



Grace Lutheran Church
September, 2026 Newsletter

Pastor's Pen

Returning to School with Faith and Purpose

As summer comes to a close, families everywhere are preparing for a new school year. Book bags are being packed, schedules are being organized, classrooms are being prepared, and students are beginning to look ahead with a mixture of excitement and uncertainty. This season of transition is an opportunity to pause and remember that God is present in every new beginning.

Returning to school brings more than academic goals. It also provides opportunities to grow in character, deepen friendships, serve others, and live out our faith in everyday circumstances. Whether students are entering kindergarten, beginning high school, attending college, or learning in a new environment (maybe attending bible study), they can trust that the Lord will guide them each step of the way.

Proverbs 3:5–6 reminds us, “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” These words offer encouragement for students, parents, teachers, and staff alike. The school year may bring challenges that are difficult to anticipate, but God’s wisdom is greater than our own, and His presence never leaves us.

As students return to classrooms, encourage them to treat others with kindness and respect. A simple smile, a thoughtful word, or an invitation to include someone who feels alone can make a lasting difference. Christian students have the opportunity to reflect Christ not only through what they say, but also through how they respond to others, handle disappointment, and demonstrate compassion.

Parents, grandparents, siblings, and guardians also have an important role during this season. In the midst of busy schedules, homework, activities, and responsibilities, families can make time for prayer. Praying together before the first day of school, blessing children as they leave each morning, or setting aside a few minutes in the evening to talk about the day can help keep God at the center of family life.

Teachers and school staff, Sunday School Teachers, and leaders of bible studies deserve our encouragement and support as well. They carry significant responsibilities and influence the lives of many people. Let us remember them in prayer, asking God to grant them patience, wisdom, creativity, and renewed strength throughout the year.

As we begin this new school season, let us not only focus on grades, accomplishments, or activities. Instead, seek opportunities to grow in faith, serve our Lord faithfully, and encourage one another in participation and understanding. Every classroom, hallway, practice field, and campus can become a place where God’s love is demonstrated.

I pray this school year is filled with learning, friendship, courage, and spiritual growth for all. And may each of us remember the promise found in Isaiah 41:10 “Fear thou not; for I am with thee.” With God guiding us, we can step confidently into the new season, knowing we never walk alone.

Yours in Christ

Pastor Roger Behrens

Grace Lutheran Church Council Highlights - August 13, 2026

Minutes from our June 11th and July 9th meetings, Financial Secretary, Treasurer and Pastor's reports were read and approved.

Pastor's Report Highlights:

- We must begin to work on how to move forward in a way to build the church, everyone involved
- We need to address improving the Stewardship and Outreach processes.
- We must move towards an on-line solution for sharing our worship services.
- Met with my support system people
- Conducted funerals for three members

Council Actions and Announcements:

- Greta Davis has listed us in her will. We will receive 10% of her estate. Fred Davis is her executor.

Correspondence:

- Thank you note from One Church Street for our donations
- Thank you note from Family Counseling Center for our donation
- Johnstown Police Benevolence asking for a donation - no action taken

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Property:

- The broken air conditioner has been replaced
-

InReach/OutReach:

- Our Relay for Life Team raised a final total of \$1,326
- The Harvest Dinner will be held on Saturday, November 7th and the Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 8th
- Would like to host the Wednesday evening Mid-Week Advent Event: December 2, 9, 16 and 23

Christian Education/Youth:

- Sunday School will resume on September 13th and a Brunch will be held after the service with Pastor in attendance. Hosted by InReach and Worship & Music
- Pastor and Samara took posters to place out in the community and post on Facebook

Worship and Music:

- Moved to raise Chenya's stipend to \$125 per service [up from \$100] as per the budget. Motion seconded and passed.
 - The Grand piano has been tuned
 - Discussed plans for the Joint Service on October 4th including Grace, Trinity and St. Luke's
 - Discussed having an anthem sung on Reformation Sunday and All Saints Sunday
-

Worship & Music- reminder that it has decided altar prayers will remain on the list for one month. Afterward, the name will be placed on the prayer chain for long term prayers. Please, if you have a name on the prayer list and their situation has improved, please let Nancy Demarest know to take their name off of the list. Our current prayer concern list is as follows:

Donald Wright, John Mero, Jr., Ruth Eisenhower, Samara Smith, Lilyann Smith, Patrica Fallis, Dan Costello, Sharon Smith, Richard Kowalacyk, David Seward, Todd Rulison, Michelle Stockwell, Gloria Gaugler, Brenda Billa

Those serving in the armed forces:

Brandon Caldwell, Victor Ralbovsky, Dylan Bumpus and Ryly Bumpus

Our current shut-ins:

At Home: Jackie Hollenbeck, Erah Kilmer, Marilyn Warner, Fred Stortocky.

At Wells House: Mary Phelps.

At Wilkinson: Marlene Slingerland

Property Committee - The Property Committee meeting will be Tuesday, September 8th at 2:00 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Finance Committee – The Finance Committee meeting will be Tuesday, September 8th at 3:15 pm in Fellowship Hall.

Ordination of one of our own! Congratulations Reverend Mellisa Bedell.





Interested in Choir?

Our Music Director, Chenya is trying to gain interest in being part of our choir. We are looking to do an anthem for Reformation Sunday on October 25th and for All Saints Day the following Sunday, November 1st. If you are interested, please sign up on the sheet on the bulletin board in the entrance area for church, or speak directly to Chenya.

TIME TO ENROLL! GRACE LUTHERAN SUNDAY SCHOOL



EVERY SUNDAY
STARTING SEPTEMBER 13TH

1 West Montgomery St.
Johnstown, NY 12095

All Children
Ages K-8th
Grade
Welcome!



Arrival time is 9am. Students will begin class
after our Children's Sermon. Pickup is 10:30.

To enroll, please contact our
teacher, Mackensie Greene,
(cell) 518-844-4062



Our church council would like to continue with our food collections and have designated the **3rd Sunday** of each month to accept donations, monetary gifts as well as food are welcomed.

Items such as cereal, mixed dinners, any pasta, condiments etc. – dry good such as paper towels, toilet paper, diapers etc., canned good are that aren't perishable.

The above are just suggestions. Any items of food or paper products are appreciated and will be brought up to the front of the church to be blessed by Pastor.

The next Sunday for our food drive here at Grace will be September 20th.

Thank you in advance for supporting our Food Drive.

Correspondence



Grace Lutheran Church, ELCA
1 West Montgomery Street
Johnstown, NY 12095-2409

6/17/2026

Dear Grace Lutheran Church, ELCA,

On behalf of The Family Counseling Center and The Family Counseling Center Foundation, I would like to express my deepest thanks for your recent donation to our organization. **Donors like you are essential to the Center's long-term success in our community.**

Your \$50.00 contribution to our organization helps us to advance a mission begun in 1976. We've grown a lot in the last 50 years, but our dedication to client care has never wavered. Your commitment to our organization allows us to continue a legacy of care in the community and empower individuals to advocate for themselves and their families - thank you.

If you have any questions about our organization or would like to or learn more about our services and programs, please contact me, Michael Countryman, Chief Executive Officer. I can be reached at (518) 725-4310 ext. 118 or at mcountryman@thefamilycounselingcenter.org.

Once again, thank you for your support, belief, and commitment to The Family Counseling Center. You are appreciated beyond words.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Countryman
Chief Executive Officer

The Family Counseling Center of Fulton County, Inc. (14-1599758) and The Family Counseling Center Foundation, Inc. (83-3231427) are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. Your 6/10/2026 gift of \$50.00 is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. No goods or services were provided in exchange for your generous financial donation.



THANK YOU

*As always, thank
you all so much
for your generous
donations to the
one Church that
food pantry your
donations helps us
meet the needs of
the community.
Sincerely,
Mary S. Wilson*

2026 EVENTS at the historic OLD PALATINE CHURCH

Route 5 between Nelliston and St. Johnsville



"The Shrine of Lutheranism in the Mohawk Valley"
Founded 1749-Erected 1770

- June 14, 4 p.m.: Young musician Ethan Lin playing violin and our historic Rowland organ
- July 5, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.: Open House with Guest Speaker Richard Christman, Chaplain and Commander of the 3rd Battalion, Tryon County Militia (with refreshments)
- September 27, 3 p.m.: Norma Bowley's Potpourri Concert with various guest performers

All events are free (Donations are appreciated and help maintain the church). The Palatines book and historical marker magnets available for purchase.

**COME TOGETHER ON OCTOBER 4, 2026 FOR
WORSHIP, FELLOWSHIP AND LUNCHEON**



Worship at 10am at Old Palatine Church



Located off of Route 5, at: 146 Old Mill Road, Fort Plain, NY

**Fellowship and Luncheon at 12pm at at Our Lady of Martyrs
Covered Picnic Area at: Noeltner Road, Fultonville, NY 12072**

Burgers and Hot Dogs to be Provided

**Sign-Up Sheets for Side Dish and Dessert will be Posted at
Each Church**

Feel Free to Bring Your Own Drinks and Chairs



Happy Birthday!

- 8. Christopher Preston
Grant Preston
- 15. Greg Niforos
- 17. Alison Hathaway Martin
- 19. Lynette Clo
- 23. Robert Jackson
- 25. Donna Coonradt
- 27. Andrea Edick

SERVING SCHEDULE – September, 2026 (subject to change)

Date	Assisting Ministers - Communion Assistants Minis	Reader	Usher(s)	Crucifer	Altar Guild - Bread	Counters
6 <u>WOV</u> <u>setting 5</u> 9:00	Presiding: Pastor Roger Behrens Donna Coonradt <u>Communion Assistant</u> Donna Coonradt	Mary Ann Hathaway	Darlene Gaugler Lee Mitchell		Darleen Gaugler <u>Bread Baker</u> <u>(At the rail)</u> Nancy Demarest	Darleen Gaugler Bonnie Olendorf
13 <u>WOV</u> <u>setting 5</u> 9:00	Presiding - Pastor Roger Behrens Linda Bumpus <u>Communion Assistant</u> Linda Bumpus	Greg Niforos	Fred Gilbert Kath VanValkenburgh		Kathy Van Valkenburgh Intinction	Nancy Demarest Bonnie Olendorf
20 <u>WOV</u> <u>setting 5</u> 9:00	Presiding - Pastor Roger Behrens Bonnie Olendorf <u>Communion Assistant</u> Bonnie Olendorf	Nancy Demarest	Linda Bumpus Nancy Demarest		Nancy Demarest Intinction	Kathy VanValkenburg Bonnie Olendorf
27 <u>WOV</u> <u>setting 5</u> 9:00	Presiding - Pastor Roger Behrens Nancy Demarest <u>Communion Assistant</u> Nancy Demarest	Vicki Behrens	Clyde Smith Donovan Smith		Peggy Niforos <u>Bread Baker</u> <u>(At the rail)</u> Mary Ann Hathaway	Darleen Gaugler Bonnie Olendorf

September

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6 9:00 worship	7 Labor Day – office closed	8 1 pm Worship & Music and InReach 2 pm Property Team 3:15 pm Finance	9	10 1 pm Bible Study 5:30 pm Council Meeting	11	12 Amsterdam Italian Festival
13 9:00 worship Sunday School begins 11 00 am Brunch & coffee	14	15	16	17 1: pm Bible Study	18	19
20 9:00 worship	21	22	23 October Newsletter articles due	24 1: pm Bible Study	25	26
27 9:00 worship 3:00 pm Old Palatine Church Concert series	28	29	30			