



THE MESSENGER

2026

Worship Schedule
Sunday: 10 am

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
216 North Wooster Ave
Dover Ohio 44622-2948
Phone: 330-343-6915
Fax: 330-602-0263
Church E-Mail:
gracehappens@gracedover.org
Pastor's E-Mail:
pastorphil@gracedover.org
Website: www.gracedover.org

Dear Friends in Christ, April marks the beginning of my 11th month as your Interim Pastor. I am grateful to continue serving as we prepare for changes in leadership. Thank you for the very kind support, prayers, and the many conversations along the way. One of the main tasks of interim ministry is to examine why and how we do ministry. We look at the way we worship and the way we serve. At the same time, we search the deeper question of *WHY* do we do this. While the answer to that can be quite involved, here is one of the basic tenets: we are called by Christ through baptism to be a people of God who worship Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Congregations in the interim learn that growth means change and we have made some important changes to be more in line with teachings and traditions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and to be more welcoming to visitors. For example, this congregation had a long history of using the term Deacon to refer to lay readers and/or communion assistants. The wearing of Deacon's stoles was discontinued. Deacons receive that stole (worn from the shoulder diagonally across the chest) as a sign of Ordination to the Ministry of Word and Service in the ELCA. Deacons are ordained rostered ministers in the ELCA who have had significant seminary education and training.

Another tradition that we let go of was First Sunday Communion coming to the rail to receive the sacrament. That was a meaningful tradition but for safety's sake and so that no one was excluded the church's leadership chose to discontinue that practice.

Under Jeff's and my leadership, we learned parts of another liturgy (Setting 4 in WOV Hymnal, *Light of Christ*).

The Planning Council has agreed that the flags in the church are not required in the worship space and do not properly represent a symbol of the Christian Church. Here is the ELCA's statement providing a quick overview (consult elca.org; search for *Flags in worship space* , for further reading).

The ELCA teaches that flags, as national symbols, are not required in Christian worship spaces and may be divisive, as they can imply that a particular national identity is synonymous with the Christian faith. The most important visual symbols in worship are those that proclaim Christ—such as the assembly, bread and wine, water, scripture, and the cross—which unite all people in Christ beyond national boundaries. Flags may be displayed in other parts of the church building for civic or commemorative purposes, but not in the primary worship center. Each congregation is encouraged to make decisions with pastoral sensitivity and respect for local context, always keeping Christ at the center.

The Planning Council suggests that in May the flags be moved from the sanctuary to another location and the American flag relocated to the Narthex and, if possible, create a wall space for names of veterans or some other way to recognize those who served or are serving. Many congregations will bring the flag into the church on special occasions to highlight the day (Memorial Day, for example), but the flag is not present for most Sundays.

Blessings,
Pastor Phil

Interim Pastor
Rev. Phil Shuart

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Planning Council

PLANNING
COUNCIL

Next Meeting
Tuesday,
May 19, 2026
@ 6:30PM



Congregational Life Meeting - LH
Wednesday, April 8th
3 pm

Endowment Board Meeting - LH
Tuesday, April 28th
7 pm

2024-2026 BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

JulieBrothers - President GaleLimron - VicePresident
Michelle Durben - Secretary John Wolfe - Treasurer

Congregational Life

Gale Limron - Director
SusieErickson
ElaineMargo
BetsyMorris
MelodyRader
JimHeller
JennaLimron

Property

Jim Gibb-Director
NathanVaughan
JeffHootman
LarryWallick
RichardElliott

Christian Faith and Life

Ashley Eick - Director
KarlaBurrier
TiffanyShepherd
DebFoust
(Cody Jerles, Coordinator YFM)

Hospitality

Sarah Wolfe - Director
Marcie Castricone
Melissa Engstrom
Cindy Jerles
Traci Smith
Bobbie Cox
Julie Vanfossen

Stewardship Development

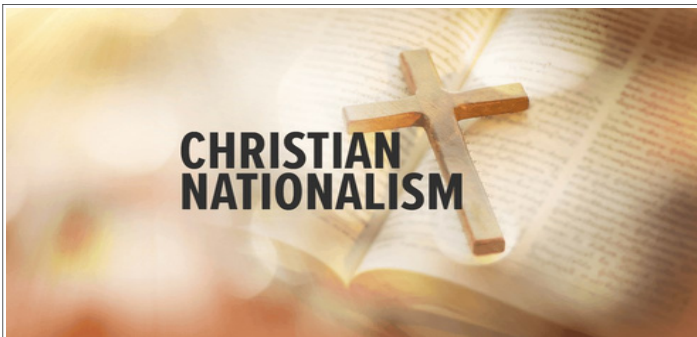
Ron Stahl -Director
Charles Castricone
KeithLands
SarahKneuss

Outreach

Pam Beller - Director
Tim Durben
JoeErickson
IreneMcCoy
JudyMartin
PamKeller

Coordinator of Youth & Family Ministries: Cody Jerles
Director of Music:/Organist : Jeff Beshore
Secretary: Lisa Morris
Treasurer: John Wolfe
Custodian: John Williamson

To Know Christ, To Live Christ, To Share Christ, and To Be One in Christ



What is Christian Nationalism?

The ELCA teaches that Christian nationalism is a distortion of the Christian faith, as it wrongly fuses selected Christian beliefs with U.S. civic life and confuses earthly governments with God's kingdom. Jesus clearly states, "My kingdom does not belong to this world" (John 18:36), and Lutherans affirm that God's kingdom is not a nation, culture, race, or government. For theological reasons, the ELCA rejects Christian nationalism as idolatry and calls for healthy patriotism that seeks justice, kindness, and the well-being of all people.



The Grace Endowment Board is a board developed to help organizations that need assistance. The board sends funding to help our congregation, local community and the world. The board members meet four times per year to gift earnings from the Endowment Fund. The gifts are to help benefit Christian and charity work from missionary work, disaster relief and social programs.

- To request a gift: endowment forms are available in the church office. The forms must be in good order and turned into the church office at least 2 weeks prior to Endowment Board meetings.

The Endowment Board members for this year's term are: Jimm Morris, Jenna Limron, Faith Bambeck, Toni Ferritto, Susan Seifert and Joe Vanfossen.

POWER of PRAYER

Grace Power of Prayer Group
Did you know that we have a Prayer Group?
Prayer requests are shared via the weekly bulletin insert, text messages or our private Facebook Group.

You can share a prayer request using the text group, Facebook group or by contacting Lisa in the office or Becky Lands at 330-340-9542.

To join the text group, please contact Becky. To join the Facebook group, send a Facebook request to Power of Prayer - Grace Lutheran.


Coffee & Conversation

Join us the 3rd Saturday of each month in Luther Hall.
8:30 - 9:30 am
 This time of fellowship is open to women off all ages. Our time together will include coffee, conversation, prayer, devotion and a short program. We will also do a free will offering.
Bring your coffee mug and a friend!

Announcements

Phillip Jr. and Marceil Hammerstrom Scholarship Fund Application

This scholarship was setup by Phillip Jr. in memory of his wife, Marceil, who was in the medical field. Also, in memory of his father, Phillip Sr, who was a machinist. If your field of study is in the **MEDICAL/HEALTH** area, or the **TRADE/INDUSTRY/ENGINEERING** area, you will be considered for this scholarship. Preference is given to active, participating members of Grace Lutheran Church, Dover. Please complete this application and return to the church office no later than April 30th. If awarded a scholarship, the check will be sent directly to your school. Also, the scholarship can be applied for in subsequent years. Any age may apply.

STUDENT NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ E-MAIL _____

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH IN DOVER _____

INTENDED COURSE OF STUDY _____

CAREER OR PROFESSIONAL GOALS _____

NAME, ADDRESS, AND PHONE OF SCHOOL _____

HAVE YOU BEEN ACCEPTED _____

EXPECTED DEGREE AND COMPLETION DATE _____

ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER, COMPOSE A BRIEF 250-WORD ESSAY THAT DESCRIBES HOW YOUR EDUCATIONAL PLAN AND CAREER/ PROFESSIONAL GOALS SERVE GOD AND BENEFIT YOUR COMMUNITY.

(Revised June 2018)



Are you looking for an opportunity to serve God? If so, the Altar Guild is looking for you!

The Altar Guild is currently looking for new members to serve God by preparing the church for Sunday services. There are 6 groups of three who are in charge of getting the church ready for weekly services two months out of the year.

If interested, please contact Pam Keller at 330-401-8343.



The Grace General Scholarship is available to Grace graduates for their **first year of study** at a college, university or trade school. Consideration will be given only to active, participating members of the congregation. Applicants eligible for the Hammerstrom scholarship will not be considered. This scholarship is non renewable.

Applications are available in the office and need to be returned to the office no later than **April 30th**.



We have several vacancies that need filled within our congregation. We desperately need some new faces & fresh ideas - consider this your invitation!

Planning Council Vacancies: we need 2 committee chairs - one for Christian Faith & Life Board and one for Congregational Life Board (this is also VP of planning council) .

Board member vacancies: the following committees are in need of additional members to help lighten the load on our chair people - Christian Faith & Life Board & Outreach Board.

Other volunteer opportunities: the annual Dover Chocolate Walk - a coordinator & a few volunteers to pass out the chocolate; communion assistants & lay readers to assist at Sunday morning services; grocery bag distributors for the Friday grocery bag drive-thru; a high school Sunday School teacher; & finally any musicians who would like to play or sing along with Jeff &/or the gallery choir during church.

Remember the old English proverb "Many hands make light work" . We need some more hands!! If you can help in any way, please contact Lisa in the church office or council president Julie Brothers (cell 419-618-2200) and we will point you in the right direction! Please prayerfully consider what you can do for your church.



CALL COMMITTEE UPDATES

Greetings from the Call Committee.

We conducted two zoom interviews with two candidates on March 17 and March 22. The Committee met at the Church on March 24th to discuss the interviews. Both candidates were wonderful individuals, but the zoom interviews did not result in moving forward with an in person interview with either candidate. The Committee is awaiting for additional Pastors to express interest in applying for the position. We are working closely with the Synod and are optimistic that we will have additional candidates to consider near the end of April or early May. Please keep the Call Committee in your prayers.

Nathan Vaughan Cell (330) 447-3637

PIERSTORF MEMORIAL LOAN FUND

Did you know Ohio Lutheran students have access to interest-free college loans?

The Pierstorf College Fund provides up to \$4,000 per year for Lutheran students enrolled full-time at accredited four-year colleges or universities. Since 1994, this unique ministry has awarded over \$14 million to support students pursuing higher education. Applications for 2026–2027 open March 1 and close June 30. Learn more or apply at: Pierstorf.org

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



The Outreach committee is looking for volunteers to help hand out grocery bags on the first and third Fridays of every month. We hand them out from 10am-1pm and many hands make light work.

Please contact Pam Beller if interested.

Thank you.



If you are graduating this year from high school, college, technical school or receiving an advanced degree, please inform the church office. Please include your name, your school and, if appropriate, your earned degree (BS, MA, PhD, etc.).

May God bless all our graduates as they begin a new chapter in their lives. God be with you on your journey and forever keep you in His grace.

Outreach



Our support of the Tuscarawas County Friends of the Homeless continues. We still offer meals one Sunday a month. Unfortunately during COVID-19 we were forced to help in a different manner. We are taking monetary donations to support the ministry rather than provide homecooked meals. Your financial support is always appreciated.

GROCERY BAG MINISTRY

Grace Outreach Board continues their Drive-Thru Grocery Bag Ministry the 1st and 3rd Fridays of the month from 10 am until supply runs out. The Outreach Board is looking for both monetary gifts and gifts of kind to support this vital ministry.

What goes into a bag to feed the hungry? The basic food items are: peanut butter, canned meat, vegetables, fruit, cereal, soup, macaroni & cheese, canned white potatoes, spaghetti sauce and spaghetti noodles.

Grocery size paper bags are also needed.



Please be Praying for...

All those serving in the armed forces, especially Christopher Smith, Connor Gwynne.

Rita Young
Glenn Siber
Steve Strohl
Richard Siber
Jeff Beshore

Ruth Patrick
Bruce Siber
Pastor Blanch Tyree
Bob Shalosky
Brooke Lester

IN OUR PRAYERS...

Please take a moment to review the names on our church prayer list. If you know the current recovery status, condition, or needs of any person listed, please advise the church office. We rejoice in God's healing and grace when someone is well enough to come off the list and we promise our prayers to all who are added. Thank You.



With Deepest Sympathy

Our deep and heartfelt sympathies are with the family and friends of Jerry Marlowe.

May the Lord embrace this family with His love and bless them with peace.

Worship

OPEN ALTAR FLOWERS

If you would like to provide altar flowers in memory or in honor of loved ones, please either sign up on the list in the Narthex or call the church office at 330-343-6915.

The cost for one vase is \$19.

You will be billed by Blossom's Florist.

Altar Flowers are available for the following dates.



April 12th - 2 vases

April 19th - 2 vases

April 26th - 1 vase

May 3rd - 2 vases

May 17th - 2 vases

May 24th - 2 vases

May 31st - 2 vases



Ladies of Grace Knotters
Lutheran World Relief
Final Project Numbers
for 2025

Quilts: 37
 Health Kits: 10
 Backpacks: 5



Worship Readings

Altar Guild
 Tuesday,
 Apr. 28th, 2026

9 am

Sunday, Apr. 5th
 Acts 10:34-43
 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
 Colossians 3:1-4
 Matthew 28:1-10

Sunday, Apr. 12th
 Acts 2:14a, 22-32
 Psalm 16
 1 Peter 1:3-9
 John 20:19-31

Sunday, Apr. 19th
~~Acts 2:14a, 36-41~~
 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19
 1 Peter 1:17-23
 Luke 24:13-35

Sunday, Apr. 26th
 Acts 2:42-47
 Psalm 23
 1 Peter 2:19-25
 John 10:1-10



Yes, on-line services are here to stay!

Now that the pandemic is over we are continuing to record our 10 am service each Sunday. Weekly on-line services are part of our on-going ministry here at Grace.

Worship Assistants

SUNDAY 10:00 AM WORSHIP

<u>ACOLYTES</u>
Apr. 5
Apr. 12
Apr. 19
Apr. 26

<u>LAY READERS</u>
Apr. 5 Gale Limron
Apr. 12 David Johns
Apr. 19 Betsy Morris
Apr. 26 Reagan Brothers

<u>COMMUNION ASST.</u>
Apr. 5
Apr. 12
Apr. 19 Deborah Horn
Apr. 26

<u>USHERS</u>
Apr. 5 John Lorenz, Ed Harper
Apr. 12 MikeSergent, Jim Gibb, Richard Elliott
Apr. 19 JohnStahl, Keith Lands, Edward Harper
Apr. 26 JeffKeller,Jeff Hootman, John Wolfe, Joe Vanfossen

<u>SOUND</u>
Apr. 5 Keith Lands
Apr. 12 Richard Elliott
Apr. 19 Tim Durben
Apr. 26 Richard Elliott



ALTAR GUILD

April: Sue Case, Janie Huffman, Melody Rader
May: Pam Keller, Elaine Margo, Toni Ferritto

Get the Messenger By Email

If you'd like to receive the Messenger by email please send an email to Gracehappens@gracedover.org with the words "Email Messenger" in the subject heading.
 Remember you can also view the current and archived Messengers online at www.GraceDover.org







gracehappens@gracedover.org
 pastorphil@gracedover.org

April 2026

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 216 North Wooster Ave
 Dover OH 44622-2948
 330-343-6915

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Sun.	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.
 <p>HAPPY EASTER</p>			1 7 pm Boy Scouts	2 6:30 pm Maundy Thursday Service 	3 6:30 Good Friday Service  <u>Church Office Closed</u>	4 9am Altar Guild Decorate
5 9 am SCS 10 am Worship Communion 	6 7pm Valley Voices <u>Church Office Closed</u>	7 12 pm Senior Crafters 6:30 pm Cub Scouts	8 3 pm Congregational Life - LH 7 pm Boy Scouts	9 7 pm Beekeepers - ORC	10	11
12 9 am SCS 10 am Worship Communion	13 7pm Valley Voices	14 6:30pm Cub Scouts	15 7pm Boy Scouts	16	17 10am Grocery Bag Drive Thru	18 8 am Men's Breakfast - LH 8:30 am Women's Group - LH
19 9am SCS 10 am Worship Communion 6pm Meal to the Homeless Shelter	20 7pm Valley Voices	21 12pm Senior Crafters 6:30pm Cub Scouts	22 7pm Boy Scouts	23	24 <u>Messenger Deadline</u>	25
26 9 am SCS 10 am Worship Communion	27 7pm Valley Voices	28 9 am Altar Guild 12 pm Senior Crafters 6:30 pm Cub Scouts 7 pm Endowment Board - LH	29 7pm Boy Scouts <u>Messenger Assembly</u>	30 <u>Scholarship Deadline</u>	