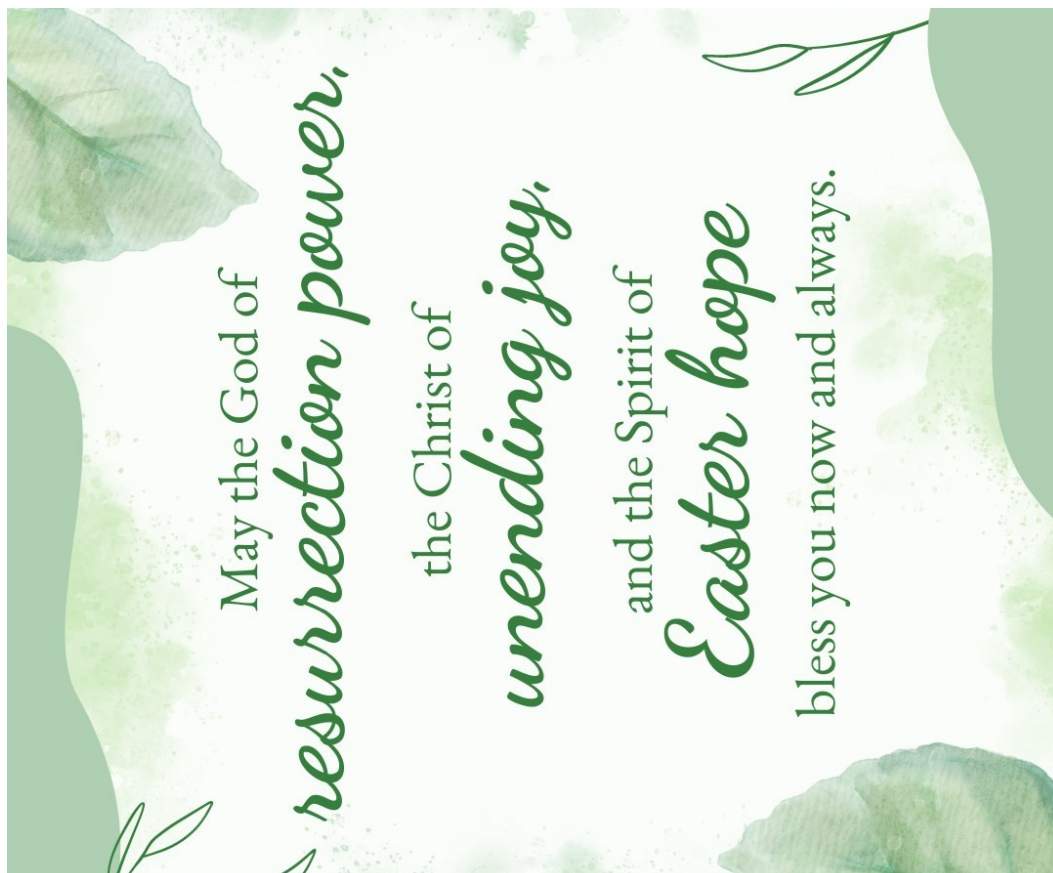


“Grace Greetings”

April 2025



Grace Lutheran Church
521 Providence Road
Chesapeake, VA 23325



<https://linktr.ee/gracelutheran>

Grace Lutheran—a community of believers in Christ called to be servants to all people.



Grace Lutheran Church

A worshipping community of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

www.GraceLutheranChesapeake.org

April 2025 "Grace Greetings"

Mission Statement:

We are a community of believers in Christ called to be servants to all people.

My Recap of and Takeaways from the Congregational Values Workshop

For those of you who weren't able to join us for the Congregational Values Workshop in March I wanted to give you a little insight into what we talked about, what we discerned together, and our initial action steps.

Pastor Liz Radtke, from the Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop, came to lead the workshop. She started by asking us to answer three questions:

1. Think about a time when you knew you were in the presence of God.
2. What brought you to Grace Lutheran, and what keeps you coming?
3. Who is God calling Grace Lutheran to be right now?

She instructed us that if we had multiple answers to any one question, to put each answer on one post-it, and encouraged us to use as many post-its as necessary. Then we grouped like answers to each questions and looked for themes. Here is what we came up with.

1. Love, Hope, Compassion, Peace, Community, Life Events
2. Support, Worship, Outreach, People, Welcome, Practical
3. Inclusivity, Servants to all, Welcoming, Internal Community, Role Models

Then she gave each of us some gold star stickers and told us to vote for the things that were most important to us. We then looked at how the categories got ranked by our value voting.

After conversation, Pastor Radtke pointed out that we seem to prioritize our connections to God and to our wider community, and that we don't put as much emphasis on our relationships with one another within the congregation. Pastor Radtke talked about how focusing on those relationships—getting to know one another and strengthening those bonds would help us to engage more and flourish in our relationships with God and our neighbors. As soon as she said it, I realized that I had been feeling this, but didn't have words for it. We at Grace have a profound sense of God sending us out, but we need to prepare ourselves first. To use the VA Synod's theme image for the year (based on John 15) we need to feed our roots before our branches can effectively reach out anymore.

So then we brainstormed some ways that we could work to strengthen our relationships with each other. These are some of the ideas we came up with:

1. Form a team of people with applicable gifts to help welcome visitors and shepherd them as they get to know the people of Grace.
2. Have more intentional mixing and mingling at Fellowship Events—not just sitting and talking with the same people all the time.
3. Wear nametags

You may notice an emphasis on these things and more in the near future as we strive to live in to who God is calling us to be.

God Bless,
Pastor Leslie

EVENTS

Mark your Calendar

| | | |
|--------|---------|---|
| Apr 1 | 10am | Threaders |
| Apr 2 | 6:30pm | Lenten Soup Supper |
| | 7:15pm | Holden Evening Prayer (Hybrid) |
| Apr 6 | 9am | Sunday School (Hybrid) |
| | 10am | Worship (Hybrid) |
| | 11:30am | Craft Group |
| Apr 7 | 9am | Food Pantry |
| | 1pm | Bible Study (Hybrid) |
| | 7pm | Bell Choir Rehearsal |
| Apr 8 | 10am | Threaders |
| | 7pm | Council (Zoom) |
| Apr 9 | 6:30pm | Lenten Soup Supper |
| | 7:15pm | Holden Evening Prayer (Hybrid) |
| Apr 12 | 8am | Men's Group |
| Apr 13 | 9am | Sunday School (Hybrid) |
| | 10am | Worship (Hybrid) |
| | 11:30am | Unconscious Bias Training |
| Apr 14 | 9am | Food Pantry |
| | 1pm | Bible Study (Hybrid) |
| | 7pm | Bell Choir Rehearsal |
| Apr 15 | 10am | Threaders |
| Apr 16 | Noon | Ladies Lunch Out |
| Apr 17 | 7pm | Maundy Thursday Worship (Hybrid) |
| Apr 18 | 7pm | Good Friday Worship (Hybrid) |
| Apr 19 | 7pm | Tidewater Conference Easter Vigil (Hybrid) |
| Apr 20 | 9am | Easter Potluck Brunch |
| | 9:30am | Egg Hunt |
| | 10am | Easter Worship (Hybrid) |
| Apr 21 | 9am | Food Pantry |
| | 1pm | Bible Study (Hybrid) |
| | 7pm | Bell Choir Rehearsal |
| Apr 22 | 10am | Threaders |
| Apr 23 | 6:30pm | Potluck Dinner |
| | 7pm | Bible Study (Hybrid) |
| Apr 27 | 9am | Sunday School (Hybrid) |

| | | |
|--------|--------|-------------------------------|
| | 10am | Worship (Hybrid) |
| Apr 28 | 9am | Food Pantry NO Bible Study |
| | 7pm | Bell Choir Rehearsal |
| Apr 29 | 10am | Threaders |
| Apr 30 | 6:30pm | Potluck Dinner |
| | 7pm | Bible Study (Hybrid) |



Sunday School Sundays at 9am

- The **Elementary School Class** will be led by Pastor Leslie Weber and meet in **Classroom #1**.
- The **Middle & High School Class** will be led by Rebecca Headings and will meet in the **Youth Room**.
- The **Adult Sunday School Class** will be led by Rich Fraenkel and will meet in the **Fellowship Hall and on Zoom**.

Hybrid WORSHIP

Hybrid Worship Sundays at 10am

Join us on site or online. Zoom log-in information is available at www.gracelutheranchesapeake.org/news--upcoming-events.



Monday Bible Study (Hybrid)

Mondays at 1pm

- Join via your computer/smartphone/tablet by clicking this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87081895614?pwd=KrF2VVmWJh96XPelnoL6XarMkD9Zy.1> (Passcode: Grace).
- Join via phone, by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 870 8189 5614 and Passcode: 940613.



Bell Choir Rehearsal

Mondays at 7pm

If you are interested in getting involved, please talk to Morgan.



Threaders

Tuesdays at 10am

The Threaders meet on Tuesdays at 10am to make walker bags for people throughout our community. There are jobs for various skill levels: sewing machine operator, button

sewer, iron operator, etc. Questions? Contact Jane Jennings or Peggy Barry.



Craft Group

Sunday, April 6th after worship

Calling all knitters, stitchers, scrapbookers, etc.—let's get together and work on our projects. Bring a bag lunch and meet in the Fellowship Hall after worship service. Any questions, contact Sandra Fraenkel.



Council Meeting (Zoom)

Tuesday, April 8th at 7pm

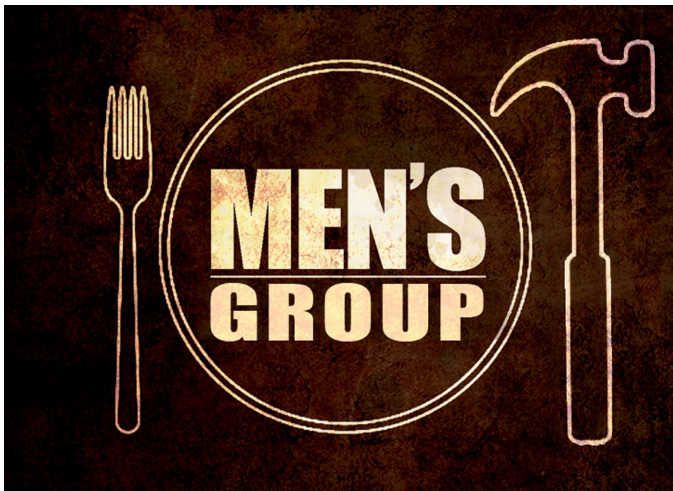
- Join via computer/smartphone/tablet by following this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87468766112?pwd=Z3VnL2RyVkRKdXhXRFFWT2E0ZlcrZz0> (Passcode: Grace).
- Join via phone by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 874 6876 6112 and Passcode: 740742.



**Midweek Lenten Gatherings (Hybrid)
Wednesdays in Lent (April 2nd & 9th)**

Join us for a **simple Soup Supper** at **6:30pm** followed by **Holden Evening Prayer** (on site and on Zoom) at **7:15pm**.

- Join via your computer/smartphone/tablet by clicking this link <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/621600567?pwd=OHhzWUFlc0FIQit0MjN5c0lEcINtQT02> (Passcode: Grace).
- Join via phone, by calling 646-558-8656 and entering the Meeting ID: 621 600 567 and Passcode: 672531.



Men's Group

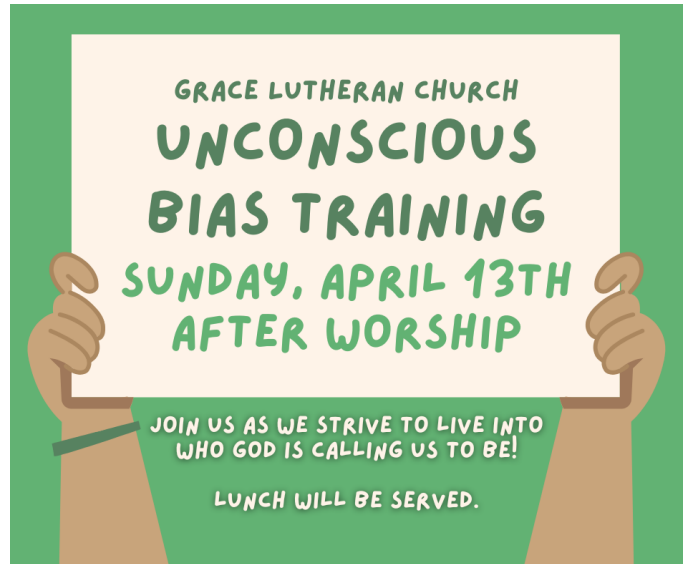
Saturday, April 12th at 8am

Join the men of GLC for potluck breakfast and work around the church.



Volunteering for Spring Flea Market

We are looking for a volunteer to take the lead on the Spring Flea Market. If you are interested and able to serve in this way, please contact Pastor Leslie.



Unconscious Bias Training

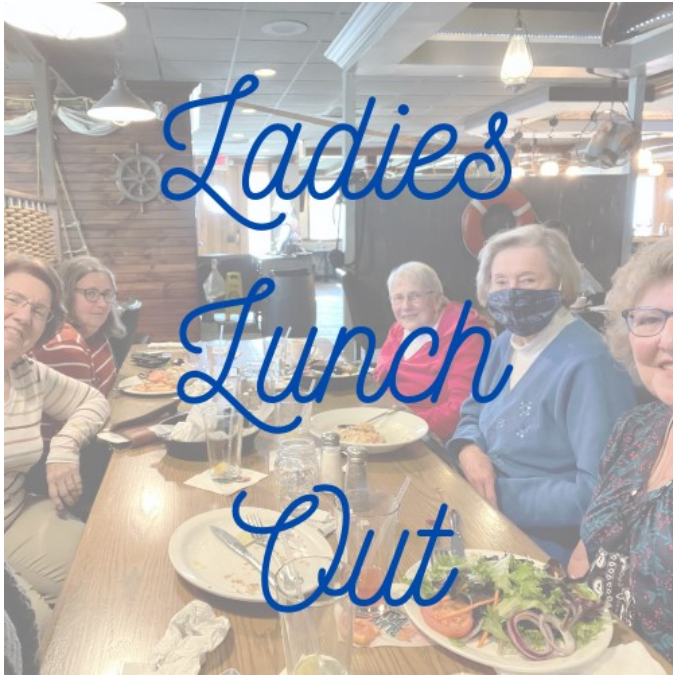
Sunday, April 13th after worship

This workshop was created by the VA Synod Tapestry Team, and the main objectives are to join together in conversation about unconscious bias/mental shortcuts. It's important to recognize that we all have biases, those biases are not necessarily bad; however, those biases can and do result in favorable and unfavorable assessments of others. Join us as we live into who God is calling us to be! Lunch will be served. Sign up in the Narthex.



Tidewater Conference Youth Group

Youth Group will not be held this month due to Easter—see you next month!



Ladies Lunch Out

**Wednesday, April 16th at Noon
at Kyoto Japanese Steakhouse & Sushi Bar**

(1412 Greenbrier Pkwy, Chesapeake)
Join the ladies of GLC for fellowship & food.
Please sign up in the Narthex by Sunday,
April 13th.



**Easter Lily
Orders due by
April 13th**

Easter Lily Orders

Due Sunday, April 13th

Help us adorn the Sanctuary for Easter Sunday. You will be able to pick up the plants you ordered the week after Easter Sunday. Each plant is \$16. Please return the order form (in the Narthex) and payment (cash or check payable to "Grace Lutheran Church" with "Easter Lilies" in memo) by Sunday, April 13, 2025.



**JOURNEY
THROUGH
HOLY WEEK
WITH US.**

JOIN US DURING HOLY WEEK
AND THEN CELEBRATE CHRIST'S
RESURRECTION ON EASTER.

A Note from Pastor about Palm Sunday

Throughout the history of the church, there have been two distinct traditions for worship on the Sunday before Easter. The tradition of Palm Sunday started (from what we can tell) in Jerusalem. But, throughout the rest of Christendom at the time, they had a tradition of Passion Sunday.

During the Liturgical Renewal in the 1970s, the two traditions were merged into what we have been observing here at Grace for at least the last 10 years: a combination of palm and passion Sunday. If you've worshiped at Grace before, you will know that we usually start outside and read the Palm Processional Gospel, bless our palms, and then parade in singing. Then we switch to a more somber mood for the rest of the worship service as we read the Passion from one of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, or Luke) in its entirety.

However, this year, I thought we would try something different. We are going to focus fully on the Palm Sunday part of the Gospel and leave the Passion reading for worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday. I selfishly do look forward to the opportunity to preach on the story of Palm Sunday, since I have never done that before and maybe never will again.

I do however highly encourage you to attend worship on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, so that you can hear the entirety of the Passion Story, not just jump

from the celebration of Palm Sunday to the celebration of Easter Sunday. If you can't attend worship in person or online, then I encourage you find time during Holy Week to read it on your own, to spend time with Jesus in his last days. I believe it will change your experience of Easter morning.

Maundy Thursday Worship (Hybrid)

Thursday, April 17th at 7pm

The Maundy Thursday service includes the words of Jesus' new commandment (*Mandatum*, from which *Maundy* comes) to love one another. As a sign of our calling to follow Jesus' example of humility and service, those on site will participate in a service project. On this night in which Jesus was handed over to death we also gather around the Lord's supper. At this service's conclusion, the altar area may be stripped of furnishings as a sign of Jesus' abandonment.

Good Friday Worship (Hybrid)

Friday, April 18th at 7pm

At the heart of this service is the passion reading according to John, which celebrates Christ's victory on the cross. As Jesus draws all people to himself, we pray for the whole world for which Christ died. Finally, we honor the cross as a sign of forgiveness, healing, and salvation. With all God's people we are invited to bow before this mystery of faith. Christ has died, so that we may live.

Tidewater Conference Easter Vigil

Saturday, April 19th at 7pm

This year we are hosting the Easter Vigil for all the ELCA churches in Tidewater. Come gather with us, and Christians around the world to celebrate Christ's passage from death to life. The service includes strong signs: new fire in darkness, light spreading from the light of Christ, the water and Word of baptism, the first resurrection meal, and power words: the great saving stories of Hebrew scriptures and the first Easter

gospel. We keep this wondrous night in the spirit of vigil, our lamps lit, awaiting Christ's coming both now and at the end of time.



Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 20th

Join us to celebration Christ's resurrection!

9am—Potluck Breakfast (*sign up in Narthex*)

9:30am—Egg Hunt

10am—Worship (Hybrid)



Quilt Raffle

ends Sunday, April 20th

As the need at the Food Pantry is greater than ever, we are having a fundraiser to help purchase needed food items. We will

be selling chances for \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Ticket sales begin Sunday, March 30th and continue through Easter Sunday when we have our drawing. Contact Rodney Haberkorn for ticket sales and Sandra Fraenkel with any quilt questions.

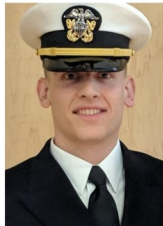
Advocacy Resources

The Virginia Synod Office of the Bishop is committed to sharing advocacy resources from ELCA Churchwide and our mission partners. To that end, the communications staff has developed an Advocacy Resource hub on the Virginia Synod website, which will be updated regularly: <https://vasynod.org/advocacy-resources/>

2025 Congregational Council



David Cooper
President



Brandon Breitsprecher
Vice President



Beth Woodard
Secretary



Tom Casey



Toni Cormack



Rebecca Headings



Faith Longworth



Fred Schleede

Updates from Council

Greetings from the church council! Spring is here and with that comes new beginnings and warmer weather. With that weather comes growing grass and that grass needed a new mower to cut it. The old mower had a hole in the mower deck that had no repair parts for it. The church

voted to allow the council to purchase a similar mower to replace the old one and it has arrived! Fred has used it for the first time and there is a video of it on the Facebook page for the church if you want to check it out. The time for the spring flea market is approaching and if anyone would be willing to coordinate that please reach out to myself or pastor. The solar panels have moved another step forward with the metering options given and now we are just waiting on the estimate of hooking up a new line. Once that is returned we will determine if we will move forward or if it no longer meets our financial responsibilities. We had our first congregational workshop on March 16th after service covering congregational values. It was very informative and instructive on what we value and what we should look at focusing on to improve the church. The next workshop will be on April 13th after worship and I encourage everyone to attend if you can. We currently have a vacancy on church council and if you are feeling so called we would love to have your voice on the council. The more opinions and discussions we have the better. As always, if you have any questions or concerns please reach out to anyone on council.

Peace,
David Cooper
2025 Council President

THANK YOU for your generous financial support of God's mission!

In **February 2025**, Grace Lutheran received \$15,284.10 in giving to the General Fund. Because of your generosity, we were able to:

- Gather for a Fellowship Hour in honor of those with birthdays and anniversaries in the first quarter.
- Support Pastor Leslie in taking time for continuing education.
- Collect food donations as part of the Souper Bowl of Caring
- Host a Blood Drive
- Gather with youth from around the Tidewater Conference for an evening of fun and fellowship.

(to name just a few) with \$17,074.19 of expenses and generous gifts of time and talent.

Year to date (through February 28th), we have received \$45,657.51 for the General Fund and have had \$37,961.58 in expenses from the General Fund. The balance of the General Fund (as of February 28th) is \$70,980.51.



LGBTQIA+
Tapestry Thread

LGBT Q&A:
Moderated Panel Event

LGBT Q&A: Moderated Panel Event

Monday, May 5 & 12

The LGBTQIA+ Tapestry Thread has announced its 2025 event will be a special two-week question and answer panel. Each of the evenings will include prayer, moderated panel question and answer,

and small group processing time.

Registration for the event will close on April 30. You do not need to submit a question in order to attend the event. For more information, to submit questions, and to register for the panel

<https://vasynod.org/event/tapestry-panel-lgbt-qa/>



VA Synod Power in the Spirit

July 17-19, 2025

at Roanoke College, Salem, VA

When we are tired or weary and feel like fainting, God promises to revise us and to raise us up – with strength like that of an eagle's wings. This hope in God is sure and true because "The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth – who doesn't grow tired or weary." (Isaiah 40:28) All of creation – the waters of the earth, the night sky filled with stars, the dust of the earth, the mountains and hills – all creation reflects God's glory (Isaiah 40:12, 26). In God's great love and compassion for humanity, God gathers us all in loving arms, lifting us up onto God's lap (Isaiah 40:11). Who can compare with God!?!

In Isaiah 40, the prophet Isaiah shares a word of hope and promise with God's people who are living in exile. They were strangers in a strange land, perhaps forgetting the steadfast promises of God to be their God – always! Like God's people of old, we too sometimes forget God's abiding promise to be with us in Christ Jesus – always! God is our hope – always!

<https://vasynod.org/power-in-the-spirit/>



Update from encircle (March 26, 2025)

<https://encircleall.org/>

We have positive news to share today! After temporarily suspending several of our services to unaccompanied immigrant children and their families and having to furlough staff, **we are now able to bring staff back and restart all services.**

As you may recall from our previous update, federal reimbursement for these programs, which enCircle provides as a subcontractor for Global Refuge (formerly Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services), had stopped for weeks. As deficits grew each day with no clear communication about the future from the federal government, we had to make a difficult decision to pause and reevaluate.

Fortunately, federal reimbursement for these contracted services has started flowing again, and enCircle has been fully reimbursed for past billing. Additionally, our partner Global Refuge has signed new contracts to continue the work with unaccompanied children in the year ahead. Though the landscape is continually changing, we believe the need to assist immigrant children and families will continue and we want to be part of meeting that need.

Thank you to all who have reached out during this difficult time. We appreciate your continued prayers and support for all those we serve and for our dedicated enCircle staff. We look forward to getting our programs back online, as well as expanding our services to include additional mental health support for immigrant children. We will continue to keep you informed about how you can be involved.

Ray Ratke
CEO

Draft social message on child protection

Jesus' call of welcome in Matthew 19:13-14 points to the church's responsibilities toward children. Yet too many children today experience not welcome and safety but traumatic abuse and neglect. The ELCA's draft social message on child protection addresses this crisis and outlines the church's sacred responsibility to protect and nurture children. To strengthen this draft, we need your feedback. Share your comments and suggestions during the public comment period, from March 21 through June 30. Read the draft and complete an online survey at <https://give.elca.org/s/3416533/gWSDz22r>.

Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church

The Commission for a Renewed Lutheran Church (CRLC) sent a draft of its final report to the Conference of Bishops and the Executive Committee of the Church Council for consultation in mid-February. The CRLC is also creating educational materials and information to prepare the wider church to receive its full report in advance of the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. Since starting their work in July 2023, the members of the CRLC have met 11 times, and they plan to meet once more in March. Read about the commission's progress through their meeting notes [<https://give.elca.org/s/3416547/gWSDz22r>].

Living Lutheran—Got an idea for our next great story?

Living Lutheran is your source for news, reflections and stories from the ELCA and its local and global companions. *Living Lutheran* belongs to the people of the ELCA and welcomes article ideas from readers. Tell us about those stories of God's people living their faith at livinglutheran@elca.org. Please include the name of your congregation or your story's connection to the church.

★HAPPY★ BIRTHDAY!

Apr 3 John Hawk
 Apr 6 Elaine Babb
 Apr 9 Beth Woodard
 Apr 20 Cori Morton
 Apr 24 Helen Sprague
 Apr 25 Raynor Lizan
 Apr 26 Rose Mary Sidam
 Apr 28 Debbie Dougherty



Apr 12 DJ & Bethany Solomon
 Apr 16 Kyle & Courtney Weed

To add/correct any birthdays or anniversaries. Please email Communications@GraceLutheranChesapeake.org



PASTORAL CARE

Please contact Pastor Leslie if you are in need of a pastoral care, hospital, or Communion visit.

PRAYER LIST

We Pray for Our Members

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Ann Anderson | Charlotte Maurer |
| Walt Anderson | Ray Miles |
| Elaine Babb | Kim Moody |
| Suzanne Bergsten | The Moody Family |
| Brandon Breitsprecher | Mike Olson |
| Tom Casey | La Quita Opperman |
| Doc Dougherty | David Pritchard |
| The Howell Family | Monique Schroeder |
| Marlene Hubert | Rose Mary Sidam |
| Grantley Jackson | The Stillman Family |
| Leonora Jones | Steve Urps |
| Jack Justice | Thomas Washington |
| Betty Keefer | The Van Horn Family |
| Lori Kilian | |

We Pray for Our Friends

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| Katie Benisek | Maya Masters |
| Kim Bentley | Nano Masters |
| Richard Bowell | Nick Masters |
| Sarita Bowell | Faye Miles |
| Laura Braugh | Tom Miller |
| Jennifer Courtois | Kandi Nash |
| Mark Dyer | Stephan Pleli |
| Madison Garriott | Glen Popard |
| Walt Garwood | Kenneth Price |
| Angela Gavalas | Tommy Reeck |
| Jenell Gordon | Elliott Reed |
| Lettie Groshel | Lisa Sanders |
| Bryan Harrover | Kathy Sidam |
| Jax Hockenberry | Ron Simmons |
| Ruby Hockenberry | Larry Smith |
| Brian Hubert | Norma Smith |
| Henry Kappes Jr | Joe Stratton |
| Murray Leffers Jr | Karen Stratton |
| Bill Manke | Samantha Strother |
| Bobby Masters | Tim Theis |

The Military & their Families
 Our Food Pantry Clients
 ELCA Missionaries & YAGM students
 All who mourn

In a effort to keep the prayer list up to date, please update Pastor Leslie monthly regarding your friends/family on the list.

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---|---|--|-------------------------|-----------|--|
| April 2025 | | | | | | |
| 6 9am Sunday School (Hybrid) 10am Worship (Hybrid) 11:30am Craft Group | 7 9am Food Pantry 1pm Bible Study (Hybrid) 6pm GS Troop 87 7pm Bell Choir | 8 10am Threaders 7pm Council (Zoom) | 9 6:30pm Lenten Soup Supper 7:15pm Holden Evening Prayer (Hybrid) | 10 8pm AA | 11 | 12 8am Men's Group |
| 13 9am Sunday School (Hybrid) 10am Worship (Hybrid) 11:30am Unconscious Bias Training | 14 9am Food Pantry 1pm Bible Study (Hybrid) 6pm GS Troop 87 7pm Bell Choir | 15 10am Threaders | 16 Noon Ladies Lunch | 17 | 18 | 19 7pm Tidewater Conference Easter Vigil (Hybrid) |
| 20 9am Easter Potluck Brunch 9:30am Egg Hunt 10am Easter Worship (Hybrid) | 21 9am Food Pantry 1pm Bible Study (Hybrid) 6pm GS Troop 87 7pm Bell Choir | 22 10am Threaders 6:30pm American Sewing Guild | 23 | 24 8pm AA | 25 | 26 |
| 27 9am Sunday School (Hybrid) 10am Worship (Hybrid) | 28 9am Food Pantry NO Bible Study 6pm GS Troop 87 7pm Bell Choir | 29 10am Threaders | 30 6pm Potluck 7pm Bible Study (Hybrid) | | | |