

The Means of Grace

MAY 12, 2024



1 John 5:13-15 - I write these things to you who believe in the Name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. And this is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of Him.

These are some of the most frustrating bits of the Bible to me—the bits where Jesus promises to give us whatever we ask. I'm thinking of phrases like *"Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours"* (Mark 11:24) and *"If you ask Me anything in My Name, I will do it"* (John 14:14). Because it sounds like Jesus is making Himself a push-button God—press the right button, and you'll get whatever you want, guaranteed.



So can I do that? Twenty centuries of Christianity says, “No. That’s not the way any of this works.” Yes, God is faithful, and yes, He hears our prayers, and yes, He occasionally heals the sick and has even raised the dead when asked! But it's clear that we don't always get what we want. If we did, who would ever get sick or die?

So if that's not what God means, then what does He mean? John gives us the missing clue to this problem: ***"This is the confidence that we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will He hears us."*** God is not a fool. He isn't going to hand over the governance of the universe to people like us, who don't know their right hand from their left. And so He commands us to pray for what we want and need—but that extra bit ***"If it is according to Your will"*** is always there, whether we say it out loud or not.

So God invites us to ask—but He reserves the final decision to Himself. And that's for our safety, isn't it? We know that whatever we pray for, we cannot cause harm, because God will overrule our mistakes and stupidity. Just this past week a friend reminded me of that when he said, *"When God puts a calling on your life or gives you something you asked for, He factored in your stupidity."* I found that to be oddly comforting.

And though we can't understand why God allows some things to happen and other things to not happen, we still know that God is in control, and that He loves us—because He gave His Son Jesus to lay down His life for us, to rescue us from evil and bring us back to Himself. And by His rising to life again He broke the power of death over all of us as well, everyone who believes in Him.

So we pray with hope—trusting the God who loves us enough not to give us what we should not have and to give us everything that we need... ***"according to His will"***.

Sunday May 12, 2024- Easter 7 / Mother's Day / Ascension Observed

Comm. Prep. Sue Lewallen

Flowers: Karin Schmidt

9:30 AM WORSHIP with HOLY COMMUNION

10:30 AM FELLOWSHIP

11:00 AM Sunday School

11:15 AM Bible Study

Monday May 13, 2024

Tuesday May 14, 2024

8:00 AM 7-8th Grade Confirmation

10:00 AM Mary & Martha Meeting

Wednesday May 15, 2024

8:00 AM Individual Confirmation

8:30 AM Chapel-Pastor Janisch

9:00 AM 7-8th Grade Confirmation

6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Study

Thursday May 16, 2024

8:00 AM 5-6th Grade Confirmation

6:30 PM Church Council

5th-8th GLS Softball, Vancouver, WA

Friday May 17, 2024

8:00 AM 7-8th Grade Confirmation

9:20 AM PK Jesus Circle

10:15 AM Committal

6:00 PM Preschool "Prom"

Saturday May 18, 2024

8:00 AM Forged Men's Breakfast and Bible Study

9:00 AM Confirmation

10:00 AM Sister's In Faith, Women's Bible Study

1:00 PM Piano Recital @ GLS

Sunday May 19, 2024 Pentecost

Flowers:

9:30 AM Worship

10:30 AM FELLOWSHIP

11:00 AM Sunday School

11:15 AM Bible Study

6:00 PM Basketball



YOUR NAME HERE

From Randy & Darlene Jensen:

Members of Grace, On behalf of Darlene and myself, we would like to convey our deepest appreciation for all the prayers, cards, gifts, and well wishes from all of you during my recent journey from surgeries to rehabilitation. They uplifted us beyond measure. I look forward to whatever recovery the Lord has planned for me, and maybe even returning to assisting in usher duties. God bless our wonderfully congregation.

*SO VERY
thankful
INCREDIBLY
grateful.
UNBELIEVABLY
blessed.*

Thank You from the Mudzongos! Thank you to everyone who was able to help the Mudzongos load and unload the truck and move to their new home in Sherwood.

What's Happening @Grace

Weekly Fellowship Food & Drinks



THANK YOU to those who have been so faithful in providing all the goodness we enjoy after worship! Please consider contributing and supporting the goodness we enjoy after worship each Sunday! Your gifts are appreciated!

Mowing! – The grass needs to be cut every week!

We need to cut it again every week. Please consider signing up for spring and summer lawn care. The lawn at church needs you... can you sign up for a weekend to cut? **THANK YOU** to those who have been so faithful in taking care of the church property and making it beautiful!



Weekly Cleaning! – The church needs cleaning every week!



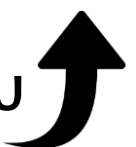
Please consider signing up for spring and summer church cleaning. The church building needs to be cleaned each week and we could use your help! **THANK YOU** to those who have been so faithful in cleaning the Lord's house and making it ready for worship!

Altar Flowers – Every week!

Please consider signing up for bringing altar flowers for our Sunday Worship. **We need flowers every week!** Signup sheet is located in the Fellowship Hall on the north facing wall.



PLEASE CONSIDER SIGNING UP TO HELP. WE NEED YOU





This past Sunday evening, May 5th, 2024 the Lord of the Church extended a Divine Call to me through the PNW District Mission Board to serve as the first pastor and home missionary in Bend, OR. I am humbled to receive this Call and grateful for the opportunity to consider how my gifts may best serve the kingdom of God by continuing in Portland or going to Bend. Holding these calls provides us all with a unique opportunity to pray for one another and the ministries we carry out. As always, all the leaders, members and friends of Grace Church are welcome to call, email, message, or text me your thoughts. I truly appreciate your input!

Grace Church Financial Update



"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing... If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. – John 15

We are One Together in ministry. Jesus is the Vine and we are the branches and connected to him we will produce much! In fact, connected to Him all things are possible!

The approved budget: Our Grace budget for the fiscal year 2023-2024 is set at **\$490,000** which calls for weekly gifts of **\$9423**. Last week's gifts totaled \$ 3,272.00.

Year to date: As of last week, the total amount of gifts we should have reached is **\$414,615**. However, at week 43, the amount in gifts we have received for the Lord's ministry is **\$341,866**.

Shortfall: Currently, there is a gap of **\$72,749** between the amount received and the amount budgeted.

We are grateful for the gifts of love that God's people have brought! This past week in addition to our weekly gifts several members have approached our leadership at Grace and have committed to make gifts to the Lord that will cover the shortfall and address some of our additional expenses! We praise God for moving the hearts of his people to express their love for Christ in such a generous manner!

Weekly Gifts: It's important to note that while our budget shortfall will be covered we still have an approved budget which requires **weekly gifts of \$9423**. We pray that every member at Grace is moved by their love for the Lord to give as generously and faithfully as He has enabled each to do. The Apostle Paul encouraged the church with these words **"Each one should give as he has determined in his heart, not reluctantly or under pressure, for God loves a cheerful giver. God is able to make all grace overflow to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will overflow in every good work... You will be made rich in every way so that you may be generous in every way, which produces thanksgiving to God through us. (1 Corinthians 9:7-8,11)"**

Grace Ministry has been blessed with many financial miracles for many years. God is good! We pray that God's children will give generously and joyfully according to His will. We are One Together in ministry.



Sunday SCHOOL

ROOTED IN GOD'S WORD
Growing in Faith Together

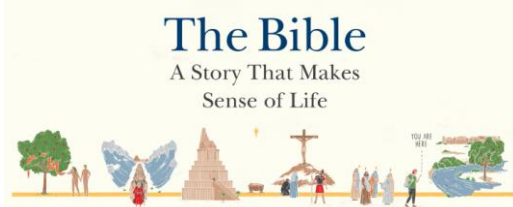
Sundays at 11:00 AM

Please plan on joining us after worship on Sundays for Bible Class and Sunday for every age! Following worship each Sunday we will continue to offer our refreshments & fellowship AND we will be adding to our opportunity for fellowship by offering Bible Class and Sunday School from 11:00 – 11:45. Please, plan to join us! Sunday School will be offered for kids Preschool – 8th. If you are interested in helping teach... please contact Pastor Bitter or Craig Baker.



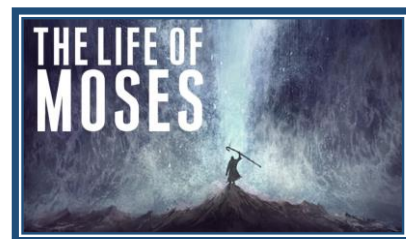
Sundays at 11:15 AM

Please plan on joining us after worship on Sundays for Bible Class as we continue our study of the Story of Scripture.
Teens to adults!



Wednesdays at 6:00 PM

Please plan on joining us on Wednesdays by clicking on to our Google Meet study. This fall we will begin a new study on the story of Moses. Join us as we discover the ways that God graciously equips us to bless others.



Saturdays at 9:00 AM

We are beginning our Confirmation Classes for students who are not able to attend during the week at GLS. This class is especially for 6th - 9th graders but younger students are also welcome to attend.



Saturday, May 18th at 8:00 AM

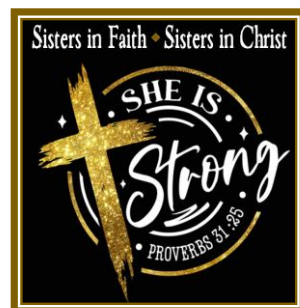
Men's breakfast and bible study! Bring your sons! Once a month we will plan to meet again for bible study and breakfast at 8:00 AM at the SCHOOL!
Please let Pastor Bitter know if you'd be interested in attending or helping organize.



Saturday May 18th at 10:00 AM

Women's Bible Study

Childcare will be provided. Come spend some time in God's Word together!



Sisters in Faith ♦ Sisters in Christ



NEW – Women's Bible Study!

Our Sisters in Faith – Our Sisters in Christ – Our Sisters in Scripture

Seeing God's strength and faithfulness in the lives of women.

At Grace Lutheran School

Childcare will be provided at Grace School by teens

COSTA MAYA MINISTRIES

MEXICO

Earlier this year, Missionary Jorge Briones recommended that 3 cities in the Yucatan Peninsula of Mexico be explored to start new churches. Those cities were Chetumal, Cozumel, and Merida. We have been praying for God's guidance in which of these cities would be the best place to plant a new church. Missionary Briones has traveled to these cities, met with fellow Christians in the area, looked at the safety of each city, and tried to determine the potential opportunities a new church would bring to those areas. Pastor Briones wrote about his visit to the city of Merida:

"In March I visited the city of Merida as part of the investigation to find a place to serve our Lord preaching his Word. Merida is one of the largest and safest cities in Mexico. I was able to interview a Korean couple (pictured below) who have lived several years in Merida and whom Pastor Carlos had met. They are Lutherans from a different denomination in Korea. They had been unable to find a Lutheran church in Merida. Though there are many churches, it is not common to find one that teaches healthy doctrine. As we discussed the plans we have to expand mission work, they were enthusiastic and willing to help. We continue to ask the Lord that he would guide us to go and expand his kingdom, producing the fruit he desires for the glory of His name."



While the visit to Merida went well, during a meeting at the end of April, both Missionary Briones and the Costa Maya Ministries Board prayerfully decided that the city of CHETUMAL would be the most fertile ground for starting a new church! Chetumal is the capital of the state Quintana Roo, located about 2 hours from Mahahual. With a growing population of around 300,000 people, the harvest is plentiful! The Briones family will be moving to Chetumal before the beginning of the next school year to begin their work there! Missionary Briones will keep in touch with his contacts in Cozumel and Merida so that in the future, God may bless us with even more opportunities to share the Gospel in those cities! We thank God for these new and exciting opportunities to share his Word with the world. Please continue to keep Missionary Briones and his family in your prayers as they proclaim God's Word in Chetumal!



Legal Status as a Religious Association

Cruz de Cristo Lutheran Church has been meeting as a congregation with a full time pastor since 2015. Now with our permanent church building completed, we are taking the next steps to become recognized by the Mexican government as a "Religious Association" - having the legal standing as a church.

A few months ago, Costa Maya Ministries Board members Juan Garcia and Pastor Dennis Kleist met with Attorney Jose Manuel, a man knowledgeable in this process, to begin navigating the legal course to receiving Religious Association status. This will bring tax benefits and other privileges to our mission similar to those enjoyed by US churches. Equally important, this status will be able to be shared with future new congregations gathered in the Yucatán.

What a blessing this is as Juan Garcia and Pastor Kleist met with Pastor Rosales and missionary Jorge Briones (pictured below) to discuss the exploratory work in Chetumal, Merida, and Cozumel! Prayers for God's continued blessings on our mission are greatly appreciated!



We love visitors! Pastor Carlos and his family with some friends of Cruz de Cristo.

THE MARY MARTHA GROUP

SOMETHING NEW- GRACE MARKETPLACE BOARD

Mary and Martha group has sponsored a new bulletin board called Grace Marketplace. The purpose is to give GLC members a place to post items they wish to sell/give that they no longer need. MM will take the responsibility of managing the board. The guidelines are posted on the board. You may post an item with a small photo or a good description on a notice no larger than 3x5 ins. The contact info will be a phone # with the person's last name. At the top of the notice please place the date posted. Notices will remain on the board no longer than 1 month or until removed by the owner.



YOU'RE INVITED!

Mary & Martha Meeting This Week

Tuesday, May 14th

Grace Church

10:00 AM



Mission to the Children (MttC)

April 23, 2024 email from John Kramer



Just to keep you abreast of the situation with cartel violence in Sonora (Mexico) where Mission to the Children works, I'm sharing a short update. The cartels are continuing the fight for US market share in the human trafficking and drug trade, a multibillion-dollar enterprise. The poor are the ones who suffer most. In Atil, about an hour south of the border where the mission has a house and chapel, a neighbor's house was set on fire this morning as punishment for some unknown wrong. Little about the situation in Sonora is making the news so I'm sharing a first-hand report written this morning from a person in a village near Atil that I've copied and pasted below."

"The people are not allowed to leave the villages they live in and if they are found with information about the local situation on their phones, they are severely punished. Spot checks of people's phones by armed men are common. The situation hasn't improved since last November, although no reports are surfacing of active gun battles at present. Yes, John, here the war has not ended, but we continue praying and more and more not to lose faith and that help will come from heaven. There are many sick people with stress and tension illnesses due to the situation and little work and so many things are going badly. I only ask you to communicate with the others that they will once again continue the same mission (in Sonora, Mexico) that they have in the past (once the present war is over), and we thank you for continuing praying and looking out for us, we are all family."

Alma

***Note: "little work" means little money and therefore little food.

John Kramer

AT GRACE SCHOOL



The Eagle Message Grace Lutheran School DECLARE *His* PRAISES

May 7, 2024

Chapel Service at 8:30 on Wednesday

We will have our weekly school-wide **Chapel Service** on Wednesday morning at **8:30**. Pastor Bourman will lead our worship this week. An offering envelope is being sent home for your child's mission offering.

We will support mission work at **Peridot-Our Savior's Lutheran School** on the San Carlos Apache Reservation in Arizona for the *Second Semester*. Your gifts will help reach more children and their families with the gospel. <http://www.poscrusaders.org/> Offerings gathered so far total \$453.68. Thank you.



School Fundraiser gathers almost \$6,000

Pastor Bourman will announce the classroom and individual winners **TOMORROW, Wednesday, May 8th** at chapel.

End of the year Field Trips

7th - 8th to Softball Tournament **Thursday, May 16th**

3rd & 4th to Oregon City **Friday, May 17**
permission form **attached**

Kindergarten to Kid's Club **Tuesday, May 21st**
permission form **attached**



May Hot Lunch

Our next Hot Lunch will be served on **Monday May 13th**. The meal will include Italian meatballs, Pasta, Fruit, Dessert and Beverages. The cost is \$5 per person. Payment can be made with EXACT cash or checks made out to *Working Eagles*.

Financial Aid applications DUE NEXT WEEK

The time to apply for financial aid for the 2024-2025 school year continues **through May 15, 2024**. If you would like to apply for financial aid, please fill out the application (**attached**) and submit the form **with your most recent 1040 tax form**. In order to process your financial aid application, **you MUST include the 1040 form and be current with your tuition payments**. If you have any questions, please contact our Board of Education Chairman Josh Luplow or Financial Aid Chairman Dan Paschke at financialaid@grace-wels.net. Families will be informed of the Board of Education/Grace Lutheran Church voters decisions regarding financial aid by **June 30**.



Softball Tournament Thursday, May 16th

Our 7th - 8th graders will be participating in a Softball Tournament with the other Lutheran Grade Schools on **Thursday May 16th from 8:30 to 2:30**. We will be hosting this tournament at the Columbia Little League Park (at the South end of David Douglas Park, off of Mill Plain Blvd. just west of I-205) in Vancouver, Washington. **Drivers/helpers are needed for this activity**. Even if you can just drop off and pick up some students, that would be very helpful! These students will return to school for the normal 3:00 dismissal time.

Please complete and return the attached permission form by THURSDAY MAY 9TH.

We will have a concession stand for players, parents and coaches at this tournament. **Volunteers are needed** to help with this food stand, which will include snacks, drinks, fruit, hot dogs and hamburgers. If you can help with this activity or have any questions, please contact Mr. Eternick jeternick@grace-wels.net or 920-988-1999.

GRACE SCHOOL RESTORATION & REPAIR PROGRESS

Many thanks to everyone who has commitment time and talents and money to help us begin to restore the school following the water pipe break this winter. We encourage everyone to look for opportunities to volunteer to help in the coming months.

PROGRESS!



FOR THE OREGON CIRCUIT!



Hillsboro Hops WELS Day June 16th, 1:00 PM. Please register at <https://hopeintigard.churchcenter.com/registrations/events/2279558>

Oregon Circuit Gathering! Saturday, August 10. Location to be determined. A gathering for the whole circuit. Music. Entertainment. Family fun for everyone!



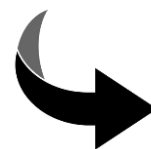
CANYONVIEW SILVERTON IS BACK... OREGON BIBLE CAMP!



Lutheran Bible Camp returns to beautiful Camp Canyonview in Silverton June 23-28. This is a wonderful opportunity for children going into grade 4-12 to make new Christian friends and spend time with old ones. Daily devotions, Bible studies, and the example of Christian adults will help feed and nurture the faith. Crafts, outdoor skills, sports, swimming, and other activities from the crazed mind of Pastor Tembreull provide fun for everyone and opportunities to build friendship and teamwork.

Details on costs and registration dates will soon follow but mark your calendars and make your plans today! If you have any questions call or email Pastor Tembreull: pastor@corvallislutherans.org or 541.231.6189. You can also follow Lutheran Bible Camp-Oregon on Facebook.

PLEASE LOOK ON THE NEXT PAGE FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION



Registration is open!

Lutheran Bible Camp

June 23-28

Lutheran Bible Camp is for young men and women who will be going into the 4th – 12th grades next school year (fall 2024).

Early Registration: April 21-May20- \$315

Registration: May 21-June 10- \$325

Late Registration: June 11-22- \$335

Registration includes three professionally prepared meals a day, room and board, and camp facilities.

Drop off will be on June 23, from 4:00-5:00PM

Closing Service and pick up June 28: 6:30 PM

Registration is online. You may use the QR code to find the registration site, find it on the Lutheran Bible Camp – Oregon on Facebook page or go to trinityeugene.org/bible-camp-registration. Please like and follow our Facebook page for information and updates.

Questions:

Pastor Luke Tembreull: 5412316189

pastor@corvallislutherans.org

Pastor Mark Swanson: 9206096204

mdws89@gmail.com



Checks can be made out to "Lutheran Bible Camp" and mailed to Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church, 2685 NW 13th St., Corvallis, OR 97330

About Lutheran Bible Camp:

This year our theme is: **Safe on the Rock**
As our lives in this world can seem unstable and uncertain, we can always rest secure on the solid rock, our unchanging God.

- Our goal is to encourage young people in their faith, build Christian character, and make Christian friends in a safe environment, while having as much fun as we can manage.
- This camp is overseen by WELS pastors and supervised by pastors, teachers, and members of the Wisconsin Synod and Evangelical Lutheran Churches of Oregon and SW Washington.
- All meals are professionally prepared and served buffet or family style so that everyone gets enough to eat. (Special diets will be accommodated with advanced notice.)
- We sleep in cabins divided by age. (The girls will bunk across the river from the boys.) You will bring your own bedding (sleeping bag/pillow) Bathrooms and showers are near all cabins.
- Our primary activity each day will be Bible Study and open discussion. We will also enjoy various crafts and activities. In the afternoon we play sports, swim, and explore the creek. After dinner, the whole camp joins in activities, and the evening ends with a devotion and campfire songs. (Campfire dependent on fire danger.)

Lutheran Bible Camp is run entirely by volunteers; however, facility costs are unavoidable. It is our goal that no one is kept from camp due to costs. If costs are the reason a child cannot attend our camp, please email Pastor [Tembreull](mailto:Tembreull@corvallislutherans.org) for financial assistance.



Evergreen Calls:

- Emily Muir *ACCEPTED* call to Lakeside Lutheran High School, Wisconsin
- Ryan Schmeling, ELHS *RETURNED* call to MLC, New Ulm, MN
- Brent & Lacey Sorn (Parkland / ELHS) *RETURNED* calls to Apostles, San Jose, CA
- Joseph Schmudlach ELHS *RETURNED* call to Onalaska Lutheran High School, WI

Pacific Northwest District Convention – June 4th & 5th

Location: Evergreen Lutheran High School at 7306 Waller Road East, Tacoma, WA 98443.

Presentation / Theme — Rejoice! The Christian's Battle Cry. Prof. Joel Russow of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary will present on three areas of strengthening relationships and extending Christlike love to lonely and hurting hearts. "In this world you will have trouble." We live in a world of death, mourning, crying, and pain. The bruising troubles of this life and the heavy barrage of the devil's attacks leave hearts, relationships, and homes lonely and hurting. But Jesus also said, "Take heart! I have overcome the world." (John 16:33)

Lay Delegate Attendance and Credentials — "Each congregation of the district shall be represented by a lay delegate, who shall be certified to the secretary of the district by his congregation" At this biennial convention each congregation seats one male lay delegate to represent your church and to vote. For that reason we ask that you would provide your delegate the proper materials and the credentials (Online Delegate Form) from the congregation they represent.

District Dues — Since "all expenses of the district convention... shall be paid by the membership of the district" your dues help cover convention expenses and provide modest travel equalization subsidy for those serving in the outer regions of our large district, as well as provide counseling for our called workers in the PNW.

Report to the Twelve Districts - Each congregation will receive one printed copy of the report by late May. A full electronic version will be available online in the first week of May. Please review the online material before the convention, so you are informed on discussions that may take place at the convention. Additionally, Floor Committees are being assembled to divide up the RTTD for summary and celebration at the convention.

Elections – Positions on the presidium and within the district be elected at this convention. This year, we have the privilege of electing our next District President following President Steinbrenner's move to Wisconsin.



EVERGREEN LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Happy May! I recently read a sentence that said that May is the month of “renewed energy.” I thought about this a little bit and came to agree with the thought. What a difference sunlight can make to our energy levels, what excitement for summer can do for our spirits, and what blooming flowers and clear mountain views can do for positive perspectives in our lives. This renewed energy makes me think of the verse in Lamentations 3, “Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning.” Every morning, God starts fresh with his love and compassion for us. It is not just a May thing; it is an everyday thing. How awesome to have a God whose blessings for us are immeasurable and unending every day. Here is a look at our past month and some things around the corner.

Auction – Earlier this month we had our “Reel Delight” auction. We raised over \$35,000 to replace the gym bench seats, upgrade some classroom tech, and feed into our tuition assistance fund. Thank you to all who helped donate items, purchase items, decorate, and support. We are truly grateful for all your hard work.

Calls – This past month was a busy one in the call world. We had 4 teachers holding calls at the end of the call season, Emily Muir, Joe Schmudlach, Lacey Sorn, and Ryan Schmeling. Emily has accepted her call to Lakeside Lutheran HS in Wisconsin and will move at the end of the school year. The other 3 calls by Joe, Lacey, and myself were all returned, and will be continuing ministry at Evergreen. Evergreen has placed a request to MLC for a graduate to replace Emily.

Dennis Gentele – Dennis will be officially and fully retiring at the end of this year. Dennis has been working and serving Evergreen for over 40 years. We are so grateful for the wonderful dedication that he and Pat have shared with Evergreen for so long. We wish them both God’s blessings and much-deserved REST in retirement. We would like to give Dennis a parting gift, if you would like to contribute, please donate to Evergreen with a memo “Dennis Gentele.”

Baseball – Districts/Playoffs start this Saturday (May 4th at 10am) in Kingston.

Track – The remaining meets are May 9th League Championship at Franklin Pierce, May 16 Quad Districts at Franklin Pierce, and May 23-25 State in Yakima.

ELHS/TELSS Band Concert is on May 10 at Evergreen at 7pm. We are excited to join our grade schools and our high school musical talents together for a wonderful concert.

ELHS Giving Day is May 22. We will have a \$15,000 match for our Evergreen Giving Day this year. We would love to hear all the reasons why Evergreen means so much to you.

End of Year Pops Concert is May 31st at 7pm at ELHS. Come see the wonderful talents of our students as they are excited to wrap up another year.

Graduation is June 1 at 2pm at Evergreen. We would love to see you come and celebrate the many accomplishments of our seniors.

We recognize that there are many different places where your gifts could be given. But we wanted to thank you for supporting the ministry at Evergreen. While other places are loosening their requirements, we continue to challenge our students academically and spiritually. We continue to give them opportunities to succeed and fail, but also give them encouragement and support as they grow through these moments. Thank you for these moments that we get to nurture and care for our teens and prepare them to serve their Savior in their lives.v

In Christ, Ryan Schmeling

Each week we will highlight ministry reports in the WELS annual report:

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Financial Services provides finance and accounting services that support WELS ministries and safeguard the assets that God has provided.

“WELS is in a very strong financial position as we enter the fiscal year 2023–24 and 2024–25 biennium,” notes Mr. Kyle Egan, WELS’ chief financial officer and treasurer. “It is with joyful thanks to our gracious Lord that the synod has continued to see strong levels of unrestricted support through gifts, grants, and bequests, which allows for the continued expansion of mission and ministry. We ask God to provide pure hearts, clear vision, and patient faith as the plans for this biennium are carried out.”

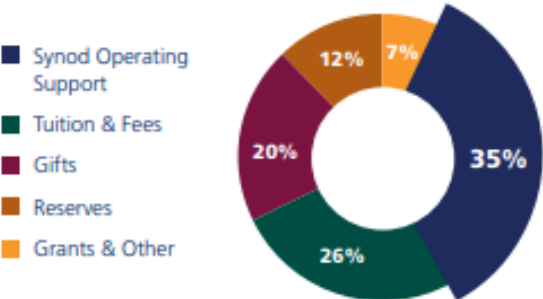
Congregation Mission Offerings (CMO) are critical to WELS’ financial position as they fund approximately 70 percent of WELS’ operating budget every year. WELS finished fiscal year 2023 (year ended June 30, 2023) with CMO of \$23.4 million, which was 1.3 percent higher than the previous year. **WELS is thankful for the continued generosity of its people in supporting ministry efforts.**

Other critical components to WELS’ financial position are strong reserves, including the Financial Stabilization Fund, which is utilized every year to support approximately 30 percent of WELS’ operating budget. The Financial Stabilization Fund holds all undesignated non-CMO funding sources (gifts, grants, bequests, investment income, and other support) to assist in supporting the synod’s annual operating expenses.

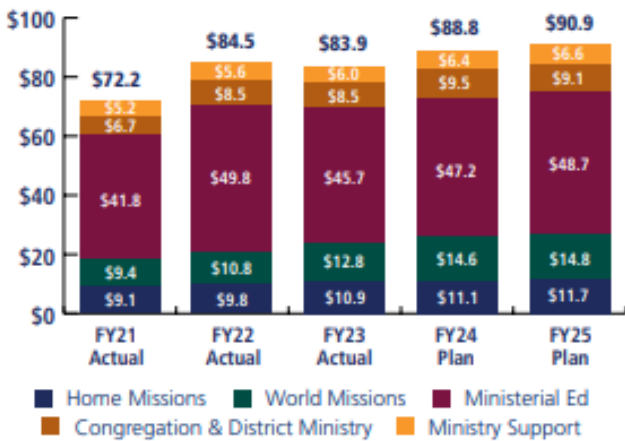
Synod convention delegates passed the proposed fiscal year 2023–24 and 2024–25 ministry financial plan in July 2023, which includes support for WELS ministerial education, home and world missions, congregation and district ministry, and general ministry. Total synod expenses (including the four ministerial education schools) for the biennium are expected be approximately \$90 million each year supported by synod

operating support consisting of CMO and the Financial Stabilization Fund (approximately 35 percent) as well as tuition, reserves, individual gifts, and grants (approximately 65 percent).

SUPPORT FOR SYNOD EXPENSES (in millions)



SUMMARY OF SYNOD EXPENSES BY FISCAL YEAR (in millions)



WELS BENEFIT PLANS

The WELS Benefit Plans Office (BPO) serves WELS and Evangelical Lutheran Synod workers and organizations through administration of the WELS Voluntary Employees’ Beneficiary Association (VEBA) Health Plan, the WELS Pension Plan, and the WELS Shepherd Plan.

The WELS VEBA Health Plan provides benefits for church and school workers and their family members in accordance with God’s Word while remaining compliant with applicable law. The VEBA Plan provides comprehensive, nationwide coverage. **More than 80 percent of WELS workers and calling bodies participate in WELS VEBA.**

The WELS Shepherd Plan is the retirement savings plan for synod workers. WELS called workers earn retirement benefits through defined contributions made to their Shepherd Plan accounts. In addition, workers can save

and invest a portion of their earnings and calling bodies can make employer contributions to provide income to workers during their retirement years.

The WELS Pension Plan provides WELS called workers with a valuable source of guaranteed income during retirement. The Pension Plan was frozen on Dec. 31, 2021. All Pension benefits earned through the freeze date will be paid to participants but no new Pension benefits can be earned for service performed after the freeze date.

Coverage and benefits provided through WELS Benefit Plans are uniform throughout all 50 states. This supports WELS ministry and the call process by providing access to high-quality, affordable benefits for workers and calling bodies regardless of geographic location. Visit welsbpo.net for more information.

Two Summer Conferences To Attend!

WELSWORSHIPCONFERENCE.NET

2024 National Conference

on Worship, Music, and the Arts

Sing a New Song to the Lord
July 30–August 2
CARTHAGE COLLEGE | KENOSHA, WIS.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- 50+ presentations
- Plenary address: "Lutheran Worship: What Now?" by Rev. Jonathan Bauer
- Vendors offering music, art, instruments, and professional services to congregations and individuals
- Concerts and recitals
- Keyboard and choral reading sessions on new repertoire
- Festival Choir (with full orchestra), high school Honor Choir (with full orchestra), and Children's Choir

REGISTER
EARLY-BIRD RATE
UNTIL APRIL 30
REGULAR RATE
AFTER MAY 1



REGISTRATION RUNS THROUGH MAY 31
\$150 EARLY-BIRD RATE UNTIL APRIL 30
\$175 MAY 1-31

REGISTER AND LEARN MORE AT
WELSWOMCONFERENCE.NET



WELS WOMEN'S MINISTRY CONFERENCE
JULY 28-30, 2024
THE INGLESIDE HOTEL • PEWAUKEE, WIS.

The foundation for the conference is Luke's account of the spread of the kingdom of God through God's chosen apostles and everyday believers. Learn from these early Christians how you too can be emboldened and empowered by the Holy Spirit to spread the Word!

WHO IS THIS CONFERENCE FOR?
Everyone! This conference is for any woman who is passionate about the spread of the Good News of Jesus in our world today, no matter her age and background. New to the faith or seasoned, married or single, this conference will encourage, equip, and empower you in your walk of faith.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- ☑ Four inspiring keynotes and a wide variety of breakout
- ☑ In-depth spiritual growth sessions
- ☑ Uplifting worship and devotions
- ☑ Delicious meals, snacks, and refreshments
- ☑ Ample opportunities to connect and network
- ☑ Ministry displays with helpful resources
- ☑ Curated marketplace of WELS women-owned shops
- ☑ Northwestern Publishing House bookstore

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

  @WELSWOMENSMINISTRY

Subscribe to the WELS Women's Ministry newsletter at wels.net/subscribe.

 **WELS**
CHRIST LIVES AMONG US

Boards & Committees at Grace

Church Council

Juan Garcia – President
Josh Luplow – 1 VP & BOE Chair
Jon Cohrs - 2 VP & Secretary
Larry Glasheen – Ministry CFO
Dan Paschke – GLS Finance
Thad Bitter – Pastor
Justin Eternick – Principal



Board of Education

Josh Luplow – Chair
Michael Godish
Dave House
James Settje
Tamm Godish - Preschool
Thad Bitter – Pastor
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Courage Mudzongo
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Pastor Bitter



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Pastor Bitter



Trustees

Ed Gillespie
Brian Boyer
Matt Ginnow
Kyle Leitzke
Tyler Hafner – GLS Custodian



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS FOR THE FESTIVAL OF ASCENSION 2024

Sunday Acts 1:1-3

- What was Luke's purpose in writing the Gospel which bears his name?
- What do you think the commands given to the Apostles by Jesus were about?
- For what was Jesus preparing them? John 20:11-13
- What else did Jesus do during those forty days between resurrection and ascension?

Monday Acts 1:4-5

- What is the implication in the word "ordered" in verse 4?
- Why is it so important for the Apostles to stay in Jerusalem waiting for the next event?
- What great event was going to take place ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven?
- Why would the Holy Spirit become such a vital force in the work of the church?
- Read John 14:25-31; Acts 2:41-47

Tuesday Acts 1:5-11

- What question did the Apostles add which indicated that they needed the Holy Spirit's help?
- How did Jesus respond?
- What does Jesus promise them again? Why is this so important?
- How far out is the work of the Word and Spirit to go? Is this still true? Mark 16:15-20
- What implication do we find in the question of the angel? John 9:3-5

Wednesday Ephesians 1:16-20

- List all of the words and phrases which speak of what we have received by the power of the Spirit?
- Why does Paul use the present tense (continuous action) for giving thanks and remembering the Ephesians in prayer?
- Who is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation and why does Paul call him that?
- How does Paul refer to the two greatest events in the history of Christendom which we are observing today and next Sunday?
- Why do we say that without Christ's Ascension and the work of the Holy Spirit there would be no hope for us?

Thursday Ephesians 1:21-23

- Where is Jesus now? Discuss all of the words which describe Jesus' lofty position?
- What is Jesus' desire about what should be proclaimed in His Name?
- Who is in charge of the Church? What is meant when we say that the Church is the body of Christ? Colossians 2:10-18; 1 Corinthians 15:12-28





Friday Luke 24:44-46

- What had to happen with everything that had been written in the Old Testament Scriptures? Why? If the Old Testament had not been fulfilled what would that have made of God?
- Why did Jesus open the scriptures for His Disciples? How does he do the same for us today? Romans 1:15-17; 2 Timothy 3:14-16
- List the ways by which we can maintain our God given wisdom.

Saturday Luke 24:47-53

- What two powerful messages were to be preached?
- What is the significance and content of each of these messages?
- What important and significant word is applied to the Apostles and to us in verse 48?
- For what were they to wait in Jerusalem?

Grace May 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 8:00 AM Indv Confirm 8:30 AM Chapel 9:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Class	2 8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation	3 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 9:20 AM PK Jesus Cir. Afternoon Member Visits	4 9:00 AM Confirmation 10:00 AM BOE
5 Easter 6 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday Sch 11:15 Bible Study (GLS at Hillsboro)	6	7 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 3:30 PM Staff Meeting	8 8:00 AM Indv Confirm 8:30 AM Chapel 9:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 6:00 PM Bend Mission Google Meet	9 ASCENSION DAY  8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation	10 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 9:20 AM PK Jesus Cir. Afternoon Member Visits	11 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 11:00 AM Dorothy Elsasser Memorial
12 Ascension Observed 9:30 Worship Communion 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday Sch 11:15 Bible Study 	13	14 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 10:00 AM Mary Martha	15 8:00 AM Indv Confirm 8:30 AM Chapel 9:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Class	16 8:00 AM 5-6 Confirmation 6:30 PM Church Council 5- 8 GLS Softball Vancouver, WA	17 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 10:15 AM Committal 9:20 AM PK Jesus Cir. 6:00 PM Preschool "Prom" Member Visits	18 8:00 AM FORGED Men's Bible Study 9:00 AM Confirmation 10:00 AM SISTERS IN FAITH Women's Bible Study 1:00 PM Piano recital at GLC
19 Pentecost 9:30 Worship 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday Sch 11:15 Bible Study	20	21 10:00 AM Circuit Meeting Immanuel, Salem	22 8:00 AM Indv Confirm 8:30 AM Chapel 9:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation 6:00 PM GLS Graduation	23 GLS Last Day School School Picnic Summer break begins 6:00 PM Preschool Graduation	24	25 8:00 AM 7-8 Confirmation
26 Holy Trinity 9:30 Worship Communion 10:30 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday Sch 11:15 Bible Study	27 	28 6:30 PM Elders	29 6:00 PM Google Meet Bible Class	30	31 