



Companion Congregation  
Msindo Parish in Tanzania

December 21, 2010

A Stephen  
Ministry Congregation

### Sunday Worship

8:15 a.m.

Holy Communion 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays  
of each month

10:45 a.m.

Holy Communion 2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays  
each month-Spanish Translation available  
Tanzanian Services on 5th Sunday

### Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve Candlelight  
Services with Musical Preludes  
5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Worship at 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, December 26, 10:00 a.m.

Regular Sunday Worship Schedule  
resumes on January 2

### Holiday Break

No Sunday school or Adult Forum on  
December 26 and January 2.

No Bible Study on Tuesday, December 28<sup>th</sup>.

No Super Wednesday rehearsals, classes or  
meals on Wednesdays, December 22 and 29.

### Contact Us

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## Ring Out, Wild Bells

by Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light;  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
Ring, happy bells, across the snow:  
The year is going, let him go;  
Ring out the false, ring in the true.

Ring out the grief that saps the mind,  
For those that here we see no more,  
Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
Ring in redress to all mankind.

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
And ancient forms of party strife;  
Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
With sweeter manners, purer laws.

Ring out the want, the care the sin,  
The faithless coldness of the times;  
Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
But ring the fuller minstrel in.

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes of foul disease,  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

For years I have put this incredible poem in parish newsletters as a way of looking back and looking forward to a new year. As I read it again this December, I was struck by how current the observations are about the ways of the world around us. While it was written in 1850, that which Tennyson would "ring out" are the same issues, tragedies, and sin that we continue to experience.

But don't miss the "ring in's!" They remain the hopes, the needs of every time. Interestingly, Tennyson did not consider this only a New Year's poem. It is written for Christmas and it captures the meaning of the real Christmas as well as any I know. The last "ring in" in the last stanza is the reason for hope, the invitation to change.

We sing at Christmas, "the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." But, of course, not only in ancient Bethlehem. They reside in every heart that seeks to make room for the once born babe, now Prince of Peace.

That Christ of Christmas invites us to join bell-ringers of every time and every place in taking rope in hand, pulling hard, ringing loudly for all to hear, "Peace on earth, good will to/for all." Now that would be truly NEW!

Pastor Tim Johnson



Do you have a favorite Christmas carol or song? If someone said to me to name the “one” song that I consider my favorite, I’m not sure I could actually pick a single one, since I have come to love and enjoy so many. And the ones that I enjoyed the most as a young kid probably have given way to those that have become more meaningful in my adult life. (Though, those “kid” songs still have a special meaning for me.) I had a little blue metal record player when I was very young. One of my favorite records to play was a recording of Gene Autry singing “Here Comes Santa Claus.” (I even saw him in person at the Rodeo Day Parade in Fort Madison when I was 4 or 5 years old!!) I remember being in our little country church and the Christmas Eve programs. We sang those carols each year and committed them to memory as we celebrated the Christmas season. I’m sure that most of you can sing, from memory, each verse of many of the Advent and Christmas songs as you have grown to love and enjoy those hymns that we use to celebrate the season. It is important that we continue to pass these songs to our youth with the same joy and enthusiasm that were so graciously given to us.

I am pleased with the music that has helped to enhance this Advent season. We have been fortunate to have those performances by the Southwest Iowa Community College Concert Choir and the Diversity Chorus to sing in our sanctuary. Their addition was special. The members of the Chancel Choir, Grace Brass, Grace Bells and Youth Bells also gave extra special “gifts” to the congregation in the “Lessons and Carols” Sunday, and the Bells and Brass Concert. Music is an important part of worship. We are very fortunate to have these dedicated and talented musicians as they freely give of their time and talents to help enhance the worship for our congregation and visitors. I believe that I have one of the best jobs in the world, as I get to work with these talented people each week. It is a joy to stand before them and direct them as we bring to life the words and music of someone we may never meet, but know who they are through the music they have composed.

Christmas Eve will bring additional music to the worship service. Pre-service music will again be provided by members of the congregation. Music will begin at 4:45 before the 5:00 p.m. service and at 10:20 before the 11:00 p.m. service. It is my hope that the weather will cooperate with us for both services. Music for the pre-service will include: Hand bell music, vocal solos, a violin/viola duet, a vocal duet, piano solo, piano/organ duets and the Chancel Choir. It is wonderful that so many people have volunteered to provide this music before the services. It is my hope that you will come to church early to enjoy these excellent musicians as they help you prepare for worship on Christmas Eve.

This year has been one of change. We will again have change in this next year. I know, that like most people, we all want to keep things in our comfort zone. Unfortunately, we don’t always have that option. There are parts of me that wish we could maintain our current situation. I know that isn’t possible and so I will anticipate the change and welcome the opportunity to work with another pastor and to share ideas as we collaborate to prepare the most meaningful worship services for our congregation. Perhaps we can compare this to our Advent season. It will be our time of preparation and waiting and anticipation of what is to come.

In January, both the St. Olaf Choir from St. Olaf and the Nordic Choir from Luther will be in the area. St. Olaf will perform at the First Christian Church, 2500 University Ave, on January 28 at 7:30 p.m. The Nordic Choir will be at Faith Lutheran Church, 10395 University, Clive, on January 16<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.

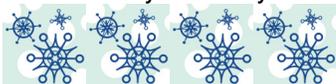
Just for some information, I will be out of the office from December 26<sup>th</sup> to January 1<sup>st</sup> as I take a short break. Rich Snyder will substitute for me on the 26<sup>th</sup> and I will be back on the organ bench on January 2<sup>nd</sup>. In closing, I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May each of you be a recipient of the Blessings and Grace of God.

See you in church,  
RICH



## January Birthdays

- 1 Betty Hirschauer  
Elizabeth Dungan  
Theodore Tussing  
Bob Gweath
- 2 Penny Hansen  
Sherry Merkwon  
Andrew Allen  
Nicholas Jessen
- 3 Conrad Thompson  
Jay Wangerin  
Eric Weber  
Emily Scholten
- 4 Lynn Niemuth
- 6 Julie Honsey  
Tammy Denton  
Joseph Mattes
- 8 Kathy Roat  
Catherine Lewis
- 10 Dawn Pilon
- 13 Jaqueline Villela
- 14 Lolita Huth  
Tessa Dawn  
Fenimore
- 15 Laria Preston
- 16 Carmen Buell  
Teresa Petty  
Kathryn Farrell
- 17 Barbara DeBolt  
Kari Berven  
McKenzie Carney
- 18 Lonnie Jessen  
Stephen Kallenbach
- 19 Arnold Johansen  
Rebecca Selander
- 20 Jason Fry  
Samuel Speck
- 21 Mary Freimuth Helt
- 22 Marilyn Allie  
Andrea Harbaugh
- 23 Donald Peterson  
Alice Kulzer
- 24 Garry Lenhart
- 25 Helen Ballentine  
Norman Buihner  
Roy Mann  
Diane Jessen
- 26 Patricia Allen  
Julia Beekman  
Valerie Culp  
Haley Honnold
- 28 Elaine Westvold  
Charles Smith  
James Kaleewoun
- 29 Norman Trentmann  
Cherlyn Lewis
- 30 Nayeli Rodriguez
- 31 Maryena Petty-Lee



## 2011 Flower Chart

The sign-up chart to contribute for the flowers on the altar is hanging in the Gathering Hall. Many Sundays are available in 2011. Thank you to all those who contributed this year. Flowers were provided by members every Sunday in 2010.

### Thank You

It was wonderful to return to our beautiful church after missing a few Sundays. My new knee is doing well and I am "out and about" again. Grace Church is so welcoming and is lovely with the Christmas banners and decorations. My heart is full of gratitude for the many good wishes for renewed health. Thank you for the cards, and remembrances. It was so helpful to be remembered. God bless you all.  
Bev Anderson

### New Banners

The Grace Altar Guild was recently able to purchase four new banners with funding received from Memorial gifts. These banners will enhance worship services at Grace during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, Epiphany and Easter. We would like to thank the families of Stanley Johnson and Kay Barks for these gifts given in memory of their loved ones to Grace.

<u>Banners</u>	<u>In Memory of</u>
Advent, Christmas and Easter	Kay Barks
Christmas	Stanley Johnson

### Endowment Applications

Applications for 2011 Endowment funding are available on the Grace website and in the church office. Applications will be accepted through January 31, 2011. They may be placed in the Endowment Fund Committee box outside the Conference Room or turned into the church office. Approximately \$18,000.00 will be available for awards.

### Office Announcements

#### 2010 Contributions

All contributions that you would like reflected on your year end 2010 tax statement must be received in the office by **noon on Thursday, December 30**. The office will be closed on December 31. Any contribution received after noon on the 30th will be input into January 2011.

#### Annual Report

It is that time of year again! Please submit your year-end report to the office by early January to be included in our 2011 Annual Report to the Congregation. **This year I am asking that all reports be submitted via email so we can put the entire Annual Report on our website.**

#### Offering Envelopes

2011 envelopes have been mailed from the Church Budget Envelope Company to your home. You will notice a nice improvement this year as the company used colored ink in the printing. There is no additional charge for this upgrade. If you have not received your envelopes by December 27, please call the office at 276-6873.

### Men in Mission

Men in Mission will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, January 6, 2011.  
Note: There will be no program after our meal. This will be a time for visiting and discussion relative to the future of this group.

### New Books in Our Church Library

*The Oak Inside the Acorn*. Max Lucado, considered one of America's leading inspirational authors, has written this children's book. It beautifully conveys the message that God has a special purpose for each of us and encourages us to be the best we can be.

*Owen and Mzee* by Isabella Hatkoss. This is a true story of a remarkable friendship between a baby hippo and a giant tortoise who were brought together as a result of the tsunami that occurred in the Indian Ocean in 2004. This incredible story is a vivid reminder that even when the world seems bleakest, we should never give up.

### Save the Date!

"Think Summer" is coming back! The Fellowship Team is planning this fun congregational event for **Sunday, March 6, 2011**. Mark your calendars and stay tuned for more details in the coming months. This is a not-to-be-missed event designed around a spring break theme, so get ready for some fun! Have some ideas? See Fellowship Team members Valerie Culp, Terin Stanfley, Carolyn Driscoll, or Justin Andersen. New members are always welcome!



## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH Council Meeting, November 23, 2010

Present: Mary Freimuth Helt, Melissa Lawson, Kristin Medhurst, Joyce Lewis, Kathy Bowermaster, Gary Nehmer, Rich Snyder, Jon Rissman, Carla Peterman, Julie Honsey, Pastor Johnson

Carla Peterman's devotions were based on the hymn *This Is My Father's World* which was written as a poem by Maltie Babcock (1858-1901). Following the presentation of the devotions the council sang the hymn.

The agenda was adopted.

The minutes of the October Council meeting was approved as printed and distributed online.

### Staff and Committee Reports

- Reports were accepted as written.
- Pastor reported on a new young adults group being formed and the number of couples requesting to be married at Grace.
- Money to cover the cost of postage for the invitational Christmas postcards will come from administration supplies account and the cost of printing the postcards will come from the communications account.

### Unfinished Business

- The Council discussed staffing needs and gaps in ministry at Grace that would impact the budget. A February retreat has been planned to discuss staff and ministry needs and adjust the budget as needed.
- The role cleansing calling time is coming to an end with the end of the year.
- The Call Committee has received 4 names from the Bishop's office as well as resumes provided by each candidate.
- The Personnel Committee will begin the evaluation process with all staff members.
- Melissa Lawson will have The Grace Book completed and on line by Monday, November 29. The book has been compiled for the purpose of being given to clergy candidates to acquaint them with Grace.
- It was approved that the Corrine Reed bequest be divided between the Property Reserve Fund and the Endowment Fund. The property reserve will receive \$10,000.00 with the remaining and any future money from the estate going to the Endowment Fund.
- Melissa Lawson presented carpet and tile samples for the Day Care nursery. It was approved that the Day Care proceed with the property upgrades.

### New Business

- It was approved that the vegetable garden on the north side of the church be expanded for a community garden with the Isaac Walton League tilling the site in the next few weeks following clearance from Iowa One.
- Mary Helt presented what she learned from the Office Administrator regarding our building emergency plans.
- Pastor Johnson presented the postcard from Grace that will be mailed to the neighborhood inviting them to Christmas Eve and Christmas Day worship.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Honsey, Council Secretary

These minutes have not yet been approved by the Council.

### Council Notes

**Friendly Visitor link to the Grace website** – We need to get the word out to congregation members who would like to keep their adult children or their friends in touch with the "Happenings" at Grace. Please call the office with their email addresses so we can spread the news.

**American Guild of Organists** will be meeting in the Des Moines area in June. Rich Snyder has details. There will be many interesting activities open to the public.

**Grace Kids Care** is putting in new carpet. Parents and daycare families have raised money to replace the old carpet. We are glad it will be clean and new for our little friends.

**An Emergency Plan** will be discussed and written up in February. The plan will then be sent to the Council for approval.

**A need for Sunday Nursery** - In the past, parents who wanted to have a child in the nursery during church took turns being in the nursery to give each other a chance to listen to the service without interruptions or we have staffed the nursery with a paid babysitter.



### Time and Talent Binder

Is your group looking for new members? Do you need help with service in a particular area? Do you have interest in a particular area and wonder if anyone else does, too? We strongly encourage you to look through the binder of time and talent forms that have been returned, especially if you are the chair or leader of a committee. It is located in the office, and we ask that it be kept there so that others can find it easily. A computerized database of the forms is currently being created, but in the meantime, feel free to look through the binder. Invite people into ministry with you. An individual, personalized invitation goes a long way.

*God's work... our hands. Who will you invite?*

## Finance Committee

Below is a summary of the income and expense of Grace Lutheran Church for the past month and Year to Date.							
Other Income YTD includes \$2,770 VBS designated gifts & \$5,402 of Esperanza designated gifts							
The expense activity for these areas was overbudget by a similar amount							
We had a favorable variance to budget year to date, however this was primarily due to expenses that were budgeted for which the actual expense has yet to occur.							
Any favorable variance has been committed to restore the \$23,149 benevolence reduction that was made to balance the 2010 budget.							
<b>Operating Activity Summary (Grace)</b>							
	<b>One Month Ended November 30, 2010</b>			<b>Year to Date November 30, 2010</b>			
			<b>Favorable</b>			<b>Favorable</b>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>(Unfavorable)</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>(Unfavorable)</u>	
Offerings	44,873.50	40,400.00	4,473.50	421,039.50	391,947.00	29,092.50	
Other Income	1,229.99	1,457.33	(227.34)	26,940.03	20,113.22	6,826.81	
Total Income	46,103.49	41,857.33	4,246.16	447,979.53	412,060.22	35,919.31	
Expenses	39,476.02	38,848.63	(627.39)	416,744.48	426,148.72	9,404.24	
Net Income (Loss)	6,627.47	3,008.70	3,618.77	31,235.05	(14,088.50)	45,323.55	

## Stewardship Committee

On behalf of the Church Council, the Stewardship Committee is very pleased to announce that the Congregation has met the pledging goals for 2011. The pledging for 2011 was an extension of the consistently strong financial support that was seen in 2010. Pledge activity for 2010 exceeded budget which has allowed the Congregation to restore certain budget reductions in Synod Benevolence. This restoration of funding allows Grace to continue their meaningful support of the Synod and their mission. Pledge activity for 2011 is projected to exceed the 2010 pledge level by 6.3%.

This increase in activity is strong evidence of our confidence of our mission here at Grace in this time of change. We thank God for his inspiration throughout this process; we see him working with and among us and are grateful to his presence in our response. We again are grateful for very gratifying results and our hope is that the same effort and consideration is given to the fulfillment of our pledges in 2011.

### People in Poverty All Too Often Invisible to Society

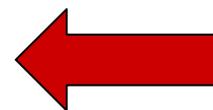
Iowa – a land where neighbors love one another and look out for each other, where community is more than a word, it's a way of life. Many of us have experienced this first hand, and it is something we are proud of and thankful for. However, nearly 12 percent of Iowans are living in poverty. These children, families and individuals are our neighbors too. They live in our communities and struggle to get by day to day.

January is National Poverty Awareness Month; a time to remember those less fortunate. Throughout Iowa communities, Lutheran Services in Iowa empowers people to make positive choices for themselves and their families by providing them with the tools and resources they need to build on their strengths and strive for a self-sufficient life. LSI's response to the love of Christ through service brings hope to thousands of Iowans every day, and our advocacy for those in need gives a voice to this all too often invisible group of people. For more information on ways LSI provides hope to Iowa's most vulnerable populations, visit [www.lsiowa.org](http://www.lsiowa.org)



## Youth News

### High School Youth Christmas Party/Lock-In Wednesday, December 29, 6:00 p.m.



9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders and their friends are invited to meet at Mustards on University at 6:00 p.m. for dinner (please bring money for your dinner) and then go back to the church for a White Elephant Gift Exchange, games, and hanging out. Please bring a wrapped gift. This gift should be something you own but want to give away and it can be silly or nice. **We will be having a lock-in**, so please bring the items you need to spend the night, such as a pillow, comfy clothes, etc. If you can help chaperone or if you have questions, please call Beth Flannery at 314-1022 or Lori Fry at 669-5177.

### High School Parent Teen Meeting

**Sunday, January 9, 9:30 a.m. in the High School Room**

9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents are encouraged to come to this meeting to brainstorm for upcoming events and to discuss what we will do for our Spring Fundraiser.



## **Feed the hungry:**

Beginning on Sunday, December 19 and continuing through the Christmas season until Epiphany on January 6, we will be doing a congregational food drive to help combat hunger in the Des Moines area. We encourage you to bring food donations (far before expiration dates) with you to church on any of those Sundays and ask that you place them under the Christmas tree in the sanctuary as you arrive. You may also place cash donations in the offering plate and mark it "DMARC food drive". Thank you ahead of time for your gifts.

Most needed items include the following:

100% juice (tomato, orange, or vegetable in a can or plastic bottle)

Fruit (canned in water or 100% juice, not in heavy syrup)

Vegetables (tomatoes, green beans, mixed vegetables, or sweet potatoes, canned with no salt added)

Beans (dry or canned in water)

Peanut butter

Meat (tuna or chicken canned in water)

Whole-grain dry pasta or egg noodles

Brown rice (regular or instant)

Vegetable soup (low-sodium)

Whole grain crackers (wheat saltines)

Spaghetti sauce

Cereal (instant or regular oatmeal with no sugar added, whole grain Cheerios, Wheat Chex, Wheaties, granola or shredded wheat)

Shelf-stable low-fat UHT milk (in aseptic packaging, no canned milk)

Infant/baby formula

Fresh whole grain bread items (with generous expiration dates)

Diapers and baby wipes

Personal products (shampoo, soap, feminine hygiene, toothpaste, or deodorant)



## **Thank You**

We thank everyone who brought treats into the office this holiday season.  
We had the prettiest cookies and the sweetest candies for all to enjoy.