

# GRACE United Methodist Church

1345 Chartres Street, La Salle IL 61301

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Office Hours 8:30 AM -1: 30 PM Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

## NEWSLETTER, FEBRUARY 2025

*Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Love never ends. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 & 13.*

Dear Friends in Christ:

Greetings to you all in the name of our LORD Jesus Christ!

It's February! This is also a month of Valentine's Day. The scripture above reminds us that the greatest gift for us from God is the gift of LOVE. God loved us so much that God's son Jesus Christ was sent to redeem us from sin by his sacrifice on the cross. The scripture also calls us to exemplify and live out the very same love for one another and towards the rest of God's beautiful creation. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, we are "caught in an inescapable network of mutuality . . . whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." Let us affect one another by Love!

The Church Council decided to have Grace UMC 175<sup>th</sup> celebrations in September 2025. I invited members to come forward to be in the planning committee. As we form as a group, we will decide on the date and other particulars and will let you all know. Please come forward to plan this celebration. 175 years of God's faithfulness toward our church! Several generations and families were blessed to be a part of Grace UMC family. We will also set up a "150<sup>th</sup> Celebrations Fund" to help us prepare for this great event in our church. I request you to kindly pray, support and participate. Thank you!

In closing, I want to wish you all a blessed month of February. May the Blessing of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide with you now and always. God Bless you!

*Pastor Solomon*

February 2025



*"Having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life."*

Titus 3:7

**All Laity and Clergy are welcome and invited!**

**Saturday, February 8**

**9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**New Lenox UMC**

**339 W Haven Ave., New Lenox**

[It's time to register for this year's laity convocation!](#)

Amid all of the chaos in the church and the world today, this is a great time for us to renew our hope and strengthen our faith. The theme is, "A Renewed Hope—Episode MMXXV: May God's Grace Be with You." Our time together will include a Star Wars perspective of good versus evil as we embrace what lies ahead in 2025 (MMXXV) and beyond. Speakers Michael Pope, Bishop Dan Schwerin and Elaine Moy will inform and inspire us with their expertise and enthusiasm.

Cost: \$15

\$25 (with Box Lunch) - lunch registration closes Fri., Jan. 31.

Walk Ins are welcome but registration preferred. In order to be able to order lunch, registration is needed by January 31. Extra lunches are not guaranteed.

Childcare will be provided (ages 3-11). Parents and Guardians will need to provide snacks/lunch for children if the lunch option is not chosen. (No peanut products, please.) Sign-up for childcare is a part of registration.

All are encouraged to wear Star Wars apparel!

May the force (faith) be with you! Go with Christ, go with hope, go with grace and be well. Amen!

Eugene Williams and Connie Augsburg

NIC Co-Lay Leaders

<https://na.eventscloud.com/ereg/newreg.php?eventid=821919&>



**Mission and Trustee Meetings**

**Tuesday, February 11th.**

**Mission's Committee meeting at 4 pm**

**Board of Trustees meeting at 6 pm**

## **Feed the Birds**

By Elizabeth Schuetz

**Feed the birds for in winter the feast for birds is bare.  
Nuts, berries, seeds, and other food they eat  
are gone for the winter so there's not much  
there for them to eat.**

**So, feed the birds crumbs of food and bits of bread  
so, they'll have something to eat.**

**Feed the birds and they'll come to your feast.  
They'll sit at your table upon the ground and savor the  
morsels which you throw down and then they'll  
fly away on graceful wings feeling grateful  
for the feast.**

**And when you set the table, they'll come again to dine  
and feast on what you bring.  
So, feed the birds a winter's feast.**



*If “Love” were a color – what color would it be?*

*Good question!*

*There are so many colors it could be from all the colors we know that exist.*

*“Love” could be the colors of a rainbow after a rain, the colors of a sunrise which comes in early morn, or it could be the colors of the sunset at the end of day.*

*“Love” could be hot as hot or hotter than the sunshine on a summer's day or cold and hard as the snow and ice of winter.*

*“Love” could be our favorite color – the color we gravitate to the most.*

*“Love” could truly be any color – the choice is ours to make and is as different as each of us are in the moment.*

*“Love” could change from one color to another any time we wish for “love's” color is not defined as one color but many colors from which to choose.*

*If “Love” were a color – what color would it be?*

*It all depends on you and me for “love's” color can be any color we want it to be.*

*So, if “Love” were a color we only must use our imagination to make it whatever we want it to be or whatever it needs to be.*

*If “Love” were a color, it is all up to you and me!*

*Elizabeth*

**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY 2025!**

**-from Pastor Solomon**

## Ecumenical Lenten Service Schedule 2025

Date	Host Church	Preacher
March 12 7:00 pm	LaSalle Congregational	Betty Delgado
<b>March 19 7:00</b>	<b>Grace UMC LaSalle</b>	Lee Iseley
March 26 7:00 pm	Zion UCC. Peru	Karen Karczewski
April 2 7:00 pm	Spring Valley UCC	Alex Garncarz
April 9 7:00 pm	Waltham Presbyterian	Jon Graham
Good Friday noon	DePue UCC	Joel Stevenor

**California Fires:** If you have seen the fires in California and want to do something for the people, here is one way to help. Grace United Methodist Church, LaSalle, will be sending one check to UMCOR, United Methodist Committee on Relief, which is the Methodist response to disasters. **By Sunday, February 9th**, put your cash donation or a check made out to Grace United Methodist Church in an envelope and put it in the offering plate or deliver it to the Church office. (Be sure to write Fire Aid, California fires or something like that in the check's memo.)

**(L.I.F.T) Ladies in Fellowship Together:** Thank you for supporting our LIFT ministry! Remember you can always invite a friend to any of our restaurant or church gatherings!

### Upcoming events:

**Saturday, February 8th:** at 11 a.m. Lunch - Thyme Kitchen  
(405 5th St in Peru, across from Westclox building)

**Saturday, March 8th:** at 11 a.m. lunch - John's Place (1802 5th Street,  
Peru)

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## Homebound & Nursing Home Members

How about sending a  
greeting to one of Grace  
UMC's shut ins?

If you know of anyone else  
who should be included on  
this list or of any  
corrections, please  
contact

**Leann Wilcoxon** at

[llwilcoxon@comcast.net](mailto:llwilcoxon@comcast.net)

815-223-1143

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**Dick Graff**

[505 College Ave](#)

[Ottawa, IL 61350](#)

**Harold & Mary Fran  
Walter**

[259 N 2559th Rd,](#)

[Peru, IL 61354](#)

**Don Kubberness**

Manor Court

[3230 Becker Dr,](#)

[Peru, IL 61354](#)

**Rose Marie Redeen**

[714 12th St, Peru, IL 61354](#)

**Tabby Chandler**

[1828 15th St, Peru, IL 61354](#)

**Myrtle Hitchins,**

[3230 Becker Dr. Peru](#)

[IL 61354](#)

**Russ Defenbaugh**

[206 N. Central Ave.](#)

[Ladd, IL 61329](#)

## February Birthday's

2. Mallorie Miller
5. Mark Whiting
6. John McCormick  
Ryan Donovan
8. Mary Fran Walter
13. Mary Covert  
Don Huling
16. Steve Opsal
22. Ginny Kochanowski
24. Tina Hardy
25. Bonnie Smyth
28. Ellen Anderson

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**



### Grace Giving Tree

Socks for all ages disappear as soon  
as they are put out, so help us  
restock. Clip socks on the Grace  
Giving Tree or leave them in the  
basket under the tree in the foyer.

Thank you!

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**Church Office Hours are:**

**Tuesday 8:30 - 1:30**

**Wednesday - by appointment**

**Thursday 8:30 - 1:30**

**Friday 8:30 - 1:30**

## A Year of Grace

**Author: Rev. Fabiola Grandon-Mayer, NIC director of connectional ministries**

In our United Methodist Church, the concept of grace is central to our theology and practice. Grace represents God's unmerited favor, a gift freely given to all. We have been invited by Bishop Dan Schwerin to observe 2025 as a Year of Grace. This will be the theme of our 2025 annual conference session.

Within the connectional ministries framework, a Year of Grace offers a powerful opportunity to deepen discipleship, nurture congregational vitality, and engage in mission that reflects Christ's transformative love. It can be seen as a collective journey of spiritual growth and active ministry. Rooted in John Wesley's understanding of prevenient, justifying, and sanctifying grace, observing a Year of Grace invites all Methodists to embrace grace as a dynamic force that informs both personal faith and communal action.

A Year of Grace provides congregations and individuals the opportunity to intentionally reflect on and live out this core aspect of Methodist theology in practical ways.

Here are some practical steps to embrace a Year of Grace in your local church or community.

- 1. Start with prayer and worship.** Grace begins with God, and a Year of Grace should be rooted in prayer and worship.
  - Incorporate grace-focused theme in worship
    - Encourage personal prayer
    - Hold special services
- 2. Equip Leaders with Grace-Centered Training.** Leadership development is key to fostering a culture of grace in the church. Training might include:
  - Workshops on Wesleyan theology
  - Conflict resolution training
- 3. Practice radical hospitality.** Prevenient grace teaches us that God extends love to everyone, even before they realize they want it. Churches can reflect this by:
  - Welcoming newcomers
  - Reaching out to marginalized groups
- 4. Offer opportunities for spiritual renewal.** Justifying grace focuses on the transformative power of faith. To nurture awareness of this expression of grace, consider providing:
  - Discipleship classes
  - Personal testimonies
  - Retreats and quiet days
- 5. Engage in community missions.** Sanctifying grace moves us toward action. Organize activities that demonstrate grace in tangible ways, such as:
  - Feeding the hungry
  - Environmental stewardship
  - Support for vulnerable populations
- 6. Build connectional relationships.** The United Methodist Church thrives on its connectional nature. Strengthen bonds with other churches by participating in:
  - Collaborative mission projects
  - District or conference-wide events
    - Sharing resources
- 7. Reflect and celebrate.** At the end of the year, take time to:
  - Evaluate progress
  - Celebrate milestones
    - Share stories

**A Year of Grace is more than a theme; it's an invitation to align our lives and ministries with the boundless love of God. By taking practical steps to reflect and act on grace, the UMC can empower individuals and communities to experience the transformative power of God's gift and share it with the world.**