

GROWING IN

# Grace

The Monthly Newsletter of Morning Star Lutheran and Monroe United Methodist Churches

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August 2023

## *an Update on the United in Grace process - a Thank You - and a Request*

### **An Update:**

I suspect that you are wondering, as I am, when we will finally and formally become “United in Grace”. For many of us we already consider ourselves “United in Grace”. I assure you that the Blending Team is as anxious as you are as we navigate the two denominations need for a clear and concise PLAN OF AGREEMENT FOR UNITED IN GRACE; A UNION CONGREGATION IN MONROE, WASHINGTON, that meets both denominations form of polity and congregational governance. We have submitted our third run at the Plan of Agreement to see if it will be excepted by each denomination, I wish to especially thank the Blending Team and Kathleen Sallee for her editing and crafting the document.

When the Plan of Agreement is signed off by both denominations, we will let you know. It is the Blending Teams hope that this will take place early in the fall, hopefully well before Thanksgiving. Once this is done, we will formally expand the team to become a joint council and bring together a team to begin work on a joint constitution. We will use as our guide the CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS for SPIRIT OF GRACE, a cooperative church of the EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA and THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH in Hood River Oregon.

There will be many more details and tasks to work out as we become one as the Holy Spirit has called us to be. As we discern those tasks and our next steps we will need a wide variety of your gifts and skills. When we know what is needed I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might be called to help.

**Thank You - Thank You – THANK YOU** to all of you who have volunteered and have stepped in to help with worship, seasonal sanctuary decorations, flowers on Sunday mornings, those who volunteer in many unnoticed tasks around the building and grounds, coordinating, serving, and providing hospitality at memorial receptions, post worship Fellowship, Rainbow Bingo and many other tasks as you see needed taking care of. Thank you to those of you who serve and share God’s love and grace in our community such as Take The Next Step, Brown Bag Brigade, Hazels Free Little Pantry and in the so many other ways that you personally share God’s love and grace in your own way by being a God bearer for our community of Monroe and world.

### **Request:**

On Sunday July 30<sup>th</sup> at our worship service we said Goodbye, Farewell, and Godspeed to Judy and Jerry Esqueda as they move to Pennsylvania to be with their family. When they moved into the parsonage, we had requested that Jerry take on a few responsibilities to care for the church and be a presence on the property. When COVID began he took on more responsibilities especially around building lockup and security. Before they moved in and before COVID we had no one person acting as a caretaker. The work that Jerry has been doing was done by volunteers to the best of my memory. We are in the process of deciding what we will do in regards to a paid position and how much volunteer help we will need or can be expected. In the mean time, at the very least we will all need to be attentive to making sure the building is open when needed and more importantly to make sure it is locked and secure anytime it is used. This means that each door will need to be checked to make sure it is locked and not ajar. There are certainly other needs such as getting recycling cans out to the curb. Please check in with Ric Hart as to how you can help until we come up with a plan. Ric is the Board of Trustees Chair (facilities and grounds), for the Methodist church

Thank you all for who you are and what you do to further God’s Kingdom work in the here and now. Thank you for your grace, love, support, and faithful service. May God’s abundant grace and love, and may the gift of family and friends bring you peace and joy in the remaining summer month of August!

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Malcolm*



Bring a sack lunch, something to drink, and a lawn chair or blanket to sit on.

**All are Most Definitely Welcome!**

Questions? Need more information?  
 Call Kathleen Sallee @ 425-387-2638  
 or Kathi Cooley @ 425-293-8694

Invite a friend!

*Photo credit: Christine Coco*

**Relax. Receive. Revive.**

Sound healing has been practiced for thousands of years and is a beautiful way to reset your emotional and physical body.

With a combination of Tibetan bowls, crystal bowls, drums, percussive instruments, chanting, bells and more, Adam will lead you through a healing journey of sound. Dress cozy, bring a yoga mat if you have one, a pillow & blanket.

While there is no charge, a free-will offering will be taken to cover the cost.

**AUGUST SUNDAY MORNING MINISTRY SCHEDULE**

Look at all of these wonderful opportunities for you to serve! Email the office and let me know where I can sign you up. You'll find this form, as well as September, in the church narthex under the "Sign Up To Serve" sign.

	AUGUST 6	AUGUST 13	AUGUST 20	AUGUST 27
Worship Asst.	Nancy Franke	OPEN	Missy Maxson	OPEN
Greeter	Joel & JoLynn Garrison	Velma Smith	Valerie & Perry Cole	Denny & Diane Coates
Ushers	Joel & JoLynn Garrison	OPEN	Valerie & Perry Cole	OPEN
Acolyte	OPEN	OPEN	Valerie Cole	OPEN
Communion Prep.	Harriet Barr	Jasmine Ray-Symms	Kathleen Sallee	JoLynn Garrison
Serve Communion need 2	OPEN OPEN	Jasmine Ray-Symms OPEN	Kathleen Sallee OPEN	JoLynn Garrison OPEN
Coffee Hour	OPEN	OPEN	Missy & Peter Maxson	OPEN
Altar Flowers	OPEN	Jill Sumpter	OPEN	Jill Sumpter
Soundboard	Charlie Brown	Kathi Cooley	Kathi Cooley	Charlie Brown

# Ministries A Church in the Community for the Community

## Brown Bag Brigade

The Brown Bag Brigade meets every Wednesday at 9am in the parish hall of the Monroe Congregational Church. They prepare 50 snack bags for the **Monroe Boys and Girls Club**, 20 lunches and 20 snack bags for **Take the Next Step**, and 10 lunches for the **Monroe Gospel Women's Shelter**. They rely solely on financial donations to purchase supplies. Your contributions are very welcome!

The BBB Crew would love to have you join them! Drop in any Wednesday morning and they'll put you to work. If you would like to make cookies for the lunches, they wouldn't turn them down! Contact Kathleen Sallee.



## Hazel's Little Free Pantry

With the summer heat upon us, **water is essential** for our friends without housing. Cases of water are fairly inexpensive and would be greatly appreciated. You can drop these by the office anytime, just let Kathi know so she can come to the office to bring them inside. Text her at 425-293-8694. You can also bring them with you on Sunday mornings.

If you're out and about and happen to think about it, stop by the store and pick up a **bag of ice** for the cooler on the office front deck. Go ahead and drop it in, even if there is already ice inside. It melts fast! Thank you!



## The Second Sunday of the month is now **Brown Bag Sunday** and the Last Sunday of the month is **Hazel's Little Free Pantry Sunday!**

Specially marked envelopes for both ministries can be found in the backs of the pews. Your offering can also be mailed to the church office in you're unable to attend.

412 S. Lewis St., Monroe WA 98272



**Nathan's Clothing Bank** (also called Nathan's Donation Station) is a wonderful ministry that offers free clothing to anyone in need. They have sizes from infant to 3x and something for every season. There are no forms to fill out and no questions asked. Simply walk in and start shopping! Hours are Wednesday - Friday from 2-4:00pm

Brigette, the organizer of Nathan's, could always use help sorting the clothing. If you have an hour or so a week to volunteer, call the church office at 360-794-2111. Nathan's is located in the garage behind the parsonage.

**Thank you for your continued support of these United in Grace Ministries!**

## Wild Church

On July 15<sup>th</sup> the first United in Grace *Wild Church* took place. It was an amazing experience that I recommend everyone attend at least once. We walked around Kathleen Sallée's beautiful property and just worshipped God in the wild. Some people took pictures or sketched. I wrote:

*"I'm filled with awe at the beauty of everything: the variety of trees and plants, birds serenading us, the pure scent of earth and flowers. The terrane was rocky, hard on my knees, but this caused me to be careful to watch my step. It slowed me down to admire the beauty rather than rushing through. It was a challenge to quiet my mind to keep my focus in the present rather than dwelling on the past or planning for the future. I found myself praising God for the gift of nature and thanking God for all the blessings: for friends – new and old – I passed on the trails. Grateful to experience wild church surrounded by love and friendship. I thanked Him for all that He's blessed me with, that I have the privilege of experiencing Him in such a beautiful setting."*



I will definitely experience Wild Church again but I encourage all of us to take the time – organized or not – to experience God in nature, to nurture that spirit of awe and wonder that happens when we take time to just be in God's presence, to marvel at the beauty of creation and see ourselves as part of it, a living breathing testament to God.

Jasmine Ray-Symms

[www.jasmineraysymms.com](http://www.jasmineraysymms.com)

Photo by [utakaha](#) on [Unsplash](#)

### **SACRED SPACES: opening the Holy Invitation even wider**

<https://lutheransnw.org/events/sacred-spaces-retreat/2023-09-16>

Join Facilitators and Practitioners of unique gatherings and organic forms of church, for a day of stories, experiences, and workshops to explore together how we can open God's holy invitation even wider. There are so many ways to gather as faithful communities, whether it's outdoors, creating art, at the pub, or just eating around one big table. Why shouldn't our gatherings reflect our uniqueness?

#### Event Details

- Main event is Saturday, September 16, 9am-5pm
- Optional evening/overnight gathering beginning at 5pm on Friday, September 15 for practitioners/leaders of experiments
- Held at Camp Lutherwood in Bellingham (1185 Roy Road, Bellingham)
- Costs \$35/person or \$100/church group (includes lunch and snacks)

Additional \$35 per person for Friday overnight option (includes dinner, breakfast, lunch)

*A Remembrance of Life for  
Dorothy Garrison  
will be held on August 24, at 4:00pm  
at United in Grace  
All are welcome to attend*



**AUGUST BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY\***  
**CELEBRATIONS**

- |    |                        |    |                         |
|----|------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| 1  | Denny & Diana Coates * | 24 | Mary McCullough         |
| 4  | Bob & Nancy Franke *   | 26 | Martin & Gwen Paietta * |
| 10 | Peter & Missy Maxson * | 28 | Linda Bender            |
| 10 | Rita Stuff             | 29 | Doug & Linda Bender *   |
| 14 | Kianna Cooley          |    |                         |
| 15 | Jim Bulis              |    |                         |
| 18 | Autumn Wardell         |    |                         |

**JULY 2023 CHURCH ATTENDANCE**  
**In Person: 30   Online: 17**

**REPORT FROM THE RUSSIA TEAM**

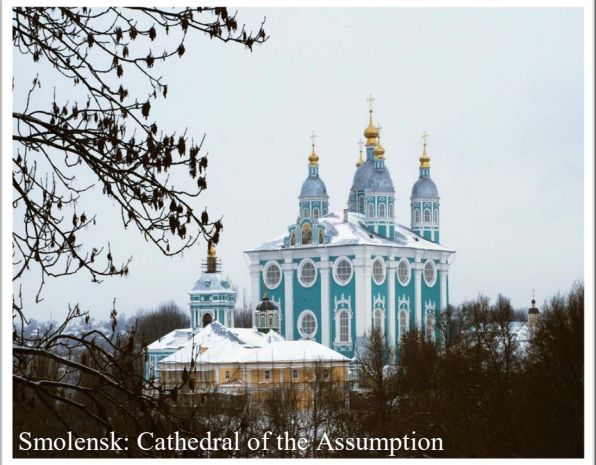
Recently I joined a Zoom conversation with members of our synod’s Team Russia, Bishop Shelley Bryant Wee, a Lutheran Bishop in Russia and another Russian church member who acted as translator. Of course, we did not directly discuss the war in Ukraine, but heard that current restrictions in Russia are making life difficult.

Previously, Morning Star and several other churches in our synod had partnered with Lutheran congregations in Russia. Those connections are largely broken now. One very active member of our Team Russia has recently died, so we have lost this significant link. Money that was previously sent to help with projects in Russia cannot be taken into the country, due to economic embargo.

We in the Zoom meeting concluded that, at least for now, it will work best to maintain our contacts at the synod level. We will have quarterly Zoom meetings, hoping to find ways to resume our contacts with Russian congregations, and to promote friendship with our Russian Christian siblings. If possible, people from sister churches may be invited join in the conversations. When it is our turn, we could see and talk with people from the church in Smolensk! I’ll let you know as plans develop.

We in the US view Russia as the aggressor and villain in the Ukraine war. But it is vital to remember that war was not chosen by the citizens of either country. In Ukraine, but also in Russia, people are enduring deaths and deprivations and fear. Please remember people in both countries in your prayers.

*Kathleen Sallee*  
On behalf of the Russia Team



From *Get Your Spirit in Shape* | United Methodist Communications



## Meet Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth

In this special “Meet a Bishop” episode of “Get Your Spirit in Shape,” we talk with Bishop Cedrick Bridgeforth about his faith journey that has led the Alabama native to his current appointment as resident bishop of the Greater Northwest Episcopal Area in the Western Jurisdiction. When Bridgeforth was 9 years old, he prayed aloud at his small church, resulting in a standing ovation. His grandma then squeezed his cheeks and proclaimed that her grandson would preach one day. Though he was intent on becoming an architect, a stint in the U.S. Air Force set the teen on a path of discernment that ended with his call to ordained ministry being affirmed while serving communion to those living on the streets of south Los Angeles.

Follow the link to watch the video and/or read the transcript:

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/meet-bishop-cedrick-bridgeforth-get-your-spirit-in-shape-ep-144>

Follow this link to download the audio:

<https://www.umc.org/-/media/umc-media/2023/07/06/18/36/gysis-144-meet-bishop-cedrick-bridgeforth.ashx?la=en&hash=2CAE8E2F95B59698FBF3E1D39050219E9BB57299>



Christine Coco



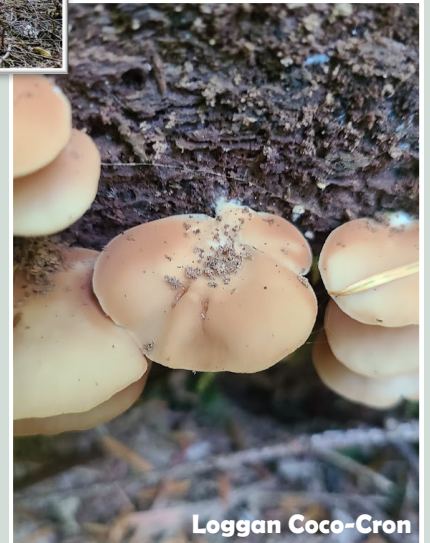
Christine Coco



Loggan Coco-Cron



Jill Sumpter



Loggan Coco-Cron

**Photos from  
Wild Church  
July 15, 2023**

**AUGUST 2023 - MONROE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

Welcome to August and the hot days and warm nights that are likely to come! Happy to share that my illusive Gold finch pair have now increased to a regular herd of 5-8 gold finches and a few red headed finches that are coming several times a day to feast off the gourmet finch mix that I am purchasing to entice them! They are picky little buggers and the food is a bit pricy, but it brings me such joy after so many years to see the bright yellow bodies and black wings fluttering all around my deck feeder. God sends his blessings in such simple ways sometimes, if we are just open to seeing them! Hope you all have found this to be true as well!

Jerry and Judi will be off to their new home and life in Pennsylvania with their family with a good-by blessing in church on the 30<sup>th</sup>. Trustees will now check out the parsonage and make any repairs necessary for a new caretaker to move in, which is being worked on by Pr. Malcolm and trustee members.

Sad to say that sometime this last month, the battery was taken out of the riding lawnmower (which is now working again). Not sure how, as the shed it is kept in is locked and very few people have the key, but it was gone and never returned. Many thanks to Alan and Harriett Barr, who replaced the missing battery and the mower is now ready for anyone who would like to take it for a spin around the grounds and cut the grass in the process! Just let the office know when and we will make sure the key is available to the shed!

The Free Clothing Bank continues to operate Wed-Fri from 2-4 and is always in need of useable clothing donations to fill it, so if you are cleaning out your closets, feel free to bring your donations to church or the clothing bank during operating hours to be passed on to others in need. Thanks for sharing and caring.

TOTAL RECEIPTS	Monthly \$ 4,606.32	YTD \$32,293.83
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	Monthly \$ 7,663.95	YTD \$46,385.63
<b>SHORT</b>	<b>- \$ 3,603.61</b>	<b>YTD - \$14,091.18</b>

Another month of running short of giving vs. expenses. Tanya and I analyze this each month and watch for any expenses that might be running over the norm, but most of the shortage is the loss of giving from those who have left the church or have passed away. We keep the faith and count on the changes in spending and giving when we combine as United In Grace, and know that you all will too. Thanks to you all for donating your time and talents and resources and keeping the church and its missions in your prayers.

Enjoy the sunshine and the festivities of August (vacations, camping, seeing friends and family, the Evergreen Fair) and see you in church!


Nancy Franke  
Financial Secretary MUMC

<u>2023 MUMC LAY LEADERSHIP</u>	
Board of Trustees Chairman	<b>Ric Hart 360-794-7772</b>
Treasurer	<b>Tanya Hubbard 360-793-8959</b>
Financial Secretary	<b>Nancy Franke 360-794-6954</b>
Staff-Parish Relations Committee	vacant
Membership Secretary	<b>Kathi Cooley 425-293-8694</b>
Lay Leader to Annual Conference	vacant
UMW President	<b>Jasmine Ray-Symms 425-223-9866</b>
Recording Secretary	vacant

**AUGUST 2023 - MORNING STAR LUTHERAN CHURCH**

<u>2023 NON-DESIGNATED OFFERINGS AND EXPENSES</u>			
	2023 Budget	May Actual	June Actual
Offerings	\$ 8,917	\$ 7,950	\$ 7,882
Expenses	\$10,384	\$11,480	\$11,090
Surplus/deficit		<b>- \$ 3,530</b>	<b>- \$ 3,208</b>

<u>2023 MSLC COUNCIL</u>	
Administrative Dir.:	<b>Missy Maxson 206-437-2535</b>
Ministry Director:	<b>Kathleen Sallee 425-387-2638</b>
Treasurer:	<b>Brian Johnson 425-503-8352</b>
Community Relations:	<b>Jill Sumpter 360-348-7231</b>
Worship:	<b>Kathi Cooley 425-293-8694</b>
Facilities:	vacant
Secretary:	vacant

 Morning Star Lutheran Church

 Monroe United Methodist Church

412 South Lewis Street  
Monroe, WA 98272-4149



**August 6: TENTH PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21**

**August 13: ELEVENTH PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION ~ Scripture: Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33**  
*Pulpit: Pr. Kristy Daniels*

**August 20: TWELFTH PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION Scripture: Gospel: Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28**

**August 27: THIRTEENTH PENTECOST ~ COMMUNION Scripture: Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20**

## **CONTACT US:**

### **Pastor Malcolm Brown**

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**Office Administrator:** Kathi Cooley

**Music Director:** Jill Sumpter

**Live stream/editor:** Bryce Cooley

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**10:00 SUNDAY MORNINGS IN-PERSON  
AND LIVE STREAMED ON YOUTUBE**



**[unitedingrace.org](http://unitedingrace.org)**