



November 2023

Grace Lutheran Church

Pastor Rosy Vote Approved; She Will Start Dec. 1

At a special called meeting held on Sunday, October 29, the Congregation accepted Council's recommendation to call Rev. Rosalina (Rosy) Rivera as our new pastor. Pastor Rosy is a graduate of Lenoir-Rhyne University, having earned a Bachelor of Music Education, with a concentration in voice and choral conducting. She graduated from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa with a Master of Divinity and was ordained in 2013. (See Pictures of her Meet and Greet on Pages 6 and 7.)



Trunk or Treat is Scary Success

A dozen members decorated their car trunks and truck beds for our second annual Trunk or Treat Sunday, Oct. 29. Lots of vamps, vixens, witches, skeletons, ghosts, super heroes, dinosaurs, and other familiar characters showed up — more than 80 — for the treats being handed out. The celebration included special Halloween music and a fog machine that became a popular photo stop. See additional pictures on Pages 16 and 17.

Photos by Pat Hope





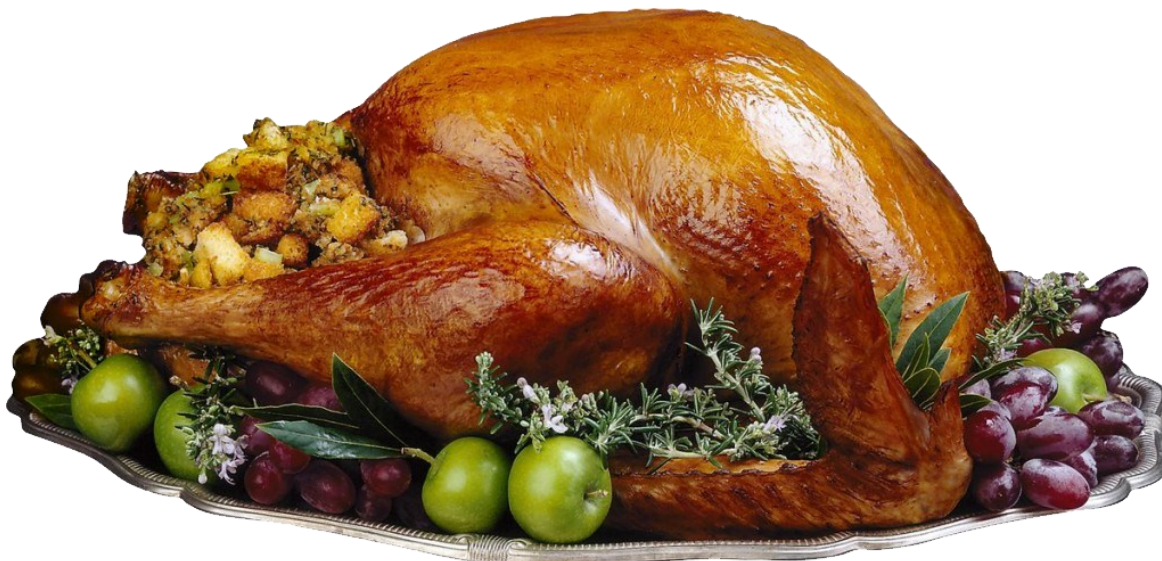
November Music to Remind us of 'Joys in Heaven'

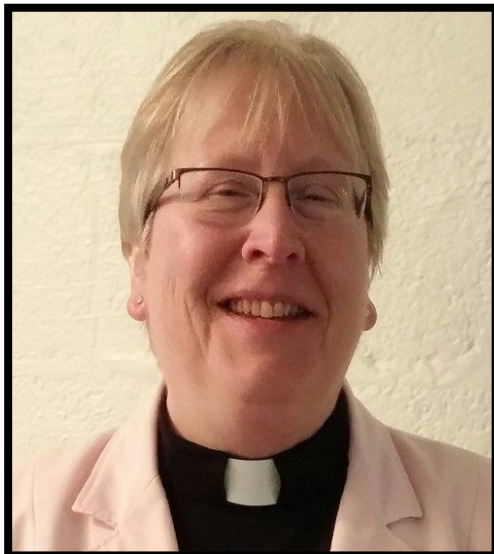
As we enter the month of November, the first Sunday of the month, November 5, marks All Saints Sunday, when we pay tribute to the women and men who came before us and have gone on to the Church Triumphant. New Creation marks this sacred and reflective time in the 9 a.m. service with a song called "The Sound of the Saints," which was introduced to the world by the Christian band Audio Adrenaline. At the 11:15 service, Chancel Choir will offer "Come, Sing of Years Gone By," a stirring arrangement by John Ferguson, edited by the legendary choral conductor and composer Anton Armstrong, whose rousing lyrics and soaring harmonies will remind us of the joys that fill the days of our forbears in Heaven.

As of this writing, Ringspiration is busy preparing Advent and Christmas numbers for the rapidly approaching holidays. In addition, preparations are well underway for a Christmas Cantata on December 17 that will combine New Creation and Chancel Choir members. Please join us!

Annual Thanksgiving Dinner Set for Sunday, Nov. 12

with appetizers at 4:30 p.m. and dinner served at 5:00 p.m. Nurturing will be providing turkey, mashed potatoes and gravy. There are sign-up sheets in the back entryway and Narthex for people to sign up to bring an appetizer, side dish or dessert. Look forward to seeing everyone. We have a lot to be thankful for! Please see Donna Gurecki if you have any questions about the event.



Pastor Paula Smith, Interim**Leaving Grace with a Happy Heart and Best Wishes**

Well, here I am at what I can only assume to be the last time I write an article for *The Light*. This past year and almost two months has gone by quickly. Much more quickly than I originally thought (or maybe hoped). It has been a joy to serve you all, and I'm thrilled to death, and wish nothing but the best for the next pastor to sit at this desk.

As All Saints Day approaches, my thoughts turn to those who have gone before us. Grace has been blessed with a plethora of God-loving, gifted, kind people. Those very people have left us with memories of them from the banners that hang in the sanctuary to some of the pictures that hang on the walls in the hallways and various rooms of this building. Everywhere

we turn, there are wonderful reminders of those who were once members of the family of Grace.

I will leave here with a happy heart, knowing that you all cared for me in the same way that you have cared for others who have come through the door, and I pray you will offer that caring and loving attitude to the new pastor, as well.

We can't always have everything we want and/or need in a pastor because pastors, just like y'all, are human beings. We all have our strengths and our weaknesses. I know mine, and I'm sure the new pastor will know hers. Be kind. Be helpful. Be prayerful.

Thank you for loving me as much as I have loved being here!

BOTH SERVICES ARE NOW IN THE SANCTUARY

9:00 a.m. Contemporary: In Person, Sanctuary

11:15 a.m. Traditional: In-Person, Sanctuary

Services on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHKKSX_JwSTrvl-LqdrbGlw

Grace Mission Statement

**Love Jesus and help others love Him
through word and actions.**

Helpful Hearts and Hands Needed It's Holiday Food Baskets and Angel Tree time again at Grace

Thanksgiving baskets will be distributed to 26 families on Saturday, November 11, and Christmas baskets and Angel Tree gifts will be distributed to 26 families on Saturday, December 16. Volunteers are needed for Thanksgiving baskets to help unload non-perishable food at the church on Wednesday afternoon, November 8 after 3-3:30 p.m., fill baskets on Thursday and Friday, and on Saturday morning, November 11, from 9 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to unload perishable food, fill baskets and place the baskets in families' vehicles. If you have questions or want to volunteer, contact Phil Stumbo at (865) 482-3048 or pstumbo@comcast.net.

In December, we will follow a similar schedule for Christmas baskets and Angel Tree gifts. The schedule will be in the December *Light* and announcements. The Angel Tree will be set up in the front entryway when the children's names have been received, and we will send out notification when the tags are ready to be chosen.



**November
Love Offering
Angel Tree**

Is There a Ukulele Out There Calling Your Name?

If you would like to learn to play this happy little instrument (so much easier than a guitar) or if you already play (maybe it's been a while), getting together with some like-minded folks may be just the ticket for a fun way to make some music. It definitely helps if you like to sing, but strumming along is fun also.



I envision a monthly get-together beginning in late fall, day and time depending on preferences of the group. Contact Judy Rosenberg at dodger32@comcast.net if you are brave enough to embark upon this musical adventure!

November Birthdays

Carol Donath	11/04
Riley Cumberland	11/07
Ed Lever	11/11
Alicia Rudat	11/11
Elaine Mueller	11/14
Judy McMillan	11/15
John Gunning	11/17
Gayla Cutler	11/22
Mary Ann Damos	11/22
Heston Moua	11/23
Julia Stockstill	11/28
Rick Rawl	11/28
Jacob Stewart	11/29
Lorraine Huynh	11/29
Quinten Fritts	11/29

If you have a name you would like to add to the birthday list or a correction, please call the church office at 483-3787.

The President's Corner by Ron Goans, MD

Thoughts on the Prologue to John



As we enter into the last part of 2023, I am sitting in my office reading the Prologue to John. I have always been fascinated and mystified by the first few verses in the Gospel of John. To refresh our memory, here is an excerpt:

**John 1:1-15
(NRSV)**

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ...And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

I found this sermon on the Prologue by Martin Luther from 1521-1522 (Christ's Titles of Honor; His Coming: His Incarnation; and the Revelation of His Glory) and am excerpting a few passages below for our use. The whole sermon can be found online at <https://sermons.martinluther.us/sermons11.html>.

According to Martin Luther:

“This is the most important of the Gospels of the church year, and yet it is not, as some think, obscure or difficult. For upon it is clearly founded the important article of faith concerning the divinity of Christ... Nothing is too great for faith. Therefore, let us consider this Gospel lesson in the simplest manner possible...we should know that all that the apostles taught and wrote, they took out of the Old Testament; for in it all things are proclaimed that were to be fulfilled later in Christ, and were to be preached, as Paul says in Rom. 1, 2: God promised afore the Gospel of his son Jesus Christ through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures.”

When you have a chance, I would suggest that you read the entire sermon since it appears to be a concise description of our view of the Trinity.

Help Needed to Fund Christmas Baskets

We are scheduled to give out Thanksgiving food baskets to 26 families on Saturday, November 11, and Christmas Food baskets to 26 families on Saturday, December 16. We have funding for Thanksgiving but not for Christmas. We will need approximately \$2,500. We will need to order the food in early December. Please make a donation in November so we can continue this important ministry. If you have questions, please contact Phil Stumbo at (865) 482-3048 or pstumbo@comcast.net.



New Pastor Meet and Greet on October 15 Is Well Attended



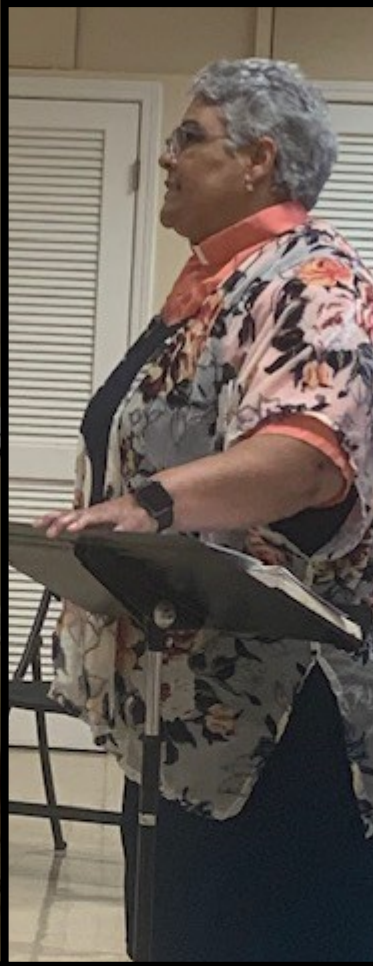
Photos by
Pat
Hope



Arisa Garden Club's annual scarecrows, which they make at Grace to put on display at the Oak Ridge Library entrance.

Photo submitted

Pastor Rosy Meet and Greet Visit



Above Pastor Rosy leading everyone in song and telling us about herself. She also answered questions. Sassy, her toy chihuahua, seemed to enjoy meeting everyone, too.

THANKSGIVING DEVOTIONAL INVITATION

Thankfulness — this is how: Write a 100 to 300-word devotional around the theme of thankfulness. Share personal stories. You do not have to use your name or other identifying clues, but we encourage you to do so. Please include a central scripture verse. Some people share struggles, others blessings, miraculous is possible, too! Nurturing Commission will print, bind, and distribute to the Congregation. Submit to the Gratitude box in the Narthex or the Church Office by Thanksgiving.

Fill Grace's Gratitude Board this November!

Everyone is invited to bring a tangible item that they are Grateful for this year. Please attach your chosen item to the Gratitude Board located on the ramp outside of the kitchen. If your treasured item is too precious, too big, or too expensive to display, take a picture of it and post.

We filled the House with friends, family and Grace members in April! Let's fill the Gratitude Board with our thanksgiving blessings in November.



November Happenings

Sunday School (Christian Education) for children and youth meet at 10:00 a.m. in Jacob's Ladder room. If you have any questions about youth Christian Education, please contact Donna Gurecki (865-599-1238).

The adult Sunday School class will be using this Bible study for the next two months. What does it mean to answer Jesus' request: "Follow me?" In this eight-session video-based Bible study, Andy Stanley will take us on a journey through the Gospels as he traces Jesus' teaching on what it means to follow. Jesus says, "Join us and you will change." He doesn't expect us to be perfect. He just wants us to walk with him. The study will be facilitated by Lisa Sipes and Betty Anne Domm. The class meets in Room 101 at 10 a.m. every Sunday. Everyone is welcome. If you would like to join this Bible study, please pick up a book on the table in the classroom or just come to class!

Is there interest in a CPR class?? Please let Donna Gurecki know if you would be interested in a class.

The prayer shawls are now located in the Narthex credenza.

Help for Lutherans in Ukraine: Lutheran Disaster Response: Eastern Europe Crisis Response (ELCA.org/disaster). The ELCA is sending aide to our sister Lutheran churches in Ukraine and several neighboring countries. You can help!

Blanket Workshop: makes blankets for distribution to Lutheran World Relief. Meetings are on the first, third, and fifth Thursdays of the month from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Everyone is welcome to join in, or just stop by to see what is happening. Sewing skills are not required.

Our Ukrainian families of Tanya Alfimova and Olya Kvach are deeply appreciative both of the financial help they've received recently from Grace and also of work from several families doing house cleaning (they are terrific!) and clearing out. They are booked up with work now! Contact Nancy Munro (nbmunro318@icloud.com or 865-483-6811) for more information.

Cocoa, Cookies and Christmas Fun! On Saturday, December 9 at 10:00 a.m. we will have pre-Christmas fun for children. Activities will include decorating a tree, singing songs, and Christmas stories. The event will last about an hour. All kids are welcome, and you are encouraged to invite friends. Please let the office know how many to expect, because we don't want to run out of cookies!

Grace Photography Club: The club will meet on Saturday, November 18, at 2:00 p.m. in Room 101. Let Stan Long (865-356-2871, Longse@aol.com) know if you're interested in participating in this group.

Advent Gathering/ Hanging of the Greens

Please join us for the Advent Gathering/
Hanging of the Greens on Saturday, December 2, starting at 9 a.m.

Decorating the church will begin at 9 a.m., activities for all ages to engage their creative spirit from 10 a.m. -12 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall, lunch served starting at 11 a.m. Please join us for a time of fellowship to bring in the Advent season.

Beware of Covid!

This is no Halloween prank, though it may feel like it! Please be wise and take precautions! Covid is again spreading in Tennessee, with East Tennessee being among the higher areas, and among our members. Several Grace members have tested positive recently.

This is a new and highly contagious variant and our previous vaccines and boosters aren't protective against it. A new vaccine is available locally – check with your doctor or pharmacy to see where it's available and if your insurance will cover it. Some doctors and the CDC are recommending waiting 10 days each between your flu shot, the Covid vaccine, and taking the RSV shot (if you're eligible for that).

Stewardship Pledge Reminder

If you have not yet submitted your Stewardship Pledges for 2024, please submit them to the church office or place them in the offering plate as soon as possible. They are very important in planning God's work at our Church. If needed, pledge forms are available in the Narthex or church office.

Thank you, Stewarding Commission

Proclaiming Commission Summary

Your Proclaiming Commission has been busy recently, working to enhance our hospitality activities, supporting our Ministry to the International Community including our ESOL and OLSE classes, and providing support to things that make Grace better known in the community. One of those efforts was to provide material support and volunteers to the early October Oak Ridge Disability Access Fair. We've also supported the Community Outreach Team's Rummage and Bake sales, are publicizing the upcoming Trunk or Treat event, and also a new venture in Advent for young children. Judy Goans is spearheading this, calling it "Cocoa, Cookies, and Christmas Fun." See Page 9 or details. We're also adding a Recovery Ministry to our portfolio of activities that support and may draw in people from the community. We thank all members of Grace who have participated in any or all of these activities!

OLSE Spanish Class

We're hoping to restart our Spanish class after the first of the year if more students are interested. Please contact Nancy Munro if you would like to give this a try!

ESOL Classes Need Teachers

We're looking for someone to assist with Grace's evening beginner class. Dorothy DeVan is the lead teacher. Pr. Sylvia Countess who has been working with the early beginners will soon take an interim assignment at Reformation Lutheran Church in Greenville. Thank you, Pr. Sylvia for your gift to our students!

If you're interested in this opportunity but not sure about what's involved, you're welcome to observe the class; it starts at 6 p.m. on Tuesdays in Room 101. You could also take a workshop on teaching ESOL that is offered quarterly by the Knoxville Internationals Network.

We also would like to add an early intermediate class on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings from 9:30 to 1:00 or 11:30. This would be a follow-on to Eunice Search's morning beginner classes and use life skills textbooks just as she and Dorothy do. Josh Williamson's classes are advanced intermediate and follow a different format.

Please let Nancy Munro (nbmunro318@icloud.com) know if you're interested in getting involved either in the evening beginner class or trying your hand at teaching an early intermediate class.

The Grace Food Pantry needs your help, because funds are running low. Many thanks to those who have donated either money or food recently. Please make a generous donation, earmarked for the Food Pantry, so that we can continue this important ministry.

Coffee, Tea, and Candy for Sale

DON'T FORGET we sell coffee, tea and chocolate. Sigrid Ludemann started this ministry at Grace some 20 years ago when Lutheran World Relief (LWR) began working with small-scale coffee and cocoa farmers around the world to improve the quality, yield and value of crops and they could earn enough income to support their families and communities.

A portion of all proceeds from LWR Fair Trade products sold at Grace goes to the LWR's Small Farmer Fund.

These items are located in the church entranceway and make good stocking stuffers.



NUTS! NUTS! NUTS!

The Clinton Lions Club is selling a variety of nuts again this year, including:

- Plain pecan halves
- Plain pecan pieces,
- Praline covered pecans,
- Cashews
- Mixed nuts (no peanuts)
- Milk Chocolate Amaretto covered pecans
- Chocolate covered peanuts.

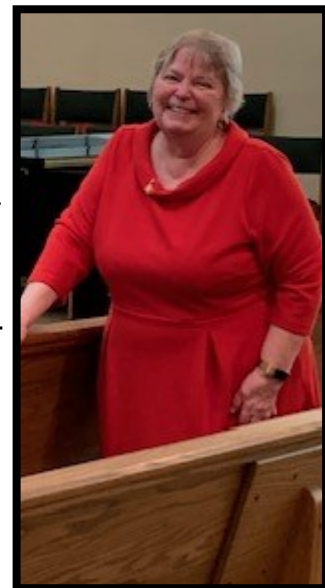
These are all one pound (16oz.) bags. The cost per bag is \$11.00.



You may contact Neal Vaughan at 865-457-4664 and leave a message or contact him by e-mail at neallion@comcast.net.

Reformation Sunday Worship

One service was held on October 29, which was Reformation Sunday. To celebrate several members enacted a play written by Judy Goans — “Reformation: The Musical.” It was a blessing to everyone. Member actors included: Donna Gurecki, Paul Gurecki, Stacey Garrick, Judy Goans, Ron Goans, Crista Froeling, Claudia Lever, Vicki Quraishi, Debra Stewart, and Robert Stewart

**Upcoming Events**

November 5 – All Saints Sunday (Time Change, Fall Back one Hour)

November 12 — Thanksgiving Potluck @ 4:30 p.m.

November 18 — Thanksgiving Food Baskets

November 26 — Christ The King Sunday

December 2 – Hanging of The Greens – 9 a.m. to noon. Lunch at 11 a.m.

December 16 — Christmas Food Baskets and Angel Tree distribution

December 17 – Christmas Cantata – One 10 a.m. service

Advent Services: December 6, 13, 20 at 6:15 p.m.

December 24 – **NO Morning Worship**; 4 p.m. service with Children's Pageant and 9 p.m. candlelight service

December 31 – Lessons & Carols — One 10 a.m. Service

Rummage/Bake Sale Benefits Local Rescue Groups

We had a very successful event on Saturday, October 14. We had great support from our volunteers! And, we had a good turnout of customers who really enjoyed the event. We are in the process of finalizing our receipts, but we received ~\$1,100 in sales and donations to go along with the \$2,900 in carryover from the previous year. In addition, we are pleased that the Proclaiming Commission voted to give us the remaining funds budgeted for this 2023 event after expenses which is approximately \$1,400 and will bring our total to approximately \$5,400 to be divided among the local rescue groups.

In addition to the Rummage/Bake Sale, we had the usual great Art Show from the 3rd graders at Woodland School (see Page 13) who are the students of Mary Catherine Chin. There were 86 entries based on the theme of a "Corgi Tea Party." The art show was on display in the Fellowship Hall from October 14 through the end of October. Lots of people viewed the show and voted for their favorite piece of art. The winner will be announced later.



Photos on Pages 12-13 by Ruth Smiley





Above is a fraction of the 86 entries in this year's art show from Woodland Elementary School. Below, Samson, Christy Gipson's cat enjoys the purchase she made for him at this year's rummage sale.



**Purchase
Approved!**

Photo by Christy
Gipson

Message From Bishop Eaton Calls For Us to be ‘Liberating Witnesses’

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning?" —Psalm 22:1

Dear church,

As Lutherans, we are accustomed to holding tension between two truths. Thus the ELCA denounces the egregious acts of Hamas, acts that have led to unspeakable loss of life and hope. At the same time the ELCA denounces the indiscriminate retaliation of Israel against the Palestinian people, both Christian and Muslim.

For the past week we have borne witness to the horrors of the escalating crisis between Israel and Hamas. We also watch a growing humanitarian crisis in Gaza as Israel blocks food, water, fuel and medical supplies and as airstrikes continue to cause unbearable civilian casualties ahead of a just-announced ground assault. We see Israelis and families around the world in the agonizing wait for word about the fate of loved ones killed or taken hostage by Hamas. We are in anguish, grieving and praying for all people who are living in trauma, fear and uncertainty.

Among us are Palestinian Lutherans who are fearful for their families, their communities and their homeland. In our communities we have Jewish and Muslim neighbors, who are also facing the horrors of this crisis and its impact on their loved ones.

It is difficult to find words that suffice in the complexity of this moment, and in the web of relationships that bind us together, as church, with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land and our interreligious partners. Yet God has called us to be a people who stand with others amid suffering.

We must also call a thing a thing. The power exerted against all Palestinian people — through the occupation, the expansion of settlements and the escalating violence — must be called out as a root cause of what we are witnessing. We are committed to our long-standing accompaniment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land.

The God who liberates us calls us to be a liberating witness. May it be so.

In Christ,



The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Things you can do:

Find updated resources and statements from the ELCA [here](#).

Join our partner Churches for Middle East Peace for prayer every Wednesday from 12:30 to 1 p.m. Eastern time. Register [here](#).

Call your lawmakers today through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and urge them to take action to deescalate the conflict and uphold unrestricted humanitarian aid to Gaza. Find your member of Congress at [govtrak](#).

Support Lutheran Disaster Response [here](#).

Grace Writers Return to In-Person Meetings



Grace Writers resumed in-person meetings Sept. 4 and on the first Monday of the month for the rest of the year. If you are writing non-fiction (essays, articles, memoir, children's writing, etc.) or Fiction (novels, science fiction, mystery, children's books) come and share some of your work with us.

Come join us in Room 101 from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on November 6. The theme for November is "thankful." Contact Pat Hope for more info.



Tea Time at Christ Church Episcopal, Rugby Michaelmas 2023

Four Grace ladies attended the Michaelmas Tea in Rugby on Saturday, Oct. 7, including Pat Hope, Joyce Fox, Carol Donath, and Audrey Elam, shown right. Lunch included a variety of sandwiches, scones with strawberry jam and Devonshire cream, along with delicate pastries and a choice of tea. After lunch the four walked through town and talked to some of the craftspeople with work on display. Below, Carol pets a rabbit while a local craftswoman spins his fur into yarn. Photos by Pat Hope



Reminder: Minimize Fragrances

It is estimated that at least 15% of the population has fragrance sensitivities resulting in migraines, breathing problems, nausea, or other unpleasant health effects. Grace has some folks with these problems and we never know when a visitor may also. For the sake of our members and for hospitality to visitors, Grace has a policy of asking all not to wear perfumes or other fragrances to worship or other activities. Thank you!



Photos
By
Pat
Hope





Grace Offers Sunday School For All Age Groups

Grace has Sunday School classes for all ages. These pictures were taken in September and show Steve Johnson leading the Youth Class, Middle Class led by Candy Yugo, and Nursery led by April Fritts.





Reception Following Oct. 29 Service and Meeting

Members gathered in the Narthex Sunday, Oct. 29 after the special called meeting to vote on a new pastor. Above, several people mingling, at right are Chris Parton, Samuel Beall (composer of Ringspiration's piece) and Slade Trammell joking around. Below, Becky and Syd Ball talk to Nancy Munro following the meeting.



Grace Lutheran Church
 131 West Gettysburg Avenue
 Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830

Phone: 865-483-3787

E-mail: graceortn@comcast.net

Website: www.graceoakridge.org

Condolences

Jo-ann Johnson — October 11
Margaret Martin — October 26

Inside This Issue

New Pastor Approved	1	Arissa Scarecrows	6	Rummage/Bake Sale	12-13
Trunk or Treat	1	Thanksgiving Devotional	8	Letter from the Bishop	14
Joyful Noise	2	Gratitude Board	8	Grace Writers	14
Thanksgiving Dinner	2	Happenings	9	Trip to Rugby	15
Pastor Paula	3	Hanging of the Greens	9	Wearing perfume	15
Both Services	3	Stewardship Reminder	9	Trunk or Treat	16-17
Mission Statement	3	Beware of Covid!	9	Sunday School	18
Food Baskets/Angel Tree	4	Proclaiming	10	Congregational Meeting	19
Ukulele Group	4	OLSE/ESOL	10	Condolences	20
Birthdays	4	Food Pantry Help	10	Inside This Issue	20
Nov. Love Offering	4	Coffee/Tea For Sale	10	Find Fall Leaves	20
President's Page	5	Upcoming Events	11		
Basket Help Needed	5	Reformation Sunday	11		
Pastor Rosy Meet	6-7	Nuts For Sale	11		



Want to win a gift card? Find the three fall leaves.

In November, our thoughts turn to Thanksgiving and all we are thankful for, but sometimes we can still find pretty fall colors. See if you can find the three fall leaves in this issue.

Please send the page numbers where you find them to Pat Hope (thetwohopes@aol.com) by Nov 30. Only email or text messages (865-310-0722) accepted. Prize to be

awarded in December.

The one pictured here doesn't count.

The three pumpkins in Oct. were on Pages 6, 8, and 11.

Congratulations to past winners:

- Bethany Lemons — October Pumpkins
- Betty Anne Domm — Sept. Coffee Cups
- Pastor Paula — August Hot Dogs
- NO CONTEST IN JULY**
- Anne Douglas — June Caps
- Rhonda Ashburn — May Hearts
- Janet Rawl — April Eggs