

Good News From Grace



God's work. Our hands.



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Celebrating Our 64th Year

2025 SYNOD ASSEMBLY REPORT

Janet Renick

June 12-14, 2025 - The Synod Assembly for the Florida-Bahamas Synod took place at the Embassy Suites in Kissimmee. Pastor Johanna Kiefner and Janet Renick represented Grace Lutheran Church.

There were 223 Lay Voting Members and 156 Rostered Voting Members.

Through Worship, Workshops, Celebrations, Elections and Fellowship times together we gathered under the theme "There is a Time for Everything", based on Ecclesiastes 3. We even had a special breakfast for Clergy With Cats!

Our featured keynote speaker was Pastor Emily Harkins of Winston-Salem, NC. She founded and pastors a church called The Dwelling, an incredibly innovative church that ministers with homeless people. She spoke about the church where she grew up - a very traditional church much different than the church she pastors today. "That church didn't just tolerate me. It invested in me." She said of most of the churches at the assembly "You are not the past. You are actually the bridge." Pastor Emily also spoke a lot about resurrection, which "doesn't just happen on Easter... look for it on a Tuesday."

Our Synod will be creating a partnership with The Dwelling.

One very exciting thing that we learned: Pastor Tom Sublett is celebrating 65 years of ordained ministry. Who does that?! A certificate of congratulations from the Synod will be presented to him at church. Congratulations, Pastor Tom!

Thank you for the opportunity to attend! It was a joy to be with God's people of the Florida-Bahamas Synod!

Janet Renick and Pastor Johanna Kiefner

Church Contacts

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CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Johanna Kiefner
Organist	Corine Keefer
Office Manager	Ellie Faust
Financial Secretary	Sandy Hostettler
Bookkeeper	Gail Atkinson

COUNCIL MEMBERS

President	Thomas Starling
Vice President	Richard Brown
Secretary	Richard Jeanes
Treasurer	Barbra Sparber Barnes
Council Members	Dave Bendorf
	Peter Koehneke
	Ted MacLeod
	Janet Renick

CHURCH FINANCIALS May 2025

INCOME	MONTH-Actual	MONTH-Budget	YEAR to Date-Actual
Regular Giving	\$ 9,821	\$ 10,000	\$ 57,108
Loose Offering	\$ 440	\$ 500	\$ 3,909
Other Income	\$ 5,464	\$ 4,019	\$ 40,523
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 15,725	\$ 14,519	\$ 101,540
EXPENSES	\$ 13,517	\$ 17,255	\$ 67,018
NET INCOME / LOSS	\$ 2,208	(\$ 2,736)	\$ 34,522



Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA)

"Like" us on Facebook!

Share us on YouTube!



WWW.GRACELCOB.ORG

Share and tell!

Church Council Report

Your Council has been very busy over the last month. There are many projects that are in the works. Richard Brown, chairman of the properties committee has been working to get our sprinklers all fixed and operational as well as fixing the commercial oven in our kitchen.

We are also looking to change our AC service company which of course, requires meeting with prospective providers and receiving quotes for service. In doing this, the council reviewed several proposals and accepted one from DG Meyers. The office AC unit which supplies cooling for the office area as well as the Narthex has failed, and we are getting quotes on a replacement unit. Our beautiful stain glass window is in the process of being re-sealed to ensure no water leaks when the storms arrive.

In addition, Janet Renick is heading up a new committee the purpose of which is to find ways to improve our relationship with the community and make us the “ friendliest Church in the area”.

We have also established a revised fund for the building improvements. This fund will be utilized to continue the repairs and updates to your magnificent facility. We continue to work through the extensive list of repairs necessary to maintain the facility.

Ellie has been working to plan for this year’s pumpkin patch, which is one of our most important community outreach projects.

We would also like to thank all of you who continue to volunteer your time and talents to make Grace Lutheran such an excellent Organization. As the saying goes, “Many hands make for light work.” If you willing to serve in any way to help make are looking for an area where you can volunteer your skills, there is always room for more volunteers.

Tom Starling, Council President

Summer brings changes—

Bible Studies suspended until Fall.

The quilters will continue to meet during for the remainder of the Summer @ 9:30 am as follows;

Tuesdays, July 22nd & August 19th

Regular Schedule will resume Tuesday, September 9th, 9:30.

The Church Council will not be meeting in July.

The Church Office will be closed on Friday, July 4th-Independence Day

And will close at 12 noon on Fridays in the Summer



“Remembering the coolest Pastor’s Kid you’ll ever meet: Michael George Koch”

I would like to share about my good friend, Michael, for those that may not have known him as well outside of church.

Michael had so many qualities that makes his absence from us on Earth leave an especially large gap. Most people in our congregation know he was my age, that he was Pastor Koch and Mrs. Linda Koch’s son, that he sat on the affectionately named by Pastor Koch “Dark Side” of the pews, (closest to the “Garden of Resurrection,”) and that he occasionally wore very fun patterned ties. When I started going to GLC, Caleb was a fussy 6 month old, overdue for baptism. Michael realized that Caleb responded particularly well to his blue with yellow rubber duckies necktie and he intentionally wore it on the Sundays I had Caleb with me. He never made me feel guilty for baby and toddler disruptions and he reminded me that if anyone was bothered, to ignore them. Despite having spinal bifida, Michael had the strongest backbone of anyone our age I’ve ever met!

He was an incredible house guest, always bringing a gift for the host, and a great one at that. I’m not sure if it was from his time working at the Wal-Mart liquor store or if he took a trip to San Sebastián Winery in Saint Augustine, but he turned my parents on to the Vintner’s Red Blend when he brought a bottle to a bonfire night in our backyard. I’ve worked in wine and spirits sales and to this day, it’s still my go-to ever since.

Michael had the warmest, genuine smile, the sincerity of which was unmistakable. His smile usually emerged following an extremely high-level, sarcastic quip that was sure to get a chuckle. His intelligence and quick wit was matched only by his determination and fierce independence. Michael’s utter capability and work ethic, makes me question if he’s even a Millennial, regardless of us both being 90’s babies. He drove multiple cars better than I ever could even after professional lessons and no physical limitations. He is truly such an inspiration to me, personally.

I had the honor and privilege of spending (not nearly enough) Sundays with Michael, outside of church as well. Together with Sarah and Mike Covitt, we tried to form a young adults group at GLC and successfully had a game night here, brunch at Kona, and some trivia and bingo nights we attended at multiple local spots. We started an Instagram for Grace in an effort to reach some younger Lutherans to join. (If you could, please join it, @graceormondbeach)

When it came to a team name for trivia, we brainstormed until Michael finally landed us on “Green Jell-O.” Why? Because he said “it isn’t really a Lutheran gathering or potluck, unless someone shows up with a big bowl of Green Jell-O!”

When it came to trivia, Michael was the guy to ask for sports questions! He particularly loved ice hockey but I can’t speak much more on that since that category is NOT my forté. His excitement towards the Penguins was contagious, though! Later as our efforts for a “young adults” group kind of tapered off, we added a few members to our trivia team and tried to all wear green for winner’s pictures to represent Green Jell-O! My Dad, LCDR Alex Stromski joined in, great at history questions, and Caleb’s godparents Scott and Chris Ryals joined as well, with expertise in golf/geography and music, respectively. We’ve since lost my Dad, August 2022, Scott on Easter 2024, and now Michael joined them in Heaven this Easter, 2025.

Michael and I had a friendship that wasn’t just fun and games. We also went to the movies, dinner, and brunch in groups of friends. Sometimes my best friend Janna would visit from Altamonte Springs to join us. Other times, it was just the two of us and we often had some of the most honest conversations with each other, including lots of tough love. I believe every person needs at least one friendship that includes the ability to dish and take tough-love advice. I also got to hear really fun stories from his high school days and swap anecdotes. It’s no secret that Michael loved animals and they loved him right back. We joked that his parents typically had at least one dog that was like a little sister sibling to him.

Before his passing, I was thinking about Michael often. I started a remote job late last year designing flyers and Instagram marketing for a company out of Delaware that hosts bingo, karaoke and trivia events. You can’t help but think of the fun memories and all of the places we visited as “Team Green Jell-O” when your job is literally to tell people how fun trivia nights are!

(Cont’d on Page 5)

I never made it to Beverly Hills, with schedule, distance and transportation being my sorry excuse. I was, however, able to visit Michael in the hospital after his stroke in 2020. I snuck in my Mom's homemade buttermilk icing on a chocolate brownie and a few other things I can't even remember from 5 years ago that I wanted to help jog his memory. I begged Gabriella, (the violinist from Stetson who came to play at Grace), to come and play for Michael. She couldn't make it but I think I remember having her record me something or playing some of her performance for him that Carol and Dan Schlevensky brought me to. I told Gabriella that the violinist from the hospital who was a good friend of Mrs. Koch's (and Michael's, they all worked together at Advent) came to play for him when he was unresponsive.

Michael's story in 2020, is a testimony of the miracles of God and the power of prayer. I'm sure most of you have heard it from the perspective of CaringBridge how the hospital employees were getting ready for the Hero Walk, as Michael was a proudly registered organ donor, and he grabbed the neurologist or surgeon's arm and rejoined us here on Earth, if only for a few years longer. However, I would like to take you back to 5 years ago, to my testimony, and what solidified my faith in God, my relationship with Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit...

April 2020...Every event seemed to happen so suddenly. I was playing on the floor with Caleb who was about 2 years old. I started bawling after receiving texts about the stroke that Michael suffered when we signed in to work that day on the Cardiac Floor of the Advent Health Daytona Memorial Medical Center for his routine nasal swab to test for that awful, infamous 2020 virus. Caleb turned 3 that August, and he was actually talking quite a bit. He asked me why I was crying. I explained, "you know Mommy's friend, Michael, who would wear the rubber duckie tie for you at church? I'm sad and crying because I found out he is going to Heaven." I had a mixture of emotions—anger, disbelief, many of the so-called stages of grief I was most likely experiencing while playing on the living room floor with my toddler son. Sarah Covitt was trying to text and reassure me that as an organ donor they had to work quickly and a life on life support wasn't exactly fun. Caleb, without missing a beat said to me, "Mommy don't cry, your friend is in Heaven but he is going to be right back." ...As Michael's roommate at the time, Sarah Williams Wagers (daughter of Fran Burdick) said, "out of the mouth of babes!" I think I denied Caleb's instinct or told him I hoped he was right. Caleb's words, however, didn't leave my mind.

That night, or the next, it's honestly a blur of grieving, I went over my boyfriend (at the time), Erin Morgan's house. We prayed, I cried, Erin made me hot tea. Sarah Covitt, Janna Gluck, and then Janna's Mom texted me. Her mom, Melanie, helps as a Chevra Kadisha in their Jewish Synagogue. I kept telling her Mrs. Gluck, that I couldn't accept it, I was in denial, that Caleb said Michael would come back. After all, who is more the expert on Heaven and God's Will than a child who is so freshly from there? As the night went on, I cried and prayed, prayed and cried, until finally, it was the weeping, wailing, gut-wrenching prayers that Pastor Tom McGawley spoke about at one of the Wednesday night Lenten services last year. I tearfully explained to Erin that all I had left for hope of Michael making it and coming-to, was that mustard seed worth, and that all God asks of us is that almost microscopic mustard seed of faith. As small as the chances were, I clung to that metaphorical mustard seed with all my might, with every fiber of my emotionally exhausted, sleep-deprived, dehydrated from every tear shed, being. I don't even remember what hour I fell asleep, but I remember the feeling of God's peace from the Holy Spirit wash over me, and finally acceptance of "His Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven," over my own selfish desires. I was content that I made my "heart's cry plea," and that God surely heard it and could make the "impossible," possible if that was "His Will" for Michael. If you ever waiver in your faith, please remind yourself you need only a mustard seed's worth to go on.

A memory that stands out so vividly both in the moment and as I write this, is a morning we spent either seeing a movie or going to brunch that he drove me back from. As the co-pilot navigating passenger, I told him that we missed or took a wrong turn, one of the many other bridges in Ormond/Daytona. He said something similar to "you've never taken this bridge? It's a great view." Even though it was way far off from our route. At the end, he admitted that he took us the long way home because we were having such great conversations and he didn't want to cut them short. I am so grateful for that day. My advice to any person reading this that wants to honor Michael's memory: slow down, enjoy this moment, and every once in a while, take the long way home.Lexi Thomas



LUNCH BUNCH JULY LUNCHEON**Friday, July 18th, 2025****12 noon****Margarita Island****24 Ocean Shore Blvd, OB****(Formerly TGI Fridays)****Sign-up in Narthex****PUMPKIN PATCH UPDATE**

We have ordered our pumpkins and are just waiting to get the date they will be delivered. As you all know, pumpkin unloading requires a lot of people to help. We will be getting info to local high schools for students to help us for volunteer hours. Prior to the pumpkins arriving, we will need help decorating the patch and getting the skids in place for the pumpkins.

After the pumpkins arrive, we will need people to sign-up to work shifts at the patch.

We are also planning to have various events on Saturdays. Some of these events will include: Pet Blessing, Motorcycle Blessing and of course our Annual Harvest Festival.

So think about what time you could give us to help make this a great pumpkin patch season. This is one of our biggest Community Events. Thank you!!!

**Thrivent Sponsored Event****Tortugas Baseball Game and Buffet****Saturday, July 26th, 2025, 5pm****Jackie Robinson Ballpark, 105E Orange Ave., Daytona Beach****Cost \$12.20 per person****(Please purchase tickets thru Janet Renick—She can take Check (made out to Janet Renick) or Cash****Sign-up in the Narthex!!!****GET YOUR TICKETS SOON BEFORE****THEY RUN OUT*****SPECIAL MOMENTS***

Please join us on Sunday, July 6th for the Baptism of Benjamin Jay Lynch. Also, on Sunday, July 13th, Caleb Thomas will be making his First Holy Communion.

God Bless Benjamin and Caleb!**CONGREGATIONAL TOWN MEETING****Mark your Calendars and Don't Forget****Sunday, July 27th, 2025****Immediately following Service**

It should be a short meeting. We will share information about what's going on in the Church and get your input on what you feel we can do to make our Church better!!



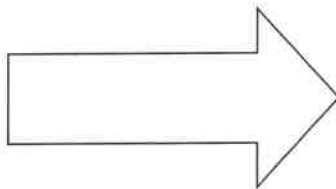
JULY

NEED OF THE MONTH

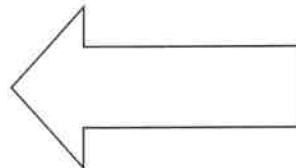


**Jewish Federation of Volusia
and Flagler Counties**

CANNED VEGETABLES



SOUP





GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS SUNDAY

Sun, Sept. 7, 2025

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

This year we will be creating hygiene kits for the Veteran's home (Barracks of Hope), as well as a Baked Potato Bar Fundraiser to benefit L.A. Fire Victims.

We are collecting soap, shampoo, conditioner, washcloths, nail clippers, combs & brushes, toothbrushes, and toothpaste. Our Thrivent Action Team card will supply the rest!

**CONTACT JANET RENICK IF YOU
HAVE QUESTIONS!**

**JUST REMEMBER THAT YOU CAN
MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

Congratulations Pastor Sublett 65 Years of Ordained Ministry

At the 2025 Synod Assembly Pastor Sublett was presented with a Certificate of Congratulations from the Synod for celebrating 65 Years of Ordained Ministry. Unfortunately, Pastor Submit was not at the Assembly to receive the award. Our representatives to the Assembly, Pastor Johanna Kiefner and Janet Renick accepted the Certificate on his behalf. On Sunday, June 22, 2025, Pastor Johanna and Janet gave a special presentation and presented Pastor Sublett with his Certificate. God Bless Pastor Sublet and thank you for all years of service.



A Walk Down Memory Lane

On Sunday, October 9th, 1988, at 3pm, Grace Lutheran Church was blessed to have a new Pastor installed, Pastor M. Thomas Sublett. Pastor Sublett received his Master of Divinity Degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary, Columbia, SC and his Doctor of Ministry from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill. He had previously served in other churches in Jacksonville, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tampa. Pastor Sublett and his wife, Betty were welcomed additions to the Grace Family. He retired in June 1999 having served this Church well. On March 26th, 2023, we welcomed Pastor Tom and Betty Sublett as members of our Church.

Please join us on the next page as we highlight and share some information and pictures of Pastor's Sublett's time as Pastor of our Church.

We are grateful that he continues to be with us and be a part of ministry of Grace ! Thank you Pastor Tom and Betty for coming back!!!

New pastor to start at Grace Lutheran

ORMOND BEACH — The Rev. M. Thomas Sublett will be installed as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church at 3 p.m. Sunday.

Sublett, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church in Jacksonville for 14 years, has been vice president of the Florida Synod of the Lutheran Church in America for the past eight years.

He previously served in churches in North Carolina, South Carolina and Tampa. He graduated from Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N.C., received his master of divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C., and his doctor of ministry degree from McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago.

The Rev. William Van O'Linda, dean of the Flagler-Volusia Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, will conduct the service. The Rev. Lavern Franzen, bishop of the Florida Synod, will give the sermon. The church is at 338 Ocean Shore Blvd.



October 1988

Rev. Sublett installation at Grace Lutheran

The Installation Service for the new pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, the Rev. Dr. M. Thomas Sublett, will be Sunday, Oct 9, at 3 p.m.

The Bishop of the Florida Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will preach and the Rev. William Van O'Linda, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, DeLand, and dean of the district, will conduct the Installation Service.

Pastor Sublett comes to Grace from Trinity Lutheran Church, Jacksonville, where he has served as pastor for the past 14 years. During that time he also served eight years as vice president of the Florida Synod of

the Lutheran Church in America.

He had previously served parishes in North Carolina, South Carolina and Tampa. He did his undergraduate work at Lenoir-Rhyne College, Hickory, N.C.; earned his Master of Divinity degree at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, Columbia, S.C.; and his Doctor of Ministry at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill.

Rev. Sublett and his wife, Betty, have two daughters: Katherine Minardi of Jacksonville and Karol Hoffman of Pembroke Pines. A dinner in honor of Pastor and Mrs. Sublett will follow the service.

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

338 OCEAN SHORE BOULEVARD
ORMOND BEACH, FLORIDA 32176

M. Thomas Sublett
D. Min.

Church Phone
667-9141

A Message From Our Pastor

"Getting to Know You" was a hit song from last year. "Getting to know you, getting to know all out you," the lyrics went. In today's world people do not know all about each other, and perhaps we suffer it that way. Nonetheless, one of the nagging problems of our days is impersonalization. People not only do not know all about each other, they tend not to know each other or even each other's name.

The church, the fellowship of believers, is one place where such impersonalization should not exist. We believe that God created each of us a special and unique person. There never has been nor will there ever be another person exactly like you or me. That makes us special creations of God. That Jesus died for each of us certainly reveals just how special and precious we as individuals are to God.

As the church of Christ we view one another as, being special. But many of us have trouble remembering names. The older we get the more true that seems to become. It is not that the other person is unimportant to us, it is just that we are making to get to know each other as differing, but equally important members of the Body of Christ, the church.



Love in Christ,

M. Thomas Sublett

Pastor Sublett



Grace Monthly Social Ministry Committee Activity Report

Month/Year June 2025 - May Collection

Chair Mare Koehneke

Agency Barracks Of Hope

Agency Contact Brandy

Donations Delivered Coffee, Creamer, Sugar, Plates, Cups, Silverware

Monetary Donation Delivered If Applicable \$50

Dollar Approximation Of Donations \$300

Volunteer Hours 3

Dollar Approximation Of Volunteer Hours \$75

Additional Comments If Any: Very appreciative. Looking forward to God's Work Our Hands
Donations in September





BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES JULY AND AUGUST



July Birthdays

07 Kathy Kahn
13 Evan Bobak
15 Lu Gaw
26 Dan Lang
30 Sheryl Forbes
31 Roy Asmus
31 Catherine Miller

July Anniversaries

07 Dave & Jackie Bendorf
12 Roy & Patti Asmus
15 Brad & Laurie Ardner
15 Pete & Mare Koehneke

August Birthdays

03 Marlitt Boettcher
10 Valerie Covitt
13 Dave Berger
13 Caleb Thomas
15 Casey Crabb
16 Rebecca Kinzer
18 Steve Rockholz
22 Spencer Earnhardt

August Anniversaries

12 Steve & Annette Johnson
14 Jim & Kim Heffner
25 Arnie & Judy Porsch
29 John & Patricia Stratton

If you would like to donate the Sunday flowers in honor of or in memory of a loved one, the cost of flowers is \$45, Elements \$30. You also get to take flowers home after the Service!



The Power of a Quarter



GLC has really been successful with the “clink” of our **quarters**. We have paid for so many things that upgrade the church over the past 5 years we have been collecting **quarters**. Please put a couple of quarters in your purse or pocket and place in the offering plates—many quarters make a difference! **Grace Quarterstone Project**

Vacationers

As you travel, don't forget, you can stay connected to Grace Lutheran Church wherever you are at:

Grace's Website <http://gracelcob.org/>
Grace's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/graceormondbeach/>

