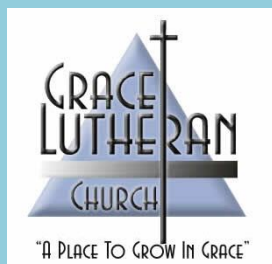


The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church



December 17, 2013

Christmas Worship Services

Christmas Eve
5:00, 7:00 & 11:00 p.m.

Christmas Day
10:00 a.m.
*Everyone Is Welcome
to Attend!*

Contact Us

Pastor Michael Schmidt
revschmidt@live.com

Director of Laity Ministries
Stephanie Johnson
stephaniejohnson@q.com

Director of Music Ministries
Jennifer Wohlenhaus Bloomberg
jennwohlenhaus@yahoo.com

Grace Kids' Care Director
Heather Nelson
heathernelsondc@msn.com
276-0943

Office Administrator
Jacquelyn Holmes
graceluth5@msn.com

Office Assistant
Michelle Voelker
rvoelker1@mchsi.com

Custodian
Todd Haugen 515-708-3758

Office 276-6873
Fax 276-4048
www.gracedm.org

Inside This Issue...

Page 2.....Birthdays, Anniversaries,
Super Wednesday Schedule
Page 3.....Dates to Remember
Pages 4,5...Council Minutes
Pages 5,6...Grace Activity Updates



The Staff of Grace

Pastor Michael Schmidt
Stephanie Johnson
Jennifer Wohlenhaus Bloomberg
Heather Nelson
Michelle Voelker
Todd Haugen
Jacquelyn S. Holmes

Happy Birthday

January 1	Betty Hirschauer Elizabeth Dungan Theodore Tussing Bob Gweath
2	Penny Hansen Andrew Allen Nicholas Jessen
3	Conrad Thompson Jay Wangerin Eric Weber Emily Scholten
4	Lynn Niemuth
6	Julie Honsey Tammy Denton Amy Schmelzer Paul Calahan Joseph Mattes
7	Laura Ziesman
8	Kathy Roat Catherine Lewis
13	Jaqueline Villela
14	Lolita Huth Tessa Dawn Fenimore
15	Laria Preston
16	Carmen Buell Kathryn Farrell
17	Barbara DeBolt Kari Berven McKenzie Carney
18	Lonnie Jessen Stephen Kallenbach Cooper Bigg
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 Roy Mann Diane Jessen
26	Patricia Allen Julia Beekman Valerie Culp Haley Honnold
28	Elaine Westvold Charles Smith James Kaleewoun
29	Cheryl Lewis Norman Trentmann
30	Nayeli Rodriguez
31	Maryena Petty-Lee



Happy Anniversary

January 4	Mark & Elizabeth Dungan
6	Eric & Heather Nelson
9	David & JoAnn Gronert
28	Duleep & Dorothy Singh
30	Larry & Carmen Buell

2014 Super Wednesday Schedule for January 8-29

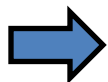
5:00-5:30 p.m.	Youth Choir (vocal choir) in the Choir Room (Grades 3-6)
5:00-6:00 p.m.	Supper served in Grace Hall I
5:30 p.m.	Book Discussion in Library
6:00-6:30 p.m.	Praise Bells Intermediate Bell Choir (hand bells) in the Bell Room
6:00-7:00 p.m.	Kids' Hour in Gym and Room 101
6:00-7:00 p.m.	Lectionary Study in the Conference Room
6:00-7:30 p.m.	High School Hangout Time - gym
6:30 p.m.	Holy Communion Worship Service in the Sanctuary
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Confirmation
6:30 p.m.	Brass Practice in Chapel on lower level
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Grace Bells in the Bell Room (9 th grade & up)
7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir in the Choir Room

Winter Weather Policy

If winter weather strikes, please take note: when the Des Moines Public Schools dismiss early or are closed, all daytime and evening activities at Grace are cancelled. Please stay home and stay safe.

Are you signed up for the weekly E-news? If you would like to be added to the distribution list, or if your email has changed, please contact Kathy Bowermaster at kbowerma@hotmail.com. We use this list for the daily Advent devotions as well, but you can easily opt out of the emails at any time. Thanks for helping us keep our lists current.

Important Dates to Remember



2014 Budget Presentation
January 19, 2014
Adult Forum, 9:30 a.m.



**Annual Meeting of the
Congregation**
January 26, 2014
Noon

Council members will serve a catered lunch for those attending.



Year End Office Deposit

Please make sure any contributions that are mailed or left at the church office for deposit in 2013 are in by **11:00 a.m. on Monday, December 30**. This will be our final office deposit of the year.



Annual Report Deadline

Please have your annual reports into the office during the week of **January 6-10**.



2014 Endowment Fund Applications

The Endowment Fund has monies available for certain capital project and other non-operational needs. The applications are available in the Church office and are **due January 31, 2014**. Please contact Kevin Krause with any questions you have on the application process.

Finance Report – November Results

Financial results for November YTD are as follows:

- Offerings – Actual \$401,812
Budget \$399,283
- Other Income – Actual \$15,299
Budget \$14,821
- Expenses – Actual \$411,642
Budget \$419,650
- Net activity – Actual \$5,470
Budget \$(5,546)

Actual net activity was favorable to budget. We expect to have a surplus at the end of the year. Pledged offerings and unpledged activity is above budget – continued thanks! Favorable expense activity is the result of certain expense activity that was budgeted but the actual expense has yet to occur. Additionally, savings was achieved due to lack of the property position for a portion of the year.

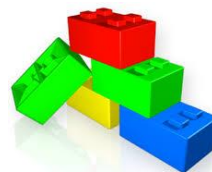
Thank You

Thank you for all the prayers and support this past year. It has been a year of ups and downs and I greatly appreciate my circle of friends here at Grace. I'm pleased to say my last scan results were clear - Praise to God! Thank you all so very much for everything!
Diane Jessen

Thank you for your support and generosity in making our bake sale a huge success. We are considering making this an annual December event.
Companion Congregation Committee

2014 Flower Chart

The 2014 Altar Flower Chart is hanging up on the brick wall in the Gathering Hall. Prices are **\$38.00** for each Sunday. If you would like to help pay for flowers to adorn the altar, choose a Sunday available on the chart and sign your name. You will receive a phone call prior to the Sunday you choose for information you would like placed in the bulletin dedicating the flowers.



Toys Needed for Room 101

Large-size Legos or Duplos are needed for children to play with on Monday evenings and other times when the room is used for child care. **No small Legos please, as these are unsafe for young children.**



Mobilizing Volunteers

You may have heard the exciting news that the Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) is moving to a new location (1435 Mulberry St., Des Moines) that will greatly enhance their ministry through increased capacity, safety, and efficiency. They are seeking a crew of volunteers to help with the move. The needs include help with getting the new building ready with strong, physical labor (shelving, cabinets, etc.) in **December (date to be determined)**, and then the move of office and warehouse items on **Monday, January 20** when volunteers will be needed to clean, stack, sort, pack, and lift 40 pounds or more. We would love to mobilize volunteers from Grace for one or both of these times.

If you are interested, please contact Stephanie Johnson at 276-6873 or stephaniejohnson@g.com. For more information and photos from the renovation and move, go to www.dmreligious.org/campaign.

God's work, our hands.

Let's mobilize!

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting

11-26-13 at 7:00 PM

Present: Rich Snyder, Karri Brandsfield, Mary Helt, Pastor Mike, John Roehrick, Staci Holst, Ardis Schmelzer, Mary Helt, Sandy Briggs and Carla Peterman

Meeting was called to order with a prayer

Agenda was accepted as written

Minutes from the October meeting were accepted as written

Written reports were accepted as written

- The visioning team will be participating in a 6-month process that will start the end of January. The council will be part of this process as well by nature of their responsibilities within the community of faith which will result in 3 congregational meetings throughout that 6-month period.
- Stephanie requested the help of council in the set-up, serving and clean-up the day of the annual meeting. The annual meeting will be held on January 26, 2014 directly following the second service.
 - A motion was made to cater the annual meeting lunch and that the council would help in the set-up, serving and clean-up. The motion carried.
- January 19, 2014 will be the presentation during education hour of the 2014 budget.
- The Personnel committee will be looking into Jackie's request to update the personnel policy by incorporating wording from the latest ELCA personnel policy so we can send the updated copy to the Synod office.
- Pastor and Jennifer are working on finding an interim person to help until May with the choir and bells until a permanent replacement can be found for Sherry.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Update on the church pictorial directory. Pastor Mike has been exploring two options. One is Lifetouch and the other is instant directory online. This one is bit different in that it would cost \$60/year but would allow the administrator of the site to make changes whenever needed. Pastor will look into printing costs to have the directory printed out as well as check with a few church members to see if they would be interested in helping take pictures for this directory.
- Update on the 4 upcoming open council spots. We still do not have any confirmed nominees as of yet. If you know of anyone who is interested in serving on the council or have any suggestions, please let one of the current council members know.
- There are no updates on the youth director or technology as of yet, but that will come up in more detail through the visioning process that will start the end of January.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Kevin Krause presented a preliminary balanced budget for 2014 with the following considerations:
 - Council Actions:
 - Discuss pledge levels - \$400,000 and \$9,000 uncollected (2.3%)
 - Approve personnel costs – 1.5% - 3.4% increase in 2014; \$3,000 each for a bell & music director
 - Approve overall budget – December meeting
 - Use of expected 2013 surplus – Grace: additional benevolence; property reserve; companion congregation committee for scholarships; other
 - Use of expected 2013 surplus – Daycare: director bonus; property reserve; other
 - Debt Service:
 - Endowment notes \$9,013 – includes loans
 - Bank payments of \$69,777 – paid off Sept 2017
 - Bank note matures October 2017
 - Building Maintenance – reoccurring activity only:
 - Other capital needs – increase budget, use reserves, endowment grant
 - Parking lot repair \$17,000 in 2014 (cash in reserves for this project just need a plan to replace these funds)
 - Carpet replacement – Hallways \$3,000; Gathering Hall \$10,000; Grace Hall \$10,000 (to be done in next 1-2 years)
 - House painting \$2,700 – to be done anytime
 - Gym Floor refinishing - \$7,000 – not time frame set
 - Bank payments of \$69,777 – paid off Sept 2017
 - Bank note matures October 2017
 - New line items:
 - First Circle of friends - \$1,600
 - Grace Garden - \$300
 - All other operating costs – remain consistent with prior year

(Minutes continued on Page 5)

- Not reflected in budget:
 - Funding youth position
 - Funding visitation position
 - Funding capital projects
 - Separate kitchen budget for supplies for the pantry – currently reflected within the different committees at church
- Daycare:
 - Great Year – Increased tuition; Long term staff replaced with lower paid positions; Heather in classroom portion of year
- Companion Congregation Committee is requesting permission to hold a St. Patrick's Day breakfast on Sunday, March 16 to raise funds for the Companion Congregation Committee to help with costs of bringing them over in May.
 - A motion was made to approve this request and the motion carried.
- Pastor requested that the December 29, 2013 service be a lessons and carols service only with no communion or pulpit so he could take this Sunday off.
 - A motion was made to approve this request and the motion carried.
- We will be having an all congregational pet project event on Sunday, January 12, 2014 in Grace Hall between services.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Amy Schmeltzer graciously donated two computers to the church for use in the Sunday school office as well as in the gathering hall to sign-up for volunteering or other things.
- The Monroe Crossing event held on November 23rd was very well received and they expressed an interest in coming back.
- December 29, 2013 at 3:00 PM there will be a Peace for a Prayer Service on the Feast of the Holy Innocents at Grace. There is no action needed on Grace's part for this service.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m. The next meeting will be held December 17th.

Respectfully submitted, Karri Brandsfield, Secretary



Prayer Service on the Feast of the Holy Innocents

***Sponsored by The Des Moines Area Ecumenical Committee for Peace
Sunday, December 29th, 3:00 p.m.
at Grace Lutheran Church***

For several years this committee has sponsored this service for the whole community. It commemorates the slaying of every child two years old and younger by Herod the Great as he sought to be sure the new "King" (Jesus) would be killed. The service lifts up the plight of children around the world who suffer because of war and poverty. Customarily, the offering is divided between a local agency and an international agency involved with helping children.



Christmas Star Tree Is Huge Success

We would like to thank everyone who took a star from the tree and purchased a gift for a resident of Mosaic or a new toy for a child from Lutheran Services of Iowa Early Childhood Development Program. Gifts and gift cards will be picked up later this week by these groups for Christmas distribution. Thanks to your generosity, a special person will have reason to smile on Christmas morning.



First Circle Friends

Our First Circle Friends program had a Thanksgiving theme on November 21. As a part of the day, group members shared various things for which they are thankful, and one of the participants shared with the group how thankful he is for everyone here and ended with the words "I love you all." It was a beautiful moment that truly captured the value of the program. Earlier in the day, another participant who hadn't been able to attend for several months walked into the room, and as soon as she was spotted, a whole group of people stopped what they were doing to rush over to her to give her hugs, welcome her back, and tell her how much she had been missed. Those of us involved with First Circle Friends hope that both of these things, which are just the tip of the iceberg, can give you some sense of the beautiful ministry that is happening at First Circle Friends. It is truly a Spirit filled experience. Here is a Thanksgiving note that we received from one of our participants:

"Happy Thanksgiving and thank you for being the shelter of First Circle of Friends. Your endeavor is appreciated. The kitchen assembly room, loungers in the library and the smiles of the children. But mostly a healing place and alive." – Linda

Members of Grace who are involved with making this program happen on a regular basis include Bev Anderson, Valerie Culp, Joie Gronert, Mary Freimuth Helt, Connie Heuton, Julie Honsey, Stephanie Johnson, Rev. Bill Kallestad, Joyce Lewis, Barb Powers, Pat Rehder, Kate Schaller, Ardis Schmelzer, Sally Thielking, Barb Tussing. Additional members of Grace who have been guest presenters include Sandy Briggs, Denny Rehder, and Jane Ridnour. Grace Kids Care children have also come up and sung for us! Finally, we are also extremely grateful for all those who contribute to the program's success by donating food and supplies. Thanks to all!



ELCA Malaria Campaign
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Narrative Lectionary Texts

January 5 – John 1:35-51
January 12 – John 2:1-11
January 19 – John 2:13-25
January 26 – John 3:1-21

We have some exciting news to share about Grace's malaria campaign! Thanks to your generosity, we are well on our way to smashing our initial goal of raising \$5000 by April 2014. As of December 10, the total raised, including some donations that have been sent directly to the campaign by members, is **\$8,085.18**. Many thanks to those of you who have contributed so far. Since the start of the ELCA Malaria Campaign, ELCA members and our companions overseas have already seen a reduction in the number of deaths from this preventable, treatable disease. We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together. By joining hands with Lutheran partners in 13 African countries, we are becoming part of the global movement to make malaria history. The campaign at Grace will continue through the next World Malaria Day in April 2014. How far can we go.....?

News From the Companion Congregation Committee

We are planning for our guests from Tanzania to come the first two weeks in June. They will be filing for visas soon and we will know if things will work out for us. This is the first planning session for this visit; **Adult Forum, Dec. 15, 2013**. If you have additional ideas or suggestions, please respond to the questions in your own way. Statements are underlined, responses are not.

Thank you in advance, Companion Congregation Committee.

Survey for Companion Congregation Committee--what makes us who we are? Dec. 15, 2013 Discussion results:

1. Our friends from Africa showed us how important family, church, beliefs, education, music, and history are to them. Name at least five places, things, and/or values you think we should share with them and how.

Freedom of Speech, thought, and religion; separation of church and state; World Food Prize, Hall of Laureates; hospital or medical place, and farms; schools; charitable (Food Pantry); Parks and green space—Ledges, Jester, Grandview; good health Grace event; AA Meeting; Multi-generational Event; Charity for needy---local and international; FCF; Sports; Eldercare; Drake; Organic Farm near Ankeny; Alpaca farm near Maxwell; East Village; Terrace Hill; Historical Building; Rieman Gardens; DMACC

2. We were showered with hospitality valued in the Bible, gifts of generosity and joy, sharing themselves and their lives. What does hospitality mean to us and how can we show it to our guests?

Host families and a whole church meal. Open our homes to them. Open dialog regarding their desires for experiences while here. Potluck; family activities; gift giving

3. The church operates for us as a community center; we have many groups at Grace; can you share the activities of and reasons for your groups? What can your group do to share "responsibility" for our visitors?

Hannah Circle fellowship activity; attend meeting or activity with circles o groups; I-Cubs; DayCare; Knitting Guild; Embroidery Guild; Friendship Force

4. The first visits were about getting acquainted; the second trips were about education; this trip is partly about our commonality of farming and agriculture. What can we use to demonstrate our farming practices and industries?

Farmer's Market; working farm; Pioneer, (Carla Peterman); public education; good traditions; ISU Extension Office; community gardens; small and large farm visit; grocery store-variety available; Living History Farms; Woodward Dairy; Townsend Industries; LSI; Meredith; Radio and TV; Libraries - Central and Franklin; forest; Pella-VerMeer windmill and Dutch culture; Kemen; Bergman Academy

5. Other ideas, factors, suggestions??? Do you have contacts, access to places and people who could help our visitors understand our church, culture, people better?

Downtown School and Capitol View are open; VBS; Mercy Hospital resources, Awareness of how political action groups work; St. John's, Basilica; winery; Union Park; Story City; Meredith Gardens; Boone train; Names (if desired) and things you might like to sponsor or do with our guests

Resources suggested: Gerald Klonglan (We have worked with him before and will be glad to do so again.)

Gifts: Coats, books, etc., as needed; Des Moines memorabilia for individuals and church.