

Grace Lutheran Church
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Messenger June-July 2026

From the Pastor's desk...A Farewell

After two years of serving as your Interim Pastor, it is time to say good-bye. My last Sunday at Grace will be June 7, and then both you and I will turn towards new blessings. I'm so excited for you as you welcome Pastor Liz and her family. And I'm so grateful for the many ways Grace has been a gift to me!

My family is off to new adventures in coming months. I have accepted a call to St Peter's Lutheran Church in Indooroopilly, which is in Brisbane, Australia. I will be one of the first female Pastors in the Lutheran Church of Australia, as they just approved women's ordination in October, 2025. My husband, Eric, is returning to being a professor of theology, history, and ethics, and he will be working remotely from Brisbane at the seminary in Adelaide. In Brisbane he will also be at a great location to connect with Lutheran church bodies throughout Southeast Asia. I'll be curious to see how my EMT certification works or doesn't work in the Australian system. You can follow my adventures on my Facebook page, "Pastor Wendolyn Trozzo."

We are awaiting our visas in order to move, which should arrive sometime between August and November, during which time we will probably be enjoying our cabin in West Virginia, but who knows – that may be

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Staff at Grace

Rev. Wendolyn Trozzo, Interim Pastor
Scott J. Breiner, Music Director
Corinne Rhodes, Administrative Assistant
Heidi Toth, Church Treasurer
Sandy Piskun, Financial Secretary

Joseph Martin, Church Council President
Jim Dolan, Church Council Vice President
Jayne Lare & Linda Rihl, Church Council Secretaries
Alison Toth, Social Media Consultant

enough time for me to do another Interim stint! We wait on the Holy Spirit for what our address will be in coming months. Our older son, Dante, is now planning a wedding with his bride-to-be Nicole, as they enter their senior year of college in Ohio. Our younger son, Cade, graduates high school in June and is going to attend an amazing Lutheran school, Susquehanna University, in Pennsylvania. He will major in communications/broadcasting and is still intending to become a Chaplain in the US Navy.

As you wish me God-speed, I wish you farewell. I do believe that you will fare well under the care of Pastor Liz, both because of her love and her skill, and because you as a congregation offer so much love and such effective ministry. It is far easier to say this good-bye because I know our time together has been good, and because I am entrusting you to a loving God and an excellent pastor. Blessings abound!

In Christ,
Pastor Wendolyn

Report from Council President, Joe Martin

Pastor Wendolyn will be with us until June 7th. Pastor Frey will be finishing her present calling on May 31st and will begin her work at Grace on June 14th. We are so grateful to Pastor Wendolyn for seeing us through the last 2 years and also to the Call Committee that worked so hard to find us a new Pastor that the Congregation voted overwhelmingly to join us at Grace.

Council has agreed to form a security team for the church. Linda Savage and Joe Martin attended a County seminar on April 28th which was very informative. If anyone would like to join this group, please let Joe Martin know. Many (if not most) local houses of worship have very active security teams and we will be playing catch up.

As part of our security measures, we have begun locking the church doors at around 10:30 am during the service. While this is all very unfortunate, it is necessary to keep the congregation safe. Doorbell buttons have been installed at each sanctuary door in the event someone gets locked out. If you are late to church and the doors to the narthex are locked when you arrive, please ring the bell outside and wait for an usher to let you in.



BAPTISMS

On Sunday, May 3, Grace Lutheran celebrated the baptism of Banks Douglas Stewart and his father, Ryan Brad Stewart!
Congratulations, Banks and Ryan!



Call Process Completed

The Call Process at Grace has now officially come to a close. We extend our gratitude and appreciation to Reverend Wendolyn Trozzo, who has been our Interim Pastor for the last two years. Pastor Wendolyn's last Sunday with us here at Grace will be June 7. We will have a special fellowship for her immediately following the 10:15 AM worship service on that Sunday, which will give everyone a final opportunity to thank her and wish her well as she and her husband, Rev. Dr. Eric Tozzo get ready to embark on their upcoming ministry in Australia!



We want to give a warm welcome to Reverend Elizabeth Frey, who has been called to and accepted the position of Pastor of Word and Sacrament at Grace Lutheran Church! Many thanks to Wendy Dolan, our Call Committee Chair and all who served on our Call Committee, for their time and dedication to this call process. The congregation of Grace had an opportunity to meet our pastoral candidate at a Meet & Greet Italian Dinner from Sal's Woodfire Pizza, which was held at



Grace on Saturday, April 11. This successful event was sponsored by Thrivent. We recognize and appreciate the generous donations made by Glen Stewart, Shirley Blankenship, June Jordan, and Kathy Ruffenach.



On Sunday, April 12, our pastoral candidate led and preached at our worship service. This was followed by a congregational meeting, at which time Pastor Frey was voted in with overwhelming success as our full-time pastor at Grace Lutheran Church!

Pastor Frey's first official Sunday as our pastor at Grace, will be June 14. We will have a special fellowship luncheon for her immediately following the 10:15 AM worship service on that Sunday.

Food Pantry News



The Future Act Club from Jordan Road School traveled to the Grace Place Food Pantry on April 28, 2026. They arrived with “Birthday Boxes”. The students collected cake mixes, frosting, candles, paper plates, plastic forks, napkins and candles. They assembled them in aluminum baking pans. They took time to label each box for male or female customers. Forty-four boxes were donated. Each pantry friend was happy to receive this thoughtful celebration box!

Grace Place Food Pantry is continuing strong in its mission of providing food for our neighbors in need who live in the communities of Northfield, Linwood and Somers Point!

State and federal funding, which provides assistance to food banks continues to be cut dramatically. *Grace Place* is very fortunate in that we have so many who contribute on a regular basis to assist our neighbors. We are an Ecumenical Food Pantry and that means many of our area churches donate. Friends and various organizations have food drives to benefit our pantry! People continue to come weekly with their contributions of bread, butter, eggs and much more. We have friends who bring in produce they grow in their own gardens! Our bagel supplier continues to be in business and drops off bags of bagels occasionally. We even get ice cream from a business who wants to remain anonymous!

Grace Place Food Pantry is a community endeavor! We are very grateful to everyone for the donations we receive!

We look forward to continuing to feed our neighbors in 2026 and we are appreciative to Grace Lutheran Church for housing our pantry all these years! Last year, *Grace Place* began to do our record keeping on line via Oasis! FYI – I can report it’s going very well! It eliminates hours of paperwork each week.

Sincerely,

Jim Cordery, Director, *Grace Place* Food Pantry

Grace Stitchers and WELCA **20th Annual Baby Shower for Shore Memorial NICU**



A wonderful NICU baby shower was held at the church on May 15, in support of Shore Medical Center in Somers Point, NJ. We were especially grateful to have Nicole, the head nurse at the maternity ward, join this celebration. Grace Stitchers and WELCA along with our brothers and sisters from Reformation Lutheran Church, Absecon,

helped make this event possible and lovingly stitched the blankets, hats, and booties. It was a beautiful opportunity to gather, connect, and show support for the hospital's NICU. We are grateful for everyone who helped make the day such a warm and memorable occasion, and for the generous gifts from our congregation!



Facilities Update

There has been some activity within the food pantry as we teamed up with volunteers to convert an underutilized room into much needed food pantry storage. Adjustable shelves were added and quickly filled with food and other supplies. We have also been working on our entry doors to make our church facility better secured during worship.

Our next project will be outdoors. Our plan is to remove the holly tree at the columbaria and add an evergreen tree before the Christmas season begins. This may include removing the large river rocks at the base of the present tree and replacing it with concrete or other hardscaping as this would be a gathering space at a memorial service or other events. There is a long history of this tree and its connection with a local family. We will present our idea to them and ask for their thoughts and any ideas before moving forward with our plans.

Honorary Mention: Congratulations to Rev. Dr. Julie Haspel, daughter of Grace Lutheran Church, and sister of Patty Dunn and Edna Cordery, for completing her Doctor of Ministry in theology!

June Worship Assistants:

6/7 Edna Cordery
6/14 June Jordan
6/21 Kevin Thomas
6/28 James Ehrhardt

July Worship Assistants:

7/5 Corinne Rhodes
7/12 Shirley Blankenship
7/19 Meg Markkanen
7/26 Ruth Bowden

Happy Birthday

June

6/2 Linda Rothermel
6/3 Frank Corradetti
6/3 Doug Siteman
6/3 Kristin Wolak
6/5 Katrina Flamm
6/8 Bettie Cross
6/9 Robin Bitzberger
6/11 Mary Ellen foster
6/19 Walter Foerst
6/22 June Jordan
6/23 John Bradley
6/23 Jim Foreman
6/23 Peg Stasuk
6/24 Sara Blumenthal
6/26 John Staples
6/28 Donna Martin

July

7/2 Meg Markkanen
7/2 Vernon Ogradnek
7/15 Jim Dolan
7/17 Mike Reynolds
7/19 Donna Berenotto
7/24 Michelle Kleuser
7/26 Lillian Young
7/27 Nathan Bilello
7/27 Zander Bilello
7/29 Diane Graham

HAPPY Anniversary!

June

6/4 Holly & Meredith Henry
6/8 Corinne & Scott Rhodes
6/9 Sandy & Mike Piskun
6/22 Sharon & Jim Ehrhardt

July

7/1 Robin & Al Johnson
7/6 Wendy & Jim Dolan
7/31 Laura & Doug Siteman