

## Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

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# June 2026 Newsletter

## From the Pastor

### Whose Authority? Reading Romans 13 in Election Season

Every election cycle, as the midterm elections come into view, someone will likely quote the Bible to settle political questions. One of the most common passages is Romans 13:1–7: “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities” (NRSVue).

So, here is a different kind of voting guide. It is neither Republican nor Democrat. It will not tell you which candidate to support.

Christians of good faith—and with deep commitments to Scripture—often arrive at different conclusions in the voting booth. No political party has a claim on God, and no candidate can wrap themselves in divine approval. But Christians are called to ask whether our political life reflects the character of the God revealed in Jesus Christ.

It begins with a question: What kind of authority does Scripture imagine?

Romans 13 is often treated as though Paul were writing a timeless political handbook or giving rulers divine approval. But Paul was writing a letter to

small, vulnerable Christian communities in Rome. He was not addressing emperors, governors, or political leaders. He was speaking to Christians trying to live faithfully under an empire they did not control.

The immediate concern seems practical: avoid unnecessary conflict, pay taxes, and do not get swept into resistance movements that could bring suffering on already precarious communities.

That context matters.

Paul does say authorities are “instituted by God” (Romans 13:1). But that does not mean authorities are divine, unquestionable, or automatically righteous. In Scripture, authority coming from God means authority is borrowed authority.

Paul already reminded his readers that God worked even through Pharaoh (Romans 9:17). Elsewhere, God uses foreign kings and nations for larger purposes. Scripture consistently presents rulers as accountable to God, not as God’s stand-ins.

Romans 13 never says government actions are automatically good. It says authority itself is not ultimate.

And which God institutes authority?

Paul has already answered that question. The God revealed in Romans is the God embodied in the crucified Christ. Not Jupiter enthroned or Mars victorious, but the God revealed in the crucified Christ, whose power appears as self-giving love.

That matters because the cross reshapes how power is understood.

Authority, in a Christian imagination, is not measured by force, popularity, fear, or the ability to remove people, defeat enemies, or win arguments. It is measured by whether it serves life, seeks peace, protects the vulnerable, and reflects love of neighbor.

Interestingly, Romans 13 does not end with obedience. It ends by moving directly into: “Owe no one anything, except to love one another” (Romans 13:8).

Christians may disagree about policies, parties, and candidates. But our political choices should remain open to critique and correction by the gospel, because our deepest allegiance belongs not to a platform but to the kingdom of God.

So perhaps that is the closest thing Christians have to a voting guide.

Not: Which party does God belong to?

But: Which visions of power most resemble the crucified Christ?

## March 9, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes

Present- Paster Matt Converse, Joe Freiburger, Linda Grawcock, Deena Hart, Mark Krider, Paul Marken, Beth Moss, Sarah Pearl, Brent Whiteleather

Absent - Maelynn Fries

Meeting was called to order at 6:29 pm by President Joe Freiburger

Devotional: Pastor led devotions from Genesis 24:1-27. This is the story of Rebekah being chosen to be Isaac's wife. It is believed this passage was written much later than when it takes place. Possibly between 500 and 400 B.C.

Minutes from February were reviewed and approved as submitted. The minutes from the congregational meeting were also reviewed and approved as submitted.

Pastors Report: Pastor gave a verbal overview of his written report. Pastor mentioned that the Synod Assembly will be on-line this year and will be Saturday June 6 th . Pastor also mentioned that Paul Marken will be our nominee to serve as the male, northeast conference, representative on Synod Council. He also mentioned that since Paul was the only nominee, there is a good chance he will be elected. Joe will advertise the need for congregational representation at the on-line Synod assembly on June 6 th . A male and a female delegate are needed.

Treasurers Report: Deena gave a summary of the February treasurer's reports. The report was approved subject to audit.

Election of Council Officers Mark nominated Joe to remain as president for a second term. Second by Paul.

Mark is willing to stay on as Vice-President. Second by Sarah. It was suggested by Joe that Paul should remain as secretary, second by Linda. After discussion, a vote was taken and the election of council officers was

unanimous. President Joe Freiburger. Vice-President Mark Krider. Secretary Paul Marken.

#### Old Business:

A) Tenderloin Fry – Mark presented the results of the tenderloin fry along with a written report.

B) Lenten Service – is all set for tomorrow.

C) Preschool Fish Fry and Silent auction. March 18 th . A sign up sheet might get passed around for this but there might not be many spaces left as the preschool families have been very supportive.

D) Game Night. April 21 st is scheduled for our Game Night. That is the same night as the DQ fundraiser. The church is considering getting a couple cakes from DQ to support the preschool and the game night. Joe to consider how they could be decorated.

E) PALs group. Sandy (the convener) needed to check with Mission 25 people to see if the group is allowed

to meet off-site. Since they acquired a building for meetings, they prefer to have meetings take place there.

#### New Business:

A) Easter breakfast April 5. 8:00 has been the traditional start time for breakfast. We will keep this the same. Our normal service time of 10AM will also remain There will not be a sign up sheet for Easter breakfast. People will just bring what they want to.

B) Easter Services - Maundy Thursday service will be at Grace at 7PM. Good Friday service will be at Hope at 7PM.

#### Team Reports:

Property – Mark. Property did not meet this month. Gary Green has volunteered to mow grass again this year. We accepted his proposal.

Food Pantry – Joe. No written report this month. The pantry is currently full, which is great. Joe also gave a report on the bread loaf offering.

Fellowship –Mark. There is a lot going on with the Easter breakfast, Tenderloin fry, and game night. Mark didn't have anything additional to share.

Worship and Music – Paul. Nothing new to report.

Christian Ed – Linda. There has not been a lot of Sunday school as of late. Linda has been in Florida and Mackenna has had Show Choir the last few weeks. There also has been some weeks where there were no students.

Stewardship – Linda. Beth mentioned that in three years she has not seen offering envelopes or even much discussion about weekly giving. She suggested that perhaps it is time to emphasize this again. Linda will consider doing another temple talk.

Permanent Endowment – Paul. Nothing to report at this time.

Altar Guild – Maelynn. Joe is concerned that no one has signed up for Alter guild for April and June. Joe will make an announcement that this is available.

Staff Support – Sarah. Nothing to report.

Preschool – Council reviewed Kirsten's written report.

Parish Nurse – Beth gave a summary of her written report. She also suggested she could give a talk if that might be of interest. Perhaps this could be done during coffee hour. The first one could possibly be about what a Parish Nurse does. It was suggested she pick a date far enough out that this is advertised in the newsletter. Council encouraged her to do all she wanted in this area.

Newsletter articles are due by March 25 th .

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 pm with the Lord's Prayer.

Minutes prepared by Paul E. Marken. 3/10/26

**As we approach the graduation of our daughter, Ellie Driver, we want to personally invite you to celebrate her high school success and achievement. Please join us on June 6th, 2p-6p.  
5674 North 350 East Columbia City.**

**We would like to invite everyone to a graduation party in celebration of Holly's graduation from Columbia City High School. The party will be on Sunday, June 14 from 2-5 pm at our house, 5240 N 550 W Columbia City. We hope you will be able to help us celebrate all of Holly's accomplishments. Ted and Alison**

## 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](mailto: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

Beth Moss 239-293-5233

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](mailto:Office.gracelutheran@gmail.com)

Newsletter articles (due by the 21<sup>th</sup> of the month):

[Newsletter.gracelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:Newsletter.gracelutheran@gmail.com)

Prayer Chain requests:

[prayers.gracelutheran@gmail.com](mailto: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

## 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

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



Adelphi Group did not meet in May but will get together on June 16th. Bill Owen will be telling about his Maple Syrup farm. We will be enjoying pancakes with SYRUP for our meal!

There is a collection box in the Fellowship Hall for items to donate to Mission 25. Pillows, pillow cases, men's hygiene products, clear fabric softener and dishwasher pods are suggested items.

The box for donated bras can also be found in the Fellowship Hall. We should plan to send the box out by September.

A Garage Sale is coming August 6, 7 and 1/2 day on the 8th. You may start bringing your items the first week in July.

Hope to see you at the OSD Noodle Dinner and at the 4-H Fair. If you can volunteer to help please do!

Save the date: Adelphi ladies are in charge of the 4-H Pork Chop dinner Sunday, July 19. The serving time is 11-2 and 2-4.

If you would like to volunteer let Linda Trowbridge know.

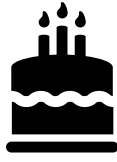
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday-Sunday School

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday- blood pressure checks

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday- Confirmation

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday- Sunday school

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday- Adult Sunday school



## June Birthdays



FAIRCHILD, Shelby	06/01
SMITH, C. Taron	06/04
MORSCHES, Robert	06/08
FRIES, Maelynn	06/12
TRIER, Leanna	06/12
BALL, David	06/16
COX, Sharon	06/18
HARTER, Arya	06/20
WILKINSON, Jessalyn	06/21
ERICKSON, Renee	06/22
FRIES, Tim	06/25
GILLARD, Jaden	06/27
VANCE, Chelsey	06/27
LEININGER, Danial	06/30
MARKEN, Andrew	06/30
SCOTT, Bobbi	06/30
TROWBRIDGE, Linda	06/30

### **Old Settlers Day Noodle Dinner**

**June 18,2026**

**11-2pm and 4-7pm**

**Adult - \$15**

**Children 6 – 12 years old- \$ 6**

**Kids 5 and under- Free**

**Chicken Noodles or Beef and Noodles**



## You're invited to a Life Line Screening event!

Where: **Grace Lutheran Church**  
**204 N. Main St., Columbia City**

When: **Thursday, July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026**

Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk** Screenings.

*Trusted by over 11 million customers.*

Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection.

**Who should attend:**  
Anyone **age of 40+**

### Special Pricing for \$129

- ♥ Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- ♥ Peripheral Artery Disease Screening

#### 4 ways to book your appointment...

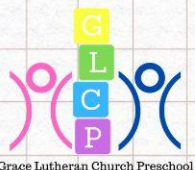
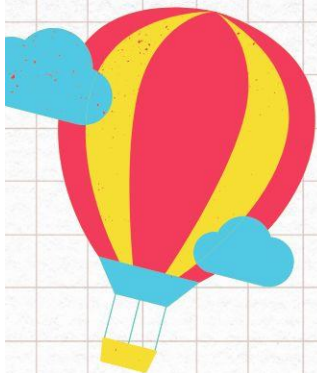
Call **800-324-9458** and use promo code **HABC001**

Visit  [LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC](https://llsa.social/habc)



Text the word "circle" to **216-279-1607**

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease. Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.



GRACE LUTHERAN  
CHURCH PRESCHOOL

# PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION

We are a caring, safe, and nurturing environment with a Christian based education. We believe in offering your children the opportunities to make decisions and solve problems. We engage children in a curriculum that encourages a positive outlook towards school. Our aim is to prepare them for the future and cultivate a lifelong love of learning.

**3-5**  
YEARS  
OLD

**CLASSES OFFERED:**



- | 4-5 year olds     | 3-4 year olds      |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| • MWF 8:30-11:30  | • T/ Th 8:30-11:30 |
| • MWF 12:30- 3:30 | • T/Th 12:30- 3:30 |
| • MWF 8:30-3:30   |                    |

For More Information and to Register  
visit our website

[www.gracecolumbiacity.com](http://www.gracecolumbiacity.com)

Enrollment Information

Contact: Kirsten Jines

260-244-7118 ext. 3

[pregracelutheran@gmail.com](mailto:pregracelutheran@gmail.com)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31 Trinity Sunday 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship	1 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Property Team 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	2 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings	3 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	4 Corpus Christi 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	5 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	6
7 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Blood Pressure 11:15am - Fellowship	8 12:30pm - Helping Hands 5:30pm - Financial Team 6:30pm - Church Council 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	9 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6:30pm - Sigma Eta	10 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	11 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	12 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	13 8am - VerValin Party
14 Flag Day 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship 1pm - Worship @Oakes	15 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	16 Old Settlers Day 9am - T.O.P.S. 10:30am - Care Team 11:30am - Adelphai Group 3:40pm - Staff Meetings	17	18	19	20
21 Father's Day 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship 11:15am - Sunday School	22 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	23 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 6pm - Game Night	24 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	25 11am - Noodle Lunch 4pm - Noodle Dinner 4pm - Noodle Dinner 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	26 Juneteenth Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	27 Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry
28 8:15am - Worship Service 10am - Worship Service 11:15am - Fellowship 12pm - Jagger Family	29 12:30pm - Helping Hands 6:30pm - Scouts America 6:30pm - Scouts America 7:30pm - AA	30 9am - T.O.P.S. 3:40pm - Staff Meetings 4pm - Whitley County	1 8am - Men's Breakfast 12pm - Food Pantry 4pm - Voucher	2 7:30pm - AA 7:30pm - Al-anon	3 Independence Day Pastor's Day Off 12pm - Food pantry	4 Independence Day

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

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**LIVE on Facebook:**

**[www.facebook.com/gracelutherancolumbiacity](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutherancolumbiacity)**

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**Upcoming Important dates...**

June 18<sup>th</sup> -OSD Noodle Dinner 11-2 pm and 4-7 pm

June 23<sup>rd</sup> – Game Night 6 pm