



# Grace Abounds

May 2026

*A Center of Mission and Ministry – Celebrating and Sharing God's Grace!*

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## MAY EVENTS

- Yard Sale & Tabling Event - May 2<sup>nd</sup>
- Preschool Year-End Programs – 6:30pm May 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>
- Youth Sunday & Graduate Recognition May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Pentecost Sunday May 24
- 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Gathering May 31<sup>st</sup>

## FROM PASTOR DAVE'S DESK

With the month of May comes longer days, warmer air, and the unmistakable signs of new life. Trees that were bare just a few weeks ago are full again. Gardens are beginning to show green shoots pushing through the soil. The sweet tastes of strawberries and other fruits from God bring joy to our taste buds as we cherish some of the finer things in life! The season of Spring also reminds us of something God built into His creation from the very beginning: **growth** — growth is possible—sometimes quietly, sometimes suddenly, but always with purpose.

Jesus used this same picture when He spoke about our lives. In John 15, He said, “I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who remain in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” Fruit does not appear by accident, and it does not grow overnight. It comes from staying connected—day by day—to the One who gives life. If you have felt spiritually dry, distracted, or stuck, May is a wonderful time to hear the Lord's invitation again: **abide**. Stay close. Let Him nourish what He wants to grow in you.

Lasting growth tends to come from steady routines, not from sudden or extreme actions. It comes from regularly reading scripture even during busy times, making prayer your immediate response, attending worship when staying home seems easier, and taking small steps of obedience even when you are unsure of what comes next. It is also important to remember that not all growth is visible right away. Some of God's deepest work happens under the surface—strengthening roots, healing wounds, reshaping desires, and teaching trust. You may not see immediate results, but that does not mean nothing is happening.

As we move through this month, I want to encourage you to choose one area where you are asking God for growth. One beautiful way to grow together is to share your gifts into the next generation through our Vacation Bible School (June 22–26). As you pray about your next step, consider one of these simple actions:

- Pray daily for VBS—for the children who will attend, for families in our community, and for every volunteer who will serve.
- Volunteer in one role, big or small. We need helpers throughout the week (June 22–26) and before, and we will gladly match you with a place that fits your gifts and availability.
- Invite and encourage, personally invite a family, offer to help with registration, or reach out to someone who may be willing to serve but has not stepped forward yet.

If you would like, share your “growth focus” with a trusted friend so you can pray for one another and watch for God's faithfulness together.

May the Lord make this a month of healthy, Spirit-led growth for you and your family. And may our church grow as well—not just in numbers, but in love, unity, and Christlike maturity. Let us keep our hearts open to what God wants to do, trusting that in His hands, the seed He has planted will bear fruit in due season.

Blessings always, *Pastor Dave*



**Serving in MAY**



**Birthdays**

- 1 Mike Hall
- 8 Lyric McCormick
- 9 Payton Metts, Sharon Neel
- 18 John David Dawkins
- 19 Michael Riley
- 20 Kim Metz (Married to Craig) 😊
- 24 Pastor Dave
- 28 Tim Dominick
- 29 Caroline Whitlock
- 31 Len Fulmer

**Anniversaries**

- 17 John & Judy Bedenbaugh +
- 22 Chad & Candace Frick
- 29 Brad & Melodie Waters

**Baptism Anniversaries**

- 1 Susan Dawkins
- 13 Edwina Wicker
- 15 Donna Hall
- 23 Heather Harris
- 26 Zach Frick
- 29 George Dawkins, Jr.



**May Sanctuary Lamp**

During the month of May, the Sanctuary Lamp burns to the glory of God and in loving memory of David Riley by Edna Riley.

**Assisting Ministers**

- 3 Allie Waters
- 10 Jessica Shealy
- 17 Ronnie Cromer
- 24 Teresa Cooper
- 31 Melodie Waters

**Altar Flowers**

- 3
- 10
- 17
- 24 Pastor Dave & Diane Adams
- 31

**Live Stream Operators**

- 3 Jessica Shealy
- 10 George Dawkins
- 17 George Dawkins
- 24 Brad Waters
- 31 Mike Whitlock

**Acolytes**

- 3 Jonathan Shealy      10 Hannah Moates
- 17 Raelynn Wessinger      24 Zoe Frick
- 31 Allie Waters

**Crucifer:** 5/24 Jonathan Shealy 5/31 Lillie Waters

**Torchbearers:**

- 5/24 Jaxon Yarborough and Ladison Kendrick
- 5/31 Mollie Waters and Hannah Moates

**Communion Assistant** Cayce Moates

**Communion Preparation** Sue & Wayne Mitchell

**Communion Clean Up** Judy Bedenbaugh,  
Nancy Derrick

**Ushers** Nathan, Camryn & Jonathan Shealy,  
Deborah & Phil Ruff

**Greeters** Nancy Derrick, Meggie Kendrick

**Offering Tabulators** Deborah & Phil Ruff,  
Camryn & Nathan Shealy

**Front Sign** Dale, Julie & Jessica Shealy

**Altar Guild** Brad & Melodie Waters

**Pew Rack Helper** Nancy Derrick



A note to all of our friends,

Heather is getting along at White Oak of Newberry. I visit to help and have lunch with her. They are taking good care of Heather.

Agape Care of SC is looking after us as well.

Thank you for the birthday wishes and all the visits and phone calls.

Bob and Heather Harris



Congratulations to **Raelynn Wessinger** who was inducted into the National Junior Beta Club at Pomaria-Garmany Elementary School!

Congratulations to **Matthew Shealy**. He is now the new Director of Communications and Marketing for the College of Visual and Performing Arts at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC.

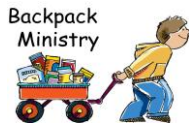
His new address is: 2281 Eden Terrace #104  
Rock Hill, SC 29730

### Manna House Item for May:

#### Ramen Noodles

Donations can be left in the Manna House box in the narthex. You can also help by donating gift cards to Food Lion or Walmart. Thank you.

### Backpack Ministry



We continue to feed 12 needy children each weekend at Prosperity-Rikard Elementary School. If you would like to help, please check the list of needed items on the narthex bulletin board. Leave you donations in the red wagon and please check the expiration dates on what you donate. Thanks!



**Grace Family:** Diane Adams; Cissie & Bob Dibble; Evelyn Harmon; Bob Harris; Faye Hartman; Pastor Al Potter; Marysue Rivers.

**Residential Care:** Heather Harris; Wendy and Michael Riley

**College Students:** Payton Metts (*Piedmont*); Camryn Shealy; Bailey Stewart; and Allie Waters (*Newberry College*)

**Extended Family:** Bishop Ginny Aebischer; Nancye Bailey (*the Dibble's daughter*); Kathy Buchanan (*Beverly Hawkins' cousin*); Terry Dickert (*Sheila Martin's brother*); Don Denton & Jeff Gonzales (*Diane Gonzales' brother-in-laws*); Pat Penland (*Johnny Merck's sister*); Randy Turner (*Cayce Moates' dad*)

**Community:** Ember Corley; Marilyn Seymour; Steve Culbertson, Young Ran (*Melinda McCormick's friend*)

**Military:** Everett Crafts, V (*Air Force -Glenda Craft's grandson, Walker Eldridge (USCG/Seattle, WA)*).

**God's World:** Global Concerns: Individuals affected by conflict, such as those in Israel, throughout the Middle East, Ukraine, and various African nations; Military families both domestically and internationally; People impacted by natural disasters including hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, floods, and earthquakes; victims of gun violence; Those experiencing homelessness; Individuals who are unemployed or underemployed; Refugees worldwide; Those facing hardships due to unfavorable economic conditions; and our adversaries.

**To add or remove a name from the Prayer List, please contact the office at 803-364-3331 or [gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com](mailto:gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com) or leave a written note in the office box. We would like to keep this list up to date as much as possible.**



**Deadline for our June/July Summer Newsletter is May 19<sup>th</sup>.**

# WORSHIP

Sunday	ATTENDANCE		Total
	Sanctuary	* Online	
3/29	63	18	81
4/05 Easter	102	21	123
4/12	60	18	78
4/19	57	14	71
4/26	61	14	75

✓ **Sunday School**  
**ATTENDANCE**

3/29 - 33      4/05 - 36  
4/12 - 23      4/19 - 24  
4/26 - 29

## April Memorials and Honorariums

### To the Current Fund:

- Kevin & Diane Wicker in honor of Edwina Wicker on her birthday.
- Beverly Hawkins in memory of Margaret Cromer
- Debbie Dominick in memory of Fred David Riley on his 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday, 4/12.
- Phil & Deborah Ruff in thanksgiving for God's great gift of human love.
- Emmett Wicker in memory of Kay Chandler
- Kim & John Uhas to the glory of God and in memory of the wedding anniversary for Judy and John Bedenbaugh May 1959.

### To the Youth Ministry:

- Lynn & Larry Wessinger in honor of the Youth of Grace Lutheran Church

### To the Scholarship Fund:

- Judy Bedenbaugh in memory of Margaret Cromer (Faye Hartman's sister)
- Judy Bedenbaugh in memory of Kay Chandler

### To the Community Service Fund:

- Edwina Wicker in memory of Kay Chandler

### To Lutheran Disaster Relief

- Timothea Sharpe in honor of Kelli Fulmer



## Offerings for April

(Does Not Include April EFTs)

GOAL through 4/26/26 =  
\$ 61,923.18

Given through 4/26/26 =  
\$ 42,471.35

Amount behind goal = \$19,451.83

### MINISTRY BUDGET Our Monthly Need:

**\$ 15,784.33**

Given during April .....\$ 11,423.75  
Given year-to-date ..... \$ 42,471.35  
Goal through April 26.....\$ 61,923.18

### MAINTENANCE/UPKEEP

Given during April .....\$1,299.00  
Given year-to-date.....\$4,989.68

### SUNDAY SCHOOL

Given during April .....\$134.00  
Given year-to-date .....\$434.00

### SCHOLARSHIP

Given during April .....\$ 40.00  
Given year-to-date .....\$515.25

### COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND YTD

Community Assistance .....\$545.00  
Bookbag Food Ministry .....\$248.67

### SPECIAL 2026 OFFERINGS YTD

Souper Bowl of Caring Offering .....\$ 420.00  
Youth Ministry ..... \$422.57  
Parsonage Fund .....\$24,931.21  
Lenten Offering .....\$736.00  
Easter Lilies .....\$235.25  
Disaster Response .....\$ 50.00



## Electronic Giving

Electronic Giving is an option at Grace through Vanco. Scan the QR Code or go to our online giving page via [graceluth.org](http://graceluth.org) to get started.



# Council Minutes

MEETING – April 14, 2026

Len Fulmer called the meeting to order with a reading of the Mission Statement. Devotions were shared by Edwina Wicker based on the book of Jonah.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastors Bobby Morris and Randy Derrick are working to re-start an 8th grade religion class at Mid-Carolina. Prior to Covid this class ran Monday - Friday off campus for 9 weeks. Pastor Dave, Len, and Johnny Merck will attend the 2026 SC Synod Assembly to vote on a new bishop. Diane Adams has a new cardiologist associated with MUSC. Diane has an ECG scheduled for April 27 and will likely need open heart surgery within the next 5 to 6 weeks.

**Adoption of Reports:** Len moved to adopt the reports as presented, seconded by Andy Metz, and passed.

**Discussion:** Johnny has contacted a contractor, Sid Gaddis, to look at the situation and quote a price to replace the sanctuary lights with LED lights.

Craig Metz reported that the parsonage work will continue as soon as the water shut-off valve is located. Water was cut off 12 years ago and grass has grown over the valve. Water is needed for cleaning and continuation of work and Craig expects to resume work shortly.

George Dawkins presented a plan to add AI Clips to our current restream software plan at a cost of \$19/month. With this service Grace will be able to add up to fifty 5 minute restream clips each month to our Facebook and YouTube accounts. There is also a need for a new laptop as the one in use is not reliable or adequate for streaming. George presented considerable research on alternative laptop computers. Johnny made a motion to purchase the best valued top pick laptop computer, seconded by Andy, and passed. Andy moved to add the AI Clips to our current plan, Linda Cromer seconded the motion, and it passed.

Len announced that the new Men's Group will have its first meeting at the end of May with the date and time to be determined.

**Ministry Team Updates:** Julie Shealy noted that the Care and Fellowship Team's first Fifth Sunday Meal March 29 was a big success with visitors who may be interested in joining Grace in attendance. The next Fifth Sunday Fellowship Meal will be on Sunday, May 31.

The Lifelong Education Team's Sunday School Easter Celebration had 37 members for breakfast and featured live chicks and puppets for the youth. This Team is currently working on Vacation Bible School which is scheduled for the week of June 22 through June 26. The theme for VBS this year is 'Celebrate the Savior' and volunteers are needed.

Grace will sponsor a Yard Sale from 9 am - 1 pm on Saturday, May 2 to support the American Cancer Society and coincide with the Prosperity's Hopping event. Brochures will be available to make an impression and re-introduce Grace to the community.

**Shepherding Concerns:** Concerns were shared for Diane Adams, Kelli Fulmer's brother in Saudi Arabia, and Matthew Shealy who is starting a new job at Winthrop.

The next council meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5th at 6:30 pm in the Ministry Center.

Pastor Dave closed the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

David Luther - Council Secretary





Grace will sponsor a yard sale and tabling event on Saturday, May 2, in conjunction with the annual Prosperity's Hoppin' with Arts and Crafts Festival. The yard sale will last from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will benefit the American Cancer Society.

In addition, we will have a tabling event where we will share information about Grace, including our worship times, Preschool materials, VBS registration fliers, and other information about Grace's ministries. This will be an opportunity to let our community know more about our Grace congregation.

For the yard sale, we will need all types of items. Please start looking around your house for items you can donate. Clothing donations should be clean and folded neatly with minimal wrinkles. We will begin accepting donations after worship on Sunday, April 26. Deadline to bring items for the sale will be Friday, May 1, at noon.

We would also appreciate donations of breakfast items, snacks, and sandwiches to fuel those who will be working this event. Look for a sign-up sheet on the narthex board later in April.

This event is being sponsored jointly by our Care and Fellowship Team, our Community Hope Team, our Good News Team, and Grace Christian Preschool. If you have questions about this event, contact Julie or Jessica Shealy, or Emmett Wicker.

## 2026 Grace Graduates

The date for Grace's annual Graduate Recognition is Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>. These are the graduates we know of:

*Mid-Carolina:* Zoe Frick, Hunter Hall, Lyla Kendrick

*Spring Hill High:* Hunter Neel

*Piedmont Tech:* Payton Metts

Please let the church office know of any Grace member who will be graduating from high school, tech school, or university in May or June (or who has graduated since May 2025) as soon as possible. We don't want to leave anyone out.



### Youth Sunday

Grace Youth will lead our worship service on May 17 as we celebrate both Youth Sunday and Graduate Recognition. Please support our Youth as they offer themselves as worship leaders and share special music. We will be practicing in the Sanctuary during Sunday School on May 3, 10, and 17. All Youth are encouraged to be a part of this special service.

### Join Us for Fifth Sunday Fellowship

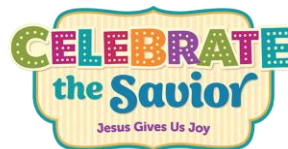
Our second Fifth Sunday Fellowship of 2026 will be a covered dish meal on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> after worship. Bring a covered dish (or several) or pick up something from your favorite grocery store deli. We hope everyone will join in this time of fellowship with our church family.

Our first Fifth Sunday Fellowship was March 29<sup>th</sup>. Good food and fellowship was enjoyed by all who attended. The Care & Fellowship Team is sponsoring Fifth Sunday Fellowship each 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in 2026.



### Youth Swim Party

Mark your calendars Youth! Our end-of-school swim party and pizza lunch will be held Sunday, June 7, after the morning service at the home of Phil and Deborah Ruff. Bring a towel and drinks for your family. Friends are welcome too!



### Vacation Bible School - June 22-26

Grace will host Vacation Bible School Monday, June 22 through Friday, 26 from 6:30-8:00pm each night with a light supper provided at 6:00pm. This year's VBS theme will be **Celebrate the Savior: Jesus Gives Us Joy**.

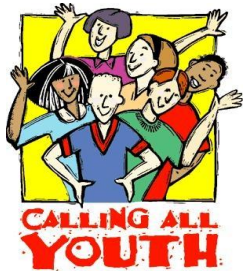
All children from age 2 to just completed 6<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to join us for learning and fun. Register now by going to [myvbs.org/graceprosperity](http://myvbs.org/graceprosperity). This link can also be found at [graceluth.org](http://graceluth.org) or on our Facebook page. Flyers with registration information will be on the table in the narthex to share with your grandchildren, neighbors, or friends with children.

We will need many volunteers to help with VBS. We need adults to lead stations for crafts, storytelling, music, and games; to take groups of children from station to station; and to prepare and serve meals. The sign-up sheet is on the narthex board. Youth above grade 6 are encouraged to serve as helpers and leaders. Contact Julie or Jessica Shealy for more information on volunteering.

Food donations for meals will also be needed. Look for a sign-up sheet to be posted on the board soon. Monetary donations are also welcome to help cover the cost of craft supplies, decorations, and food for meals. Use any envelope and mark it "VBS". Thank you for your support of our VBS ministry.



Monthly GYM Time  
ON SUMMER BREAK  
May - July



### YOUTH Sunday is Back!

Grace Youth will lead the May 17<sup>th</sup> worship service as we observe Youth Sunday. You will read lessons, lead our music, and serve in other leadership roles as ushers, greeters, and communion assistants. We will be making assignments and practicing during Sunday School on May 3, 10, and 17. Please plan to be a part of this special Sunday!

### Save the date for VBS!

Grace Youth are encouraged to participate in Grace's Vacation Bible School the week of June 22-26. Youth who have completed 7<sup>th</sup> grade and up will be needed to serve as group assistants and station helpers. Preschool aged and K-6<sup>th</sup> youth are invited to participate as students.

### Thanks for Supporting our Youth!

Thank you to Dale & Julie Shealy for preparing our delicious April GYM Time meal of hamburgers and hotdogs, and sides; to Judy Bedenbaugh for providing potato chips; to Teresa Cooper and Lynn Wessinger for providing desserts; and to Mike Shealy and Lynn Wessinger for providing drinks!

### April GYM Time

During our devotion time, we continued seeking to answer the question "What is Jesus like?" by turning to John 6:1-13 and Ephesians 2:10 to discuss how Jesus feeds us and works through us – and how we are created to do good works and God has a plan for each of us.



Sundays, May 3, 10, & 17 – 9:30 a.m.

**Practice for Youth Sunday**

Sunday, May 17 - **YOUTH SUNDAY  
& Graduate Recognition**

Sunday, June 7 – **SWIM PARTY**  
at the home of Phil & Deborah Ruff  
Noon – 2pm

Tuesday, June 23 – 12:45-2 p.m.  
**GYM Volunteering at Manna House**



The Three Puppeteers of our Youth and Young Adults Sunday School class did an egg-cellent job sharing a special Easter message during the Easter Celebration on April 5<sup>th</sup>. Thanks also to Kelli & Len Fulmer for providing the baby chicks for the show!

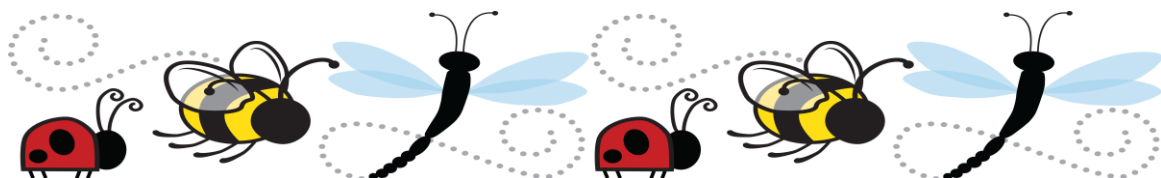


At Grace Youth Ministry's April GYM Time, we enjoyed a delicious hamburger/hotdog meal, we packed the weekly food bags for our Backpack Ministry, played an exciting game and had devotion time.

# May 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Manna House Item this Month: <b>Ramen Noodles</b>					1 Ministry Center Reserved	2 <b>YARD SALE</b> 9-1
3 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	4	5 6:30 Council Meeting	6 Each Wednesday: 6:00 Women's Bible Study 7:30 Choir Rehearsal	7 Each Thursday: 6:00 Confirmation 6:00 Joyful Noise	8	9 Ministry Center Reserved
10 <b>Mother's Day</b> 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship 	11  6:30 Preschool Program	12  6:30 Preschool Program	13 ↓	14 Last day of Preschool 	15	16 <b>Armed Forces Day</b> 
17 <b>Youth Sunday</b> 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	18 5:30 Worship Team Meeting	19 <b>MAY Newsletter DEADLINE</b>	20	21	22	23
24 <b>Pentecost</b> 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship	25 Office closed <b>Memorial DAY</b> 	26	27 Newsletter Team 9:30	28	29 	30
31 9:15 Breakfast 9:30 Sunday School 10:30 Worship <b>5th Sunday Fellowship - lunch</b>						





## Grace Lutheran Church

210 Grace Street  
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Prosperity, SC 29127  
www.graceluth.org 803-364-3331  
gracelutheranprosperity@gmail.com

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

# Coming up in June

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June 7

June 11-13

June 22-26

Youth Swim Party after church

SC Synod Assembly in Columbia

Grace's Vacation Bible School

*Please register on our website!*