

# *Voice of Grace*

*We are called to proclaim the Word and celebrate the sacraments.*

*We gather in Christian community for nurture and support. We are sent out in service to others.*

## *Hallelujah! He Is Risen!*



watercolor by Nina Daly

*He is risen, indeed! Hallelujah!*

*Worship - Sundays 10:30 a.m.*



*April 2023*

## Pastor's Message

Whew, time to take a breath after all that energy that went into Christmas!

Wait, what? We are through Easter already?!!

Time flies when you're having fun.

Another fun event waits just around the corner ...

Synod Assembly! Wahoo!!

What's that you say? Do I hear "What's a Synod Assembly?" and/or "ZZZZZZZZ ..."

Touché. This may very well be one of these things only "church nerds" actually get excited about.

Also, extra-nerdy factor: this is the first in-person assembly for the Southwestern Washington Synod and my first as a pastor in this synod. I am pretty stoked.

Why? What is this thing? It happens roughly every other year. Some synods, which are geographic "districts" if you will, of our national church body the ELCA, meet annually. The SW Washington Synod consists of almost 100 congregations in Western Washington south of the midway point between Seattle and Tacoma and all points west of that "boundary," to include all of our Olympic Peninsula. One or two elected lay members (if you recall, we chose Mary Ronen and Jan Schroeder at the January semi-annual meeting) and the pastor of each congregation, along with retired clergy in the synod, come together and do synod "business."

Asleep yet? Well, it's also more than that. There are opportunities for Christian education, learning what's going on in other corners of the synod and worship with a multicultural dimension (led this year by Light of Grace Korean Church in Federal Way. I attended the historic ordination of Jenny Kim, the first Korean-born woman ordained in the ELCA last year). We elect representatives to the synod council and a representative to the 2025 Churchwide Assembly, which happens every three years and can make substantial changes to how we do church locally, at this national-level gathering.

(Though extremely unlikely, I want to note if I were to be nominated for the latter role I would feel obligated to issue a "Shermanesque statement," i.e. "I will not accept if nominated and will not serve if elected." Don't get me wrong. I'd probably love to go in 2028 and ultimate-church-nerd it up but the 2025 Assembly will occur from July 28 to August 2 in Phoenix, Arizona. God and I made a little covenant after I served as a chaplain in Phoenix and a pastor in Montana that unless God sends Jesus back to drag me kicking and screaming against my will, I will never return to Phoenix and its 115+ degrees in the summer nor Montana, and its sometimes -30 temps before the wind chill factor is considered, in winter. Short of signs and wonders as depicted in the Book of Revelation, this is non-negotiable.)

The most recent synod assemblies have occurred via Zoom due to COVID and having attended Montana's in 2021 in that format, that is NOT fun. Like with many other activities, it is good to be together in 3-D again. This will take place Saturday, May 6, at Messiah Lutheran Church in Auburn. Assemblies have typically been two or three days in the past but post-COVID, change is of course the new norm. This will also represent a cost savings for our already-tight Grace budget as hotel will not be a necessary expense as a result.

More information about the Assembly can be found at [swwasynod.org/events](http://swwasynod.org/events). If you want to engage as a non-attendee, please check out the agenda, especially the resolution under consideration called "Covenant for Care for Creation." In short, the resolution commits us all as a congregation and a synod "to assess the impact that our activities and the use and maintenance of our property may have upon creation—in such matters as energy and water use, cleaning products, lawn care, paper use, food choices, recycling and waste, and transportation," among other considerations. Your voting delegates represent you and appreciate your input when deciding how to vote.

Last but not least, an unwritten fact about synod assemblies is some of the best stuff happens "in the hallway" as when getting a cup of coffee. Old friends are seen and new acquaintances are made. I look forward to seeing seminary colleagues, in some cases for the first time in a decade, and others such as Pastor Peter Mohr, Vanessa's youth pastor on Whidbey Island who became our pastor as a married couple in 2006-2007 when we lived in Puyallup. He helped inspire my own call to ordained ministry. Pastor Peter now serves a congregation in Centralia. I can think of others who moved to SW Washington from Montana Synod around the same time I did and I am sure I'll be surprised by other familiar faces I didn't expect as we gather for the event themed "Seeking God's Shalom."

Until then, and always, let us indeed pursue God's everlasting, abiding and transcending peace.

In Christ,

*Pastor Sean*



*see next page*

P.S. I feel like I have “church-nerding” to catch up on when it comes to synod assemblies. I felt weird not long after entering seminary for 1) not having been to one and 2) not even knowing these were a thing. I belatedly attended my first in 2017 as an intern at Grand Canyon Synod. I incorrectly assumed these were an occasion for formal dress. On the first day, I wore my bow tie. On the second day, I leveled down to the aloha shirts most were clad in. I have a wealth of closet space devoted to the latter and much less of the former after completing my hospital chaplaincy stints. Aloha, Synod Assembly 2023, here I come. I am ready with bells flowers on-

## Worship Service Changes

by Pastor Sean Janssen

The Church Council made the difficult decision at the meeting on Tuesday, April 18, to discontinue live-streaming our worship services

The unanimous vote comes after months of prayer, deliberation and discernment. This decision did not come easily. We recognize it inherently comes with a sense of having lost something that has been a big part of our ministry the last three years. However, with all things considered, we arrived at the consensus that this is a necessary change for the benefit of both the in-person worship experience and the staff and volunteers who have navigated a complex system to produce the webcasts.

We also recognize not every member of Grace will agree with this decision. We encourage your feedback and want your voice to be heard. Please reach out to a member of the Church Council or call the office and ask for Pastor Sean to have a dialogue about your questions and concerns.

It is vital that all of our members be able to continue to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion even when they cannot attend Sunday worship in-person. Please call Pastor Sean at the church office or email [revseanjanssen@gmail.com](mailto:revseanjanssen@gmail.com) to arrange home visits and the bringing of Holy Communion.

We will be resuming the audio recordings of the lectionary readings and sermon, and they will be posted to our website in lieu of the video recordings.

Easter blessings be upon you this season and God's peace be with you as well.



Palm Sunday at the Community Center

## Church Colors

What is the symbolism of the colors we use in church?

The choice of color in worship is more than making our environment pretty. It is used to help us understand where we are in our church year.

**White** is the color of light, gladness, purity, and joy in Christ. White is the liturgical color appointed for festivals of Christ—Christmas and its season, the Name of Jesus, the Epiphany, the Baptism of Our Lord, the Transfiguration, the fifty days of Easter, and Christ the King.

**Red** is the color of fire—the fire of the Holy Spirit. Red is used for the Day of Pentecost, Maundy Thursday, Reformation, ordination, and church dedications and anniversaries.

**Purple** is the penitential color of Lent.

**Blue** is the preferred color for Advent, because it is the color of hope, a central theme of Advent.

**Green** is the color of growth, and it is used during the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost, to represent growth of the Christian way of life and thought.

**Black**, the color of ashes and humiliation and mourning, is appointed for Ash Wednesday.

Paraments adorn the altar in in these appointed colors of the liturgical day or season, helping to make the altar the visual focus of the worship space. In pointing to the mayor season through colors, paraments serve devotional and educational functions. Paraments have been used since at least the fifth century A.D.

*.....Altar Guild and Sacristy Handbook by S. Anita Stauffer*

## Ultreya!

by Mary Ronen

What is a Ultreya? Literally, it is a Spanish word, meaning “Onward, or go beyond.” It is an extension of sorts of the Via de Cristo weekend experience, a reunion of others who attended past weekends. An Ultreya is a time for fellowship and sharing of individual experiences in spiritual growth.

Via de Cristo, also Spanish, is a phrase meaning “Way of Christ.” It is living out your Christian faith as a life style. It is not a church, a church within the church, nor a para-church organization. It is a Lutheran renewal comparable to Roman Catholic Cursillo®, and its priorities are on teaching the gospel of grace and encouraging a renewed personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Via de Cristo is inter-denominational and welcomes any and all Christians to attend.

Some of your friends here at Grace have attended one of these three-day weekends and continue to meet in reunion on 2nd and 4th Fridays of each month. On Saturday, June 10, we are hosting an Ultreya here at Grace, There will be music, prayer, and, of You are course, food (we are, after all, Lutheran!)

You are all invited to attend. There will be a sign-up sheet—just so that we kow how many to plan for.

## **2023 Orphan Concert— Save the Date May 28, First Presbyterian Church**

*by Sharon Dembro*

The program is looking fantastic! Please spread the word. Here is information about Grace's support of our children.

### **HOW IT STARTED**

Mark and Sharon Dembro met Father James Ssemakula, a priest at the Anglican church in Stockholm, when Mark was assigned to the U.S. Embassy in the mid-90s. In 1996 Father James returned to Uganda to work with AIDS orphans in Mpigi District. He supported 70 children with help from the Swedish government and private contributions and had started programs to empower women. Grace Lutheran began contributing to his work in 2002. Father James visited Port Townsend in 2005, speaking to area churches and other organizations about his work and receiving pledges of support. In August 2005, we learned that Father James had died suddenly while visiting his family in Sweden. We were at a loss to imagine how we could continue to help these children, now "orphaned" a second time. Bill and Gwen Howard had visited with Father James in Uganda and one of their contacts recommended a young man of integrity who would see that our money got to the orphans' schools. Kenneth Kasule has far exceeded our expectations. He:

- knows each child, their scholastic and other needs and aspirations
- visits their schools regularly and speaks with their teachers
- knows their home situations and intervenes to resolve problems
- takes care of their medical needs
- counsels them
- holds group meetings at the end of each school term to discuss school and other issues
- provides us with budgets and written accounts of all funds expended for each child

Kenneth was able to contact 35 of Father James' orphans. All of this initial group have finished secondary school and additional training courses. They are now middle-class citizens: nurses, beauticians, teachers, caterers, electricians, skilled carpenters, social workers, computer technicians, business owners, community health workers, and our first M.D.

We now support 28 children. Because of Kenneth's dedication they were able to continue studying during the two years of COVID school closures. In national tests, several of our students have scored at the top of their districts.

### **WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW:**

#### **ARE WE SUPPORTING AN ORPHANAGE?**

No. Our children live with extended family or with the remaining parent. If that situation is untenable, Kenneth enrolls them in a school that accepts boarders.

### **WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?**

Church budget funds are not used for this program.

Funding comes from Lisa Lanza's annual concert, the endowment fund, Thrivent, and individual contributors. In order to ensure the viability of the program, we need broad congregational participation. The amount pledged by members determines how many orphans we are able to help. Average cost per child is about \$500 per year including administrative expenses.

### **DO WE SUPPORT THE CHILDREN IN OTHER WAYS?**

Our support goes beyond financial commitment. We try to link each child in the program with a member of Grace with whom they exchange emails facilitated by Kenneth. We include an orphan each week in prayers during the Sunday service. We contribute to a fund to buy a special Christmas gift for each child. This year all the children received a pair of shoes and a backpack.

### **HOW ARE OUR FUNDS ACCOUNTED FOR?**

Kenneth submits a budget itemizing projected costs for each school term. He disperses the funds to the schools our children attend, scans the schools' receipts for each child and transmits them to us via email. We pay about \$160 per three month term for his transportation and communication expenses including his cell phone, internet subscription, and transport costs to go to the children's schools. Kenneth receives a salary of \$40 per month for his services. He also receives about \$200 per term to be used for emergency medical and other expenses.

### **HOW DO WE TRACK OUR CHILDREN'S PROGRESS?**

After each term, Kenneth scans and sends the child's school report. These are then forwarded by email to those writing to the student along with letters the child writes to his/her Grace pen pal.

### **HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE PROGRAM?**

A pledge request goes in the mailbox of each member of Grace early in the year asking for a financial commitment to the program for that year. These commitments determine how many orphans we can support. Although the cost per child varies depending on school and grade, we estimate \$500 per year (this includes administrative expenses).

Just as important is the relationship we build with each child through our letters. We have several students in need of correspondents.

### **WHY SHOULD I SUPPORT THE ORPHANS?**

There are 15 million AIDS orphans in Africa, 1 million in Uganda alone. Without education, their likely future is begging or prostitution, and possible early death from AIDS. Grace Lutheran, and others in our community, have participated in a miracle—these throw-away children, with our help, become productive, working, middle-class citizens. For the program to continue, it needs the broad involvement of the congregation. Another benefit beyond price —their prayers for us.

## Connecting With Others by Rev. Jeff Lee

Submitted by Jim Norman  
Reprinted with permission:  
Restoration Church, [restorationva.org](http://restorationva.org)

### What is your level of connection with others in the church?

Connecting into a local church can be a challenging step. In many cases, people can feel like there are cliques and that it is very hard to make new friendships. This is a major challenge for any church community.

Larry Osborne, pastor and leadership expert, shares these words about how people connect or “stick” in churches in his book *Sticky Church*.

“I think of people as being like Legos. We all have a limited number of connectors. Introverts have a few. Some extroverts have dozens. But either way, once they’re full, they’re full. And when that happens, we tend to be friendly but to not connect. It’s what happens when you move to a new town and are excited by everyone’s friendliness, only to be discouraged three months later that



you haven’t connected with anyone. When Nancy and I meet someone new, we’re very friendly. Say you’ve just moved into our neighborhood. We might bring you some fresh-baked cookies, invite you over for coffee or a barbeque. But to be honest, we won’t connect on any sort of deeper level. If we have some extra time, tickets to a ball game, or a chance to have some friends over, we’ll use it as an opportunity to reconnect with the people we’re supposed to be close to but haven’t seen in three weeks-or three months. This can be very confusing and frustrating for people who are new to a community or church. The acts of friendship send one message, but the lack of connection sends another. It’s why so many people complain about churches being cliquish. The reality is, it’s not so much a church full of cliques as it is a church full of people whose connectors are already full. Obviously, this can be a huge problem when it comes to assimilating new people into a small group or even a congregation. New people, by definition, have lots of empty connectors. They usually share with other new people a very strong desire to get connected.”

How does this open up your eyes to the challenges of connecting people into a church community?

We all need to assess our level of connection. On the one hand, if we feel like we are not connected into a church community, then we need consider if we are investing the necessary time and energy for building new relationships. On the other hand, if we feel connected in a church community, then we need to consider if we are making space for new people when God brings them. Both of these considerations play a vital role in opening the way for new people to connect

into a church community.

We are like Lego pieces. We only have so many connect points.

We need to assess whether we are making the effort if we do not feel connected. If we do not invest the time and energy to try to connect with others, then we will not make those connections. We cannot expect to show up to a worship service once per month while not engaging in other events or groups and expect to make connections. Our Lego pieces will never come into meaningful contact with others.

We need to assess whether we are opening up space for others if we do feel connected. If we do not open up time and relational space for others, then we will not be available for new people to make connections with us. Our Lego pieces will remain full and new people will connect with us.

God is building up His people by joining people together in meaningful relationships. God’s love and grace flows through real people in real relationships. Our role is to discern what we need to do to be open to those God-given connections with others.

### Going Deeper and Prayer:

- How does God build up His church based on Ephesians 2:19-22 and this devotional?
- What comes to your mind when you assess your level of connection?
- To what extent do you invest the necessary time and energy to make meaningful connections with others? What stands in the way? What choices are you making?
- To what extent do you open up space for others to make meaningful connections with you? What stands in the way? What choices are you making?
- God made space for you. He commands us to make space for others. What can you and others do to take a step of obedience?
- Take some time to pray about your relational connections. Consider your level of connection and then ask God what you can do to either invest your time & energy into new

### A Prayer for Patience and Understanding

Dear Lord, please help me. I lay before you my tiredness and ask for new energy. I lay before you my frustration and ask for more patience. I lay before you my resentment and ask for peace. I lay before you my judgement and ask for inspired understanding. I lay before you my anger and long to be forgiving. Please help me, dear Lord.

*Read more like this at: [living-prayers.com/petitions/](http://living-prayers.com/petitions/)*

## Reconciling in Christ

by Mary Ronen

What do you know about “Reconciling in Christ”? What is RIC? The RIC Program is made up of Lutheran congregations, synods, colleges, seminaries, outdoor ministries, and other Lutheran organizations.

As stated on their website, (*ReconcilingWorks.org*), its purpose “is to ensure the welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions; to work for racial equity and commit to anti-racist work.” The SW Washington Synod website says it “celebrates the presence and gifts of our \*LGBTQIA2+ siblings in Christ. The synod’s RIC Work Team is working for true hospitality toward LGBTQIA2+ people and to remove barriers to full participation in the Southwestern Washington Synod.” There are many churches in our area from all over who are active in this movement.

Even though we as churches say “all are welcome,” LGBTQIA+, and Black, Brown, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) continue to experience exclusion, discrimination and harm. By following the ReconcilingWorks program, there is full welcome with inclusion and equity of ALL in ALL areas. It is a fundamental Christian value and it is what we are called to do.

ReconcilingWorks builds community and fosters welcome and acceptance in all Lutheran settings. It advocates for the changes necessary to ensure full participation in all areas. An independent, Lutheran, membership-supported organization, ReconcilingWorks is committed to work for positive change.

LGBTQIA+ and others experiencing exclusion and discrimination are able to search for a faith community in their area that is a welcoming one by checking the website,

## CPR and AED

An AED, or automated external defibrillator, is used to help those experiencing sudden cardiac arrest. Chuck Thompson demonstrated how to use this device, which is located in the narthex by the mailboxes. Here, he is showing the proper way to do CPR.



## Women of Grace New Reading Group

Recently some of the women here at Grace met in order to brainstorm for an activity that would appeal to some, if not all. They voted at that time to get together to read and study a book. The book they chose to begin with is one by Shannon Bream, *Mothers and Daughters of the Bible*. We gather in the church library after church every other Sunday. Our discussions are based on study questions that are included in the book.

All women at Grace are welcome to join us. Questions? Ask Tammy Rumpel, Mary Ronen, or Miriam Gaenicke.



## A Habitat Home for Judy

A cause for celebration—Judy is now happily settled in her new home. Judy is pictured here at her House Blessing, receiving the keys.



# Grace Gallery

## Stations of the Cross

by Nina Daly

You may remember that there was a time when First Baptist in Uptown hosted gallery walks during Holy Week called the Stations of the Cross. Many of our artists from Grace participated. Each artist was given a station with the accompanying Bible reading. I remember this being a time of deep searching and sorrow as all Jesus went through became more meaningful while we worked on our art pieces.

The first time I participated, I was given the station of the Garden of Gethsemane. It brought up times when I was not a part of a church and how alone I felt. I was able to get into how Jesus felt when his disciples fell asleep. Another station I had was when Jesus was put in the tomb. I did a lot of investigation about tombs during that time. A friend of mine had recently gone to Turkey and had taken many photos of the ancient tombs there. They were a great resource.

I also remember getting together with my artist friends and talking about the difficulties we had creating the pieces and the emotions we were going through. Much has happened since we participated in the Stations of the Cross. One of our artists passed away and the other moved. The pandemic happened and things just never seemed the same to me as there was so much loss.

This year, somehow it seemed right to bring out our remaining artwork from that time and show it in the gallery. Once again, a sense of all those emotions came through. Changes have happened since we first created the art, but God remains the same. A God who loves us so much He gave His only Son to die for us.

Some of this artwork is shown on this page.



Art work was displayed in the sanctuary on Good Friday at the Stations of the Cross worship service.





## Rise: A Devotional

by John Pavlovitz  
johnpavlovitz.com

submitted by Cornne Bugbee

### Examine Your Day with the Examen

Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuit order, taught the practice of examen. He recommended that the brothers examine their lives twice each day—at lunch and at night before bed. I like the examen questions as interpreted by the authors of *Sleeping with Bread*, a book by Dennis, Sheila and Matthew Linn:

For what moment today am I most grateful? For what moment today am I least grateful?

When did I give and receive the most love today? When did I give and receive the least love today?

When did I feel the most alive today? When did I feel the life draining out of me?

They say to ask God to bring to your heart the moment for which you are the most grateful. Then they suggest you breathe in gratitude and thank God. Then ask God to bring to your heart the moment for which you were the least grateful. Ask yourself what happened in that moment that was so difficult. Be with the answer without trying to fix it or change it. Breathe out fear.

*This message is excerpted from "How do you renew your spirit in Lent?" by Kate Elliott from the March 5, 2020, Gather magazine.*

### Quilt Raffle

Grace quilters want to thank the congregation for supporting the quilt silent auction. With a match to the bid amount, they were able to send \$500 to Lutheran World Relief for Turkey Earthquake Relief.



....Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven." ---Luke 5: 17-20

"I've battled depression for a couple of decades, and I'm grateful for that. Not necessarily for my illness, but grateful for the fact that I'm still here battling means I'm still here, while so many are not. I think about people in my life, or those I've known from a distance, whose stories have ended while I'm still co-writing mine. There are reasons for this, many which I'll never really understand, but some that are easy to identify. One reason I'm still here is that I have often been carried by the love of good people. I've been fortunate to share life with human beings who showed up at the right time and, through their generosity or kindness or humor, simply saved my life.

For this reason, the account of a man being brought to Jesus by his friends has always been meaningful, because it reminds me of how powerful community is in helping us when we exhaust our resources, the way it fills in the gaps and sustains us in the painful seasons. There is a beautiful absurdity in the image of a group of people so desperate to help a man they love that they climb on top of a house, dismantle the roof, and lower him down to Jesus. Audacious stuff. I used to wonder what the carried man felt in those moments as he descended through the ceiling, but after enduring years of illness, I understand. I know what it is to be helpless and then helped. I know how it feels to be that loved. The community of carriers hasn't just allowed me to overcome the overwhelming, but it's taught me how to be one of those determined friends, too. I want to be the kind of friend who carries someone when they need to be carried. I want to be the kind of a friend who will not be dissuaded by the crowd. I want to be the kind of friend who rises to the rooftops and does something outrageous so that someone else can know healing. Be a carrier when you can but allow yourself the blessing of being carried."

### An Apache Prayer

submitted by Barbara Gould

May the sun bring you new energy by day.

May the moon softly restore you by night.

May the rain wash away your worries.

May the breeze blow new strength into your being.

May you walk gently through the world,  
and know the beauty all the days of your life.





Lucy Hladecek recently celebrated her 83rd birthday!  
Happy Birthday, Lucy!

She would love to hear from you. Send a note or a card to:

Kristen Diamandis  
792 San Lorenzo Street  
Santa Monica, CA 90402

### Greetings from the Dinkelmans!

We're happy to announce that our son, Andy Dinkelmans — Richard Andrew Dinkelmans, Jr.—will be graduating on May 6, 2023 from Washington State University. Andy has earned two Bachelor of Science degrees, each with honors, in Neuroscience and Psychology.

During the next year Andy will be working and deciding what type of graduate school he wishes to attend.

Andy was baptized on December 17, 2000, at Grace Lutheran Church in Port Townsend.

*Dick and Debra Dinkelmans*



A delicious pancake supper was provided by Men in Motion on Shrove Tuesday





### Pastor Sean's Birthday Party

On April 2, we honored Pastor Sean on the eve of his birthday with cake and decorations.

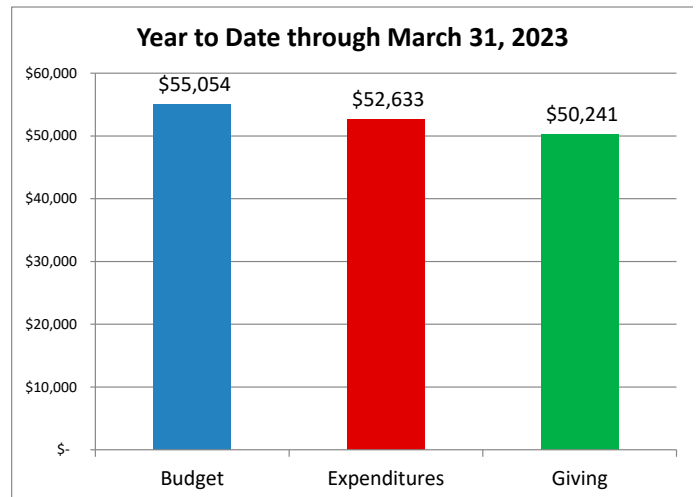
### Mark Your Calendar

Worship, Sundays, 10:30 a.m.  
 Quilting, Mondays, 10 a.m.  
 Prayers Against Cancer, last Monday of each month, 2 p.m.  
 Lectionary Study, Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m..  
 Real Life 101, 4th Saturdays, 11 a.m.  
 Men's Bible Breakfast, Fridays, 8 a.m., at The Roadhouse  
 Via de Cristo Reunion, 2nd & 4th Friday evenings, 5:30 p.m.  
 Council, 3rd Tuesdays, 5:30 p.m.  
 Women's Book Study, alternating Sundays after church  
 Congregational Meeting, Sunday, June 25 after church



*Let's fill this up.*

### Grace Financials



#### Grace Council

**President:** Mary Ronen  
 maryeronen@gmail.com  
**Vice President:** Tammy Rumpel  
**Secretary:** Jan Schroeder  
**Ministers:**  
**Resources (Treasurer):** Dennis Struecker  
**Fellowship:** Jim Norman  
**Facilities:** Steve Brantner  
**Worship/Music:** Nina Daly  
**Stewardship:** Mark Dembro  
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