



TOWER ECHOES 2026

From the Pastor,

April showers bring May flowers. April Death and Resurrection bring May Ascension and Pentecost.

May flowers and the grass and the trees all grow better when April does its job and provides rain to provide moisture for those things that thrive when moisture is in the soil. A dry April means a difficult time for growing plants. It means humans need to pay more attention to watering the things silently begging for a drink.

Jesus needed to die with our sins upon himself so he could take them to the grave with himself. God needed to raise Jesus from the dead in order to conquer sin, death and the power of the devil. Jesus walked on earth following the resurrection for forty days. Jesus could not remain on the earth indefinitely because the Holy Spirit could only be sent after Jesus ascended into heaven and sit at the right hand of God. The apostles (the church) could only have the power to proclaim Christ if it received the Holy Spirit. The book of Ecclesiastes 3:1-2a "For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven; a time to be born and a time to die."

There really is a plan and timing for everything. One can't die if one is not born. One cannot ascend if one does not die and be raised from the dead. It is all part of God's plan. But so is the sending of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit gives us faith in God as the Father and Jesus as God's Son. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live out our lives in that faith provided to us.

God has a plan for us, but we are also responsible to live in that plan and to live out that plan. My two star words are "Be" and "Let Go". I get to be part of God's plan and let go of my plans that interfere with God's plan for my life. How does your star word help you live in the Holy Spirit this year?

Christ has ascended so the Holy Spirit may come to you.

Pastor Jim



On Sunday, May 3rd we will celebrate Rogation Sunday. Soil, Seed and Water.

We will recognize our Grace Lutheran 2026 Seniors with a Senior Breakfast on May 3rd. Graduating on May 9th from Johnson County Central are: **Kaiden Dorn and Owen Weber**. Congratulations to both of them.

Our final meeting for “Kids for Christ” will be May 13 for this school year.

Vacation Bible School will be our next opportunity to have youth worship and is planned to be held at St. Paul’s UCC, Osage, July 13-17 .

Please plan to attend “Kids for Christ” after school on Wednesday May 13.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 4th Sharley Thompson

May 6th Travis Armknecht

Aiden Weber

Allison Bousquet

May 8th Carol Armknecht

May 12th Isabell Gerking

May 13th Alta Bohling

May 15th Carl Purcell

May 27th Steve Schulte

May 28th Eunice Weber

Carol Wiebke

May 29th Blakely Kuhl

May 30th Bryce Cropp

Holly Kuhl

Henry Rolf

May Anniversaries

5/7 - Kyle & Ashley Wellensiek

5/25 - Madison & Logan Lang

5/27 - Dean & Jody Wellensiek

5/27 - Ryan & Amy Beethe

5/29 - Jack & Shelley Moles

Grace and Louis Bentzinger are now residing at Good Samaritan Center, 1622 Walnut St. in Syracuse 68446. Louis is in Room 105 and Grace is in Room 505. They have a new email address so that you can contact them also.

lb24849@gmail.com

Rite of Confirmation

Lucas Cropp, Jude Fricke and Hayden Wellensiek were confirmed at Grace Lutheran Church on April 26th.

Lucas' parents are Bryce & Lisa Cropp.

Jude's parents are Casey & Emily Fricke.

Hayden's parents are Bret & Melissa Wellensiek.

BASKETS OF PROMISE

The Women of Grace are again sponsoring the “Baskets of Promise” project for Lutheran World Relief. This has been a successful project, and we thank everyone who participated in the past and again this year. For 5 weeks, beginning April 12th, we will be collecting items that will be used to assemble the Personal Care Kits. We will end the collection on Mother’s Day as we honor these mothers by helping them ensure health for themselves and their families by being able to use these kits that we provide for them.

Bars of Soap (4-5 oz.) Any brand in the original wrapping.

Bath Towels (lightweight, maximum size 52” x 27”, dark colors are recommended).

Toothbrushes (adult size)

Sturdy Combs

Mother’s Day will be the last Sunday of the gathering,
but items can be brought at anytime.

Church Seasons: The celebration of the resurrection of Jesus continues until The Day of Pentecost, May 24 and then we enter the Time after Pentecost until the First Sunday in Advent.

Church Festival Days: May 1—Philip and James, Apostles

May 14— The Ascension of our Lord

May 24—The Day of Pentecost

May 31- The Holy Trinity

U.S. Holidays: May 1 – May Day

May 5—Cinco de Mayo

May 10 – Mother’s Day

May 16 - Armed Forces Day

May 25 – Memorial Day

Grace Lutheran Church Special Meeting March 29, 2026

The special congregational meeting of Grace Lutheran Church was called to order by President Cheryl Grundman at 9:18 am.

Cheryl Grundman discussed the need for a new water line. Cheryl stated the church received two anonymous donations totaling \$6,000. These donations should cover the expenses for the new line. A heartfelt thank you was given for these two anonymous donors and their extremely generous gifts. It was announced the donations from Easter offering will now go to NE Synod Mission Field. But should anyone wish to donate money toward a building fund, they may designate their offerings as such.

Cheryl told the congregation that a vote is still needed to approve the council to spend over \$1,000. A motion was made by Gene Ekhoﬀ to approve the water line project. Kate Dietz 2nd. Motion was passed by unanimous consent.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Weber

Grace Lutheran Church Council April 15, 2026

The regular meeting of the Grace Lutheran Church Council was called to order by President Cheryl Grundman at 7:02 pm – Members present: Cheryl Grundman, Mike Carman, Ryan Panko, Jody Wellensiek, Lisa Weber, and Diane Wilken (Church Treasurer). Owen Weber (excused). Pastor Helgren led with an opening prayer.

Minutes of the March 2026 meeting were reviewed. Jody Wellensiek motioned to accept and Ryan Panko second. Minutes approved.

The Treasurer's report was reviewed. Mike Carman motioned to accept the treasurer's report and include the added information categories, Ryan Panko second, motion carried.

Correspondence: none

Pastor's report:

March visits reported on shut-ins, hospitalized.

Pastor will attend a zoom workshop on April 23 "Preparing your Congregation for your Retirement Part 2". A Baptism for Asher David Moses will be held Saturday, May 16 at 10:00am. Asher is the son of Joseph and Shyanne (Thompson) Moses. Use of the church basement was also requested.

Property - (Mike and Ryan co-chairs) Mike gave an update on the waterline. Cheryl and Ryan attended the Village Board Meeting to discuss the waterline. The internet wire on the north side of the church has been buried. The repair of the neon cross on the exterior of the west side of the church was also discussed.

Worship, Evangelism & Fellowship - (Jody Chair) –none

Parish Ed & Young People – (all co-chairs) -none

Stewardship & Memorial – (Lisa Chair) a discussion was had on possible items to purchase with memorial monies. Brett Wellensiek will be looking into upgrades for the PA system. A discussion also included possible upgrades to the exterior cross. No decisions were made.

Old Business

Amy Woods held a meeting on April 7 to introduce herself to the church councils and discuss the PMA program and Synod resources.

New Business

An additional Visitation Training Class will be held on April 29th at 7:00pm. All are welcome. More classes will happily be scheduled for anyone else wishing to be trained in Visitations.

Possible changes to the church insurance plan were reviewed and discussed. It was noted that a congregational survey is beneficial before any significant changes are made. A change in plans was proposed that includes lowering the valuation to 80%, a premium of \$10,561, and an additional buy back option at approximately \$1,500. This buy back option will lower the deductible from \$19,000 to \$5,000. A roof replacement would include a \$5,000 deductible. It was noted the premium of a new plan would then be lower than the approved budget. A motion to approve the change in insurance was made by Ryan Panko, Jody Wellensiek, second, motion carried.

The PMA program was discussed, along with the use of the \$10,362 ELCA Investment Fund to pay for classes. Policies will be reviewed at a future meeting and updated to allow for the use of these funds. A motion was made by Jody Wellensiek to endorse Nick Weber for the PMA program. Ryan Panko second, motion carried (Lisa Weber recused). Paperwork will be sent to the Synod's office to start the PMA process.

Next meeting – May 11, 2026, at 7:00 pm.

Hope Council joined the meeting at 8:00pm to begin the discussions on arranging and scheduling services starting in August. Councils will continue to work on scheduling.

Meeting adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Weber

May 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
3 HS Senior Breakfast - 7:30 a.m. Rogation Sunday Worship w/Communion - 8:30 am Sunday School 9:30 am	4	5	6	7	8	9
10 HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY Worship - 8:30 am Sunday School 9:30 am	11 Grace & Hope Bible Study 2:00 pm Church Council 7:00 pm	12	13 Final Kids for Christ 4:00 pm	14	15	16
17 Worship w/Communion - 8:30 am Sunday School 9:30 am	18	19 Piecemakers Blanket Making	20	21	22 <i>TOWER ECHOES DEADLINE</i>	23
24 PENTECOST SUNDAY <small>Wear Red</small> Worship - 8:30 am Sunday School 9:30 am	25 	26	27	28	29	30 ELCW Synod Assembly @ Younes Center, Kearney May 29-31
31 Sing Fest Worship - 8:30 am Sunday School 9:30 am Synod Assembly Worship via Live Stream - 10:00 a.m. https://www.youtube.com/@NebraskaSynod						

WEATHER FORECAST

GOD REIGNS
and the
SON SHINES
EXPECT
SHOWERS
OF
BLESSINGS!



✓ Every day
GOD is good!

The LORD is my Shepherd Ministries

Grace Lutheran Church
306 N. First St.
P.O. Box 96
Cook, NE 68329



Church Office: 402-864-4201

Pastor Jim Helgren: 402-864-2113

Church Email: grace68329@gmail.com