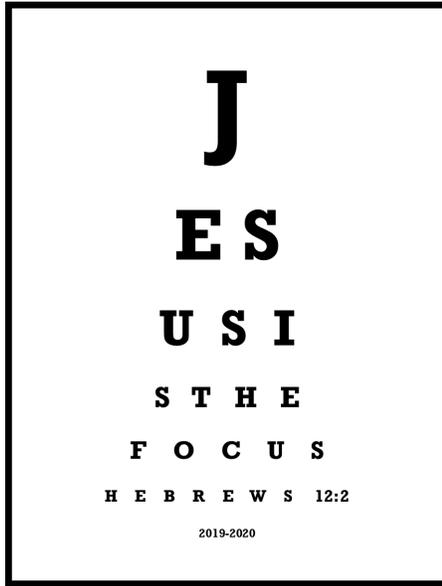


The Founder and The Finisher



Are you better at beginning things or finishing things? Most people are one or the other. Jesus is both. This past academic year, the verse for our theme *Jesus is the Focus* has been Hebrews 12:2, "Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, **the Author and Perfector** of our faith, who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross..." July marks the final month of this theme; and our focus remains on Jesus, for He is the One who always finishes strong.

The One who began our faith is the One who completes it. He brought you to faith in Him, baptized you, confirmed you, and continues to nourish your faith with His Holy Word. Sometimes Jesus' title of "Author" in this passage is translated *Captain, Founder, Pioneer, Leader, or Champion*. Pioneers are heroes and champions. They go first; they blaze a trail for others to follow, so that those who come after them will have an easier path.

Your faith is the path Jesus pioneered for you. Faith is your belief and trust in God, even though you can't see Him. Jesus knows all about faith. He trusted the Father during

His time on earth, paving the way for us and inviting us to follow Him.

What about making it to the finish line? In my case, I can be pretty good at getting things started (sometimes too many things!) but finishing them?? I need help! That's why I am especially thankful that we can rely on Jesus as the perfect Finisher of our faith; for a true finisher brings things all the way to the targeted goal. And that's Jesus!

No matter how tempting it might be for us to give up, we should never quit in the race of faith. It's tempting to quit when things are going wrong in our lives. That's why we must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. It's tempting to quit when a spouse doesn't believe and fights you in the faith; when your teens complain about church; when live-streaming just isn't the same; when your job disappears; when your loved one gets sick; when your baby is born disabled; or, when your own body just doesn't function right anymore. It's tempting to quit when our soul is weary and our heart is broken; but if we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, we can keep going.

Jesus' 1st title, **Founding Author**, **begins** before the beginning and carries forward. His 2nd title, **Perfect Finisher**, **then** picks up and reaches beyond the end. The perfect finish occurred when Jesus resolved to bear all the weight and punishment of your sin and mine on the cross. Jesus cried out with his last breath, "**It is finished!**" Yes, Jesus authored our faith, and He finishes it. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last, the Original Architect and the Finishing Carpenter. Jesus gets us across the finish line of faith. That's heaven! I'll see you Sunday!

- Pastor Charles Reich

Voice of Grace

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327 Avenue C SE
Winter Haven, FL 33880
www.glwh.org

CHURCH PHONE:
863-293-8447

SENIOR PASTOR
Charles Reich

VICAR
Michael Duffy

CHURCH ADMINISTRATOR
Sharon Wilson

OUTREACH
Jeff Wittcop

DIRECTOR OF YOUTH AND FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY
Leah Welter

DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP ARTS
Wynn Bonner

ASSISTANT to the TREASURER
Teri Ogle

MEDIA ADMINISTRATOR
Peggy Jo Griffin

CUSTODIAL/ MAINTENANCE
Alan Baker

MEMBERSHIP/OFFICE SUPPORT
Linda Aceto

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
Casey Billman

SCHOOL PHONE:
863-293-9744

PRINCIPAL
Michael Rottmann

TECHNOLOGY
Jon Peterson

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Susie Woods

PRE-SCHOOL PHONE:
863-299-9186

PRE-SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
Gillian McIntee



A Prayer during Civil Unrest

by Vicar Brendon Moore, June 2, 2020

Father in Heaven,

You are Lord of Heaven and Earth. Everything You made is under Your governance. Yet, in Your mercy and love, You allow Your human creatures to make every day decisions about how we live our lives. We have often used this freedom to fall into sin - both in our individual lives and as the whole of humanity. Forgive us, Lord, for all the ways we fail to live according to Your will in our thoughts, our words, and our actions.

Sin is evident in many ways throughout all of Your creation, and right now our hearts are heavy with the manifestations of injustice in our nation and in our world. We grieve with those who have fallen victim to all forms of injustice, especially recent instances of racial injustice. We lament with those who are frustrated by a lack of change to patterns of injustice. And we weep with those whose past traumas have led them to lash out in desperation and even violence. Be with these brothers and sisters, Lord, grant them Your peace and Your comfort, and let their voices be heard by those in authority - so that our culture, nation, and world would grow to show them the same love that You Yourself show to those who are afflicted.

Grant Your wisdom and guidance to those who are in positions of authority. Lead them to govern according to Your will as stewards of the authority You have entrusted to them. Let their leadership be evidence of Your love for all people. Lead them to administer Your justice so that Your will is done upon this earth. And guide them to make each decision, law, and decree for the good of all people.

We ask for Your protection, Lord. Keep all people safe, and lead Your Church to show compassion to all - especially the vulnerable and those afflicted by injustice. Protect those who keep safe our families, neighborhoods, communities, and nation. Protect our police officers whose job is to protect and serve their communities, and lead them to do their duties with honor to the justice and benefit of all they serve. Be with them as they face difficult circumstances, in tough situations, and help them to remain calm and composed in the midst of struggle. Keep them safe as they fulfill their duties with the authority You have entrusted to them, and lead them to restrict their use of force only to that which is necessary for the safety of all people.

Above all, Lord, lead us to remain faithful to You in all we say and do. Help us to trust that You are Lord of all, and You are always working to bring about Your will in all things. For into Your hands we commend all for whom we pray, through Your Son Jesus who made manifest to us Your unending love. Amen.

"The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many"

Matthew 20:28 ESV



New theme for the 2020-2021 Academic Year
"Sent to Serve!"

Faculty and Staff Planning Meetings
July 27-28 (Monday and Tuesday)

The Plan for In-Person worship in July

Our Board of Elders met by video conference Monday evening, June 22, and **approved the plan for in-person worship through July**. We will keep the 3 services on a weekend format with communion every other Sunday. The non-contact, continuous flow manner of Holy Communion has proven to be very safe and will take place on selected weekends at the end of the worship service, with worshippers immediately exiting out the side doors. Calling ahead to assure a seat is not necessary. For those willing, we do need volunteers for welcoming, guiding, acolyting, and preparing the sanctuary.

Pastor Charles Reich

Saturday 5:00 PM

Sunday 8:30 AM contemporary

Sunday 10:45 AM traditional (also live-streamed)

July 11-12 with communion, meet Vicar Michael Duffy

July 18-19 Vicar Duffy first sermon

July 25-26 with communion

As previously communicated:

Anyone coming to the church campus needs to follow standard guidelines of social distancing.

Before leaving the house,

1. **Check your temperature and examine yourself to make sure you are free of any early signs of viral infection.**
2. **Bring your own mask and hand sanitizer.** (gloves are optional).
We have extras available and plenty of hand sanitizer.

Once at the church

1. **Maintain six feet spacing between families.**
2. **For the sanctuary, please ENTER from Ave C** by way of the recently renovated narthex, and **EXIT** the sanctuary by the side doors.

Addresses for Brendon Moore and Family

Current

2210 Amarado Ct.
Wichita, KS 67205

Beginning August 1

8114 West Main St.
Belleville, IL 62223

Congregational Outreach, Mission Projects & Assimilation

The Going Teams exist to help each generation of Grace *connect people to Jesus*. Would you like to help us **GO** and bring the good news of Jesus **to our neighbors, to our community, or to the nations?** Please give us a call, 293-8447 or email Jeff Wittcop (jwittcop@glwh.org) and we would be glad to help you get involved!

YOU'RE INVITED to our Going Team Meeting on Tuesday, August 18, at 6:30 PM in the Mary-Martha Room. Join us as we discover ways to reach out into our church community, neighborhoods, and be involved in national and international missions. For more information, contact Jeff Wittcop, Director of Outreach and Assimilation at 863-293-8447, or email jwittcop@glwh.org.

**BOND
LEARN
ENGAGE
SERVE
SHARE**
Grace members are mindful of B.L.E.S.S. and equipped and encouraged to put it into practice as they are "Going" to the neighbor.

**MISSION PARTNERS
for July
THE MISSION
and
Operation Barnabas**

JfL JOBS for LIFE™
Jobs for Life will have a new summer class which will begin in August and be completed at the end of September. This will be a VIRTUAL CLASS (using ZOOM or MEETING) done on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6:00 PM til 8:00 PM. To learn more about the classes 863-291-6270 or email to heart4wh.org/ employment.
Grace Lutheran Church is a Mission Partner with Heart for Winter Haven which sponsors Jobs for Life.


Blood Drive
**August 16
8:30 AM-12:30 PM**
Be sure to eat a good meal and drink plenty of water before giving blood.
**Make a Difference:
HELP SAVE A LIFE!**

Our Appreciation

Senior Singles

I hope you are all staying well and safe. All of us have missed being together for fun and fellowship. Hopefully, we will soon meet together again. As soon as it is safe, we will have an outing. Blessings and peace.

Linda

Joel, Heather, and I want to thank those members of Grace Lutheran Church and School who remembered us in their prayers, cards, e-mails, phone calls, and their memorials given in memory of Jan. Words cannot adequately convey our deep appreciation for your Christian support at a difficult time in our lives. Special benedictions to each of you.

In Christ,
Floyd, Joel, and Heather Behrens

Weekly Attendance Report
6/14 - 203
6/21 - 191
6/28 - 184

Parish Statistics
Deaths
Margaret Saul – 6/10/2020
Lee Lehman – 6/14 2020
Mary Juergens – 6/23/2020

Treasurer's Report for Grace Lutheran Income Statement Compared to Budget For the Four Months Ending May 31, 2020

	Current Month Actual	Year to Date Actual	Year to Date Budget	Variance
Church:				
Income	93,957.16	1,086,994.58	1,005,903.37	81,091.21
Expenses	74,767.03	939,253.15	1,000,407.27	(61,154.12)
Net	19,190.13	147,741.43	5,496.10	142,245.33
School:				
Income	230,499.28	1,779,177.98	1,764,247.29	14,930.69
Expenses	134,686.08	1,728,129.15	1,797,449.33	(69,320.18)
Net	95,813.20	51,048.83	(33,202.04)	84,250.87

Charitable IRA Distributions

Individual Retirement Account (IRA) owners aged 70 ½ or older are eligible to make qualified distributions directly to a charitable organization. The benefits of making a direct Qualified Charitable Distribution from an IRA include:

The contribution results in a reduction of adjusted gross income (AGI). A number of tax calculations are based on AGI, such as:

AGI is used in determining the how much of Social Security income is taxable, with a maximum of 85%. Therefore, making a direct contribution makes it less likely that Social Security benefits will be taxable.

Medical expense deductions are limited to amounts in excess of 10% of AGI in 2019. By lowering this threshold by reducing AGI, more medical expenses become deductible for those that itemize deductions.

The Net Investment Income Tax of 3.8% applies once AGI reaches certain thresholds for single (\$200k) and married (\$250k) filers. Lowering AGI could reduce or eliminate this tax on investment income.

Medicare premiums are based on AGI, so the reduction in could result in lower insurance costs.

The contribution allows taxpayers who use the standard deduction to reduce taxable income. The charitable amount counts toward the individual's required minimum distribution (RMD) for the year, as calculated annually based on age and account balances.

The contribution must be made directly from the IRA trustee to the charitable organization (the funds cannot be received by the account owner).

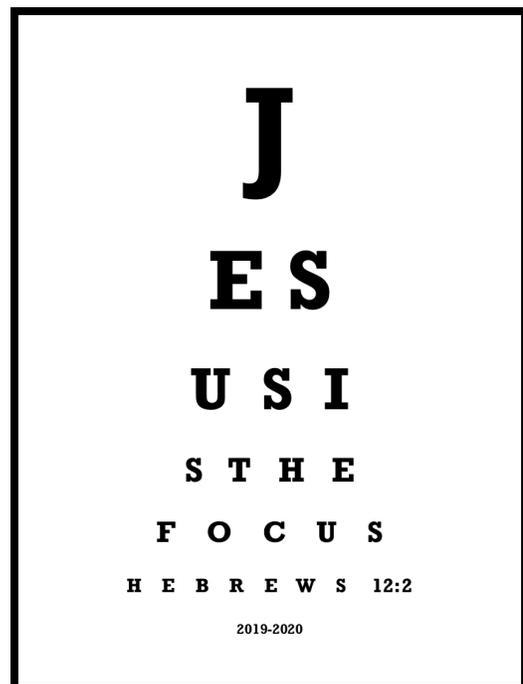
Overall Update

Regarding church finances, we are thankful for your ongoing generous support through on-line giving, automatic withdrawals, and mailed-in envelopes. Because of your generosity, we have been able to help people affected negatively by the current economy. We have also received a major gift that has allowed a church endowment fund to be established so that the interest earned from the gift may help fund future ministry endeavors.



GRACE LUTHERAN SCHOOL CONGRATULATES OUR 8TH GRADE GRADUATES:

- Tyler Tyson Bailey
- Devan I. Booker
- Marissa Brooks
- Maddox Gage Fletcher
- Jordyn A. Frazier
- King Garrett
- Lacey M. Gerberding
- Lani M. Kemp
- Lara LeVasseur
- Vivian Nipper
- Espen Peeples
- Jana Marie Peterson
- Hanna Jade Reed
- Jonathan Rivera Jr.
- Madison Teti
- Bliss Updike
- Connor Bryce Winchester
- Andrew William Woods



THE MISSION STATEMENT OF GLS: *The mission of Grace Lutheran School is to provide its students and their families with a strong spiritual and academic foundation so that they know and understand God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ and are also able to live lives appropriate to their positions in their families, churches, community, and country.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 1 PM WM Board Mtg.	2 9:30 AM LWR Quilters	3 Church Office Closed 10 AM Bible Study w/ Rev. Meyer - MM	4  5 PM Worship Svc
5 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School - Facebook 10:45 AM Worship	6	7 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Admin Staff 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 6:15 PM Praise Band	8 6 PM Youth - ZOOM	9 9:30 AM LWR Quilters	10 Church Office Closed 10 AM Bible Study w/ Rev. Meyer - MM	11 5 PM Worship Svc
12 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School - Facebook 10:45 AM Worship Vicar Duffy Induction 12 PM Families in the Park - Pre-School Playground	13 6 PM School Board Mtg	14 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Admin Staff 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 6:15 PM Praise Band	15 6 PM Youth - YR	16 9:30 AM LWR Quilters	17 Church Office Closed 10 AM Bible Study w/ Rev. Meyer - MM	18 5 PM Worship Svc
19 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School - Facebook 10:45 AM Worship	20 5:30 PM Business Management 6:30 PM BOD Meeting	21 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Admin Staff 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 6:15 PM Praise Band	22 6 PM Youth - ZOOM	23 9:30 AM LWR Quilters	24 Church Office Closed 10 AM Bible Study w/ Rev. Meyer - MM	25 5 PM Worship Svc
26 8:30 AM Worship 9:45 AM Children's Sunday School - Facebook 10:45 AM Worship	27 8 AM Faculty/Staff 5:30 PM Bus. Mgt. 6:30 PM BOD Meeting	28 8 AM Faculty/Staff 10 AM Bible Study 10:30 AM Admin Staff 5:30 PM Prayer Svc 6 PM Exec. Elders 6:15 PM Praise Band	29 6 PM Youth - YR	30 9:30 AM LWR Quilters	31 Church Office Closed 10 AM Bible Study w/ Rev. Meyer - MM	



VOICE OF GRACE

Grace Lutheran Church
327 Avenue C, SE
Winter Haven, FL 33880

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Connecting People to Jesus