended. We ended up handing out about a 100 balloons and wristbands. June's event was very crowded and we had lines of smiling faces waiting to get their balloon and wristband. Then came the rain and wind and our flyers went flying everywhere. We had 3 tanks of helium and ran out of helium but kept blowing them up with our mouths. We ended up handing out approximately 150 balloons and wristbands. More than any other First Friday event. We had a bunch of helpers and I would like to thank Mariah for getting all our wristbands tied with ribbon, Pastor, Kirsten, Kenzee, Keith, Mark, Bill, Maelynn, Linda, Ariel. The next First Friday is August 7th. The theme is Carnival on the Square with Los Electro from 6 to 9pm. We are in booth 167 down from the post office and across the street. If you would like to join us, see Joe Freiburger. Hope to see you there.





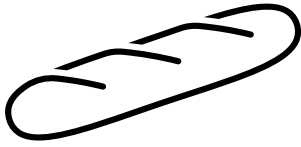
The June Meeting began with the singing of a Blessing to the tune of "Eidleweiss." The meal consisted of pancakes, syrup, egg casserole, sausages, fruit and orange juice.

Following the meal Ann Wolfe led the business meeting starting with the coming Garage Sale. Linda Grawcock told about the need for workers and items for the sale. Items can be brought beginning on July 26th. The sale is on August 6, 7 and a half day on the 8th. Linda needs help so let her know if you can help with this fund raiser.

There will be no meetings in July and August. The September 15th Meeting will be for the assembling of Personal Care Kits. A list of needs can be found on the W L C A Bulletin Board. Last year Adelphi put together 17 kits for Lutheran World Relief! Members are asked to bring a sack lunch on that day.

There was a motion to move funds from the W E L C A account to the Adelphi account. The motion was seconded and moved.

Our special guest for the day was Bill Owen who told us about Maple Acres and his maple syrup business. He took us through the process stating that he started when he was 6 years old helping his grandfather! There were 4 years when he was in the service that his brother helped out. The process has seen many improvements over the years. He has 140 acres of trees with 14 miles of tubing which the squirrels (mortal enemies) love to chew on! He and his maple products can be found at various markets such as the Barr Street Market in Fort Wayne. He belongs to the Maple Syrup Association. He will be cutting wood this summer to be burned in the boiling process. Thank you Bill for giving us a new appreciation of what goes into making Maple Syrup!!



Bread Loaf Offering 2026

We will continue the same format for bread Loaf Offerings that we have been doing for the last 2 years. On the first Sunday of the month, we will announce which organization will benefit from the offering. We will be passing around 2 Bread Loaf Baskets. The following Sundays, the Bread Loaf basket will be in the Narthex next to the collection plate. Here is a list of the recipients that will receive the Bread Loaf offering each month. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to Joe Freiburger, Pastor or any other church council member, Thank You for all your support and donations.

Joe Freiburger

January- Whitley County Ministerial Association (Energy Assistance) c/o
Craig Allen Myers 169 E 600 S-57 Churubusco In. 46723

February- Campus Ministries

March- Gafkjen Endowment Fund

April- Synod Disaster Relief Response

May- The Center

June- Gideons

July- Babe

August- Lutheran Senior Care Ministries

September- Grace Lutheran Preschool

October- Fire Fighters Christmas Candy Handout

November- Mission 25 Giving Tree

December- Grace Lutheran Food Pantry



August Birthdays



Birthdays

CONVERSE, Kim	08/02
DARSTEIN, Tyler	08/04
BALL, Carol	08/05
PARISH, Arden	08/11
HORMAN, Vanessa	08/12
KAMERZELL, Kathleen	08/16
FAIRCHILD, Jordon	08/20
PEARL, Brad	08/24
LAMLE, Gary	08/30
LAMLE, Nadean	08/30

1st Sunday-Sunday School

1st Sunday- Bp check

2nd Sunday- Confirmation

3rd Sunday- Sunday school

4th Sunday- Adult Sunday school

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Christian Holidays, Holidays in United States

Aug 2026 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship	27 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	28 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 4pm - Whitley County 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082	29 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	30 8am - Life Line Screening 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	31 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	1
2 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Blood Pressure 11:15am - Fellowship	3 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Property Team 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	4 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082	5 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	6 8am - Garage sale 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	7 Pastor's Day Off 8am - Garage sale 12pm - Food pantry	8 8am - Garage sale
9 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship 1pm - Worship @Oakes	10 12:30pm - Helping Hands 5:30pm - Financial Team 6:30pm - Church Council 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America	11 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082 6:30pm - Sigma Eta	12 WCCS First day of school 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher 6pm - District	13 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	14 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	15 Assumption of Mary
16 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship 11:15am - Sunday School	17 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	18 9am - T.O.P.S. 10:30am - Care Team 11:30am - Adelpal Group 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6pm - Pre-k open house 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082	19 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher 6pm - Pre-k Open House	20 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	21 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	22
23 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship	24 8:30am - Pre-k 3day First 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	25 8:30am - pre-k 2day First 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 4pm - Whitley County 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082	26 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	27 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	28 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	29
30 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship	31 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	1 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6:30pm - Cub Scouts 3082	2 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	3 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	4 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	5

Worship At Hope Sundays at 8:15am
Worship with Holy Communion at Grace
Sundays at 10am

LIVE on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/gracelutherancolumbiacity

Upcoming Important dates...

August 6-8 Garage sale

August 30- Blessing backpacks