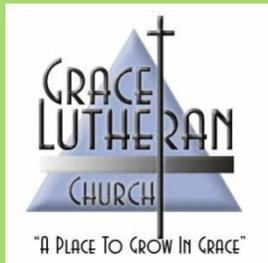


The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church



February 25, 2014

**Sunday Worship
with Holy Communion
8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.**

**Wednesday Lenten Worship
Services
Ash Wednesday, March 5
through April 9
6:30 p.m.**

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
Congregational Meeting
In Remembrance
- Page 3.....Coming Events
- Page 4.....Council Minutes
- Page 5,6.....Coming Events
- Page 7.....Malaria Drive Update
- Page 8.....LSI, VBS, Thrivent News



Spring

Spring is nearly upon us. This is not due to the forecast of Punxsutawney Phil, the weather-interpreting groundhog, or the birds heard singing in the trees. Nope. This is the work of the Liturgical Calendar. Lent is change. It literally means "spring" and begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5. See! You feel a little better already, right? OK, maybe not.

If you move beyond the added midweek worship services, the change in schedule and liturgical colors, and the fact that everything seems to get a little busier, you find that this is, if nothing else, a season of change. We will go through a number of changes during these six weeks. We will move from the both the figurative and physical winter and move into warmth of spring and the resurrection. And hopefully April 20 also find us with green grass!

A lot of things change during this season of Lent. This makes it a great time to reflect both individually and corporately. We will be spending some time corporately reflecting on our work here at Grace Lutheran Church. This will officially begin with lunch and a congregational meeting scheduled on March 30 following the 10:45 a.m. service. This first meeting will center on the collective history of Grace Lutheran Church. We will spend time sharing stories and memories. Whether you have been here a short time or all of your life there are stories to share and things to be learned. To know where we are headed, it is important to know where we have been. So, please come with stories to share. It should prove to be a fun time.

Lent is home to a number of ways to reflect individually. Whether diving into devotionals or other Lenten practices, we find ourselves yearning for God during these 40 days. One thing Active Grace is initiating this year is a 30-day challenge. The point of the 30-day challenge is to try to either do something every day for 30 days. Instead of giving something up, where then day 31 looks like a feast of sorts, this is designed to build healthy habits. It may be walking or praying or laughing. Do something small and achievable for 30 days. A person can do almost anything for 30 days.

We know that Lent is 40 days, but with the different ways to count those 40 days things can get confusing. Instead, the 30-day challenge will go from March 16 through April 14. Why not start on Ash Wednesday? I'm glad you asked. This gives you a week in Lent to reflect and on what the challenge might look like for you. Then we will start the 30 days together and end on the Monday of Holy Week.

It will be interesting to hear stories about what people are able to accomplish, and the healthy habits that have started in the process! I am looking forward to it.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike



March Anniversaries

- March 5 Gus & Kari Berven
- 15 Sonny & Kristina Hutton
- 18 Jeffrey & Anne Farrell
- 20 Edward & Jane Ridnour
- 24 Randy & Karen Taylor



March Birthdays

- March 1 Mary Johansen
Rebecca Sonius
Kristen Snyder
- 2 Donald York
- 3 Renee Mulvihill
Matthew Heid
- 4 Kimberly Carballo
- 5 Brent Culp
Katherine Scholl
- 6 Pressly Reha
- 7 La Vonne Mitchell
- 8 Jack Chenoweth
- 10 Patty Flannery
Nadine Garcia
- 11 Tammy Hagerty
- 12 Jacquelyn Holmes
Andrew Keller
Rachael Bigg
- 13 Lathrop Preston
Hilary Woodhouse-Farver
- 14 Sally Niffenegger
- 15 Bill Jensen
Evelyn Knudsen
Ann Warren
Lydia McCleary
- 17 Kathy Bowermaster
Beth Flannery
Melissa Swanson
Benjamin Honsey
- 18 Joann Jensen
Thomas Selander
Robert Sauerman
Emma Ashton
- 19 Diane Westercamp
Haley Turner
- 20 Karen Taylor
- 21 Janet Kjellberg
Susan Miller
Angela Allen
- 22 Louie Anderson
- 23 Rick Harmon
- 24 Mary Jo McCleary
Beau Brindley
- 26 Ryan Nordeen
- 27 Stephanie Johnson
Sierra Carney
Zara Preston
- 28 Alexson Calahan
- 29 Sharon Schwemler
- 30 Kristin Medhurst
Curtis Chenoweth
- 31 Daniel Gutmann
Amy Ziska

Congratulations

From the children and family of **Moe and Charlotte Nielsen** on their **57th Wedding Anniversary**, February 22.

Congregational Lunch and Meeting on March 30
This is NOT your normal Congregational Meeting.

Whether you have been at Grace for 9 weeks or 90 years, there are stories to share. So, let's share them. That is the focus of the congregational lunch and meeting that will take place in Grace Hall on March 30 following the 10:45 a.m. service. We will gather in fellowship around a meal and will then spend time talking about our experiences at Grace Lutheran Church. People are asked to bring stories and memories as we journey together through the life of this community of faith and what all has happened along the way.

So, come, be fed. We look forward to seeing you there.

In Loving Memory of Vivian Feilmann
Vivian Lucille Feilmann, 89, passed away on Monday, February 17, 2014 in Des Moines. She was a member of Grace Lutheran Church for 58 years. Her funeral was held at Grace on February 22 with burial at Resthaven Cemetery.

Born in Des Moines, Vivian attended Lincoln High School and joined the Army during WW II as a WAC. After the war, she attended Ottawa (KS) University, Iowa State Teachers College (UNI) and graduated with a degree in physical education from Drake University in 1949. Vivian taught physical education and swimming in Clarion, Boone and Des Moines at Harding Middle School.

Vivian is survived by her husband of 61 years, Carl; twin sons, Paul (Patricia Wojtkiewicz) and Mark (Ann) of Ankeny; daughter Ann (Robert) Merkley of Des Moines; nine grandchildren; and five great grandchildren. Please keep this family in your prayers.



Welcome, Welcome!!
Make your life a little easier on
Sunday, March 16
Enjoy an Irish Breakfast
sponsored by the
Companion Congregation Committee
Fellowship time for all: 9 -11 a.m.
Free will offering appreciated.
No Adult Forum or Sunday school this morning



NCAA Bracket Fundraiser

March Madness is approaching! Selection happens on March 16th. So, do you feel lucky? Local and regional charities hope so! We will hold the church pool again this year. There will be a \$5 entry fee and the winner will choose which charity will receive the pool monies. Last year, Sue Anderson won and was able to give the \$210 pool to Visiting Nurse Services. So far we have given away a total of \$460 due to this annual charity!

To enter simply fill out a bracket and turn it in to the church office between Sunday, March 16 and 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 20 with the \$5 entry fee. You should also note your chosen charity when you turn in the bracket. Brackets will be available in the church office or you can print your own. You could also scan your bracket and send it to revschmidt@live.com. Please either include cash, or make the check payable to Grace Lutheran Church with NCAA in the memo field.

Men in Mission

We are hosting our semi-annual meeting with the Men from Immanuel Methodist Church on Thursday evening, **March 13, starting at 6:00 p.m.** Their own Bob Wells will be speaking on the Floods of 1993. Please plan on attending.



Lutheran World Relief Request

Going to the dentist? Please consider asking for an extra toothbrush to donate to Lutheran World Relief. Many dentist offices are willing to provide extra toothbrushes for a worthy cause. We will be making 200 personal care kits for LWR this Lenten season. A collection basket will be placed in the Gathering Hall in March. Please donate adult size toothbrushes in their original packaging. Thanks from your LWR group!

Lenten Series for Midweek Services

The theme for our midweek services this year is "Into the Wild," a theme designed by ELCA World Hunger. Here is a brief explanation of the theme.

"For nearly 1 billion people in the world, going hungry is not a spiritual practice or reverent sacrifice. Hunger is a reality in which many of our brothers and sisters live every day. This Lent, ELCA World Hunger invites you and your congregation to go "Into the Wild," to follow Jesus into the wilderness and to reflect on your own journey into the "wild places" of the world where we encounter human need, abuse of power, risk and God's grace. Many suffer in the wilderness of the world, yet we know that the Holy Spirit is there, calling us, accompanying us and empowering us to meet our own needs by serving the needs of our neighbors. We know that the call to share in God's good news is a call made to all Christians, of every age, in baptism."

Active Grace 30-Day Challenge

A person can do almost anything for 30 days. Even documentaries have been made that are guided by this premise. So, we figure it would make for a great challenge for Lent. We will use the first week of Lent for people to discern a good individual challenge and then we will begin together on March 16th and continue through April 14th. The challenge is simple, try something different for 30 days. This is not about giving something up, but rather about adding something for 30 days. It could also be adding something or taking on a goal like reading, or walking, or praying every day, or even putting something into savings. What is something that you have always wanted to either do more or not at all? Lent would be a great time to start.

Who: Grace Fellowship with Bill Henderson

What: Meeting, program, fellowship

Where: Grace Hall

When: 5:00 p.m., Sunday March 9

Grace Hall is reserved on March 9, for the first Grace Fellowship meeting of 2014. You are invited to come for a light supper, program and conversation.

Bill Henderson will do his magic with music and story about Mary (or was it Marie or Merry?) Come find out what he's up to ... For information call Verda at 276-6625

Grace Lutheran Church Special Council Meeting 1/26/14 @ 2:00 PM

Present: Rich Snyder, Karri Brandsfield, Mary Helt, Pastor Mike, Ardis Schmelzer, Jay Wangerin, Kevin Drury, Stacie Holst, Eric Weber, Barbara Zimany, Don Peterson, Cathy Barks and Kristin Medhurst

Meeting was called to order with a prayer

Election of new officers for 2014:

President: Kevin Drury
Vice President: Jay Wangerin
Secretary: Karri Brandsfield

Topics Discussed:

- A request was made to the council by the UNI Campus Ministry for a date to participate at service to heighten awareness of their ministry at college. A motion was made and seconded to approve this request. The motion carried. Pastor Mike will work on getting date and details finalized.
- Stephanie just wanted to make council aware that the Lutheran World Relief drive will be taking place simultaneously with the Malaria campaign during the month of April. There is no action needed at this time.
- We have set a Council retreat date of February 9, 2014 starting at noon and going until 3:00 PM at Grace.

We will not hold the regularly scheduled council meeting on Tuesday, January 28, 2014 since we have covered all the issues at hand today 1-26-14 during this special council meeting.

Meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer at 2:20 PM. The next meeting will be held February 25, 2014 @ 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Karri Brandsfield, Secretary

Grace Lutheran Church Council Retreat Meeting 2-9-14

Present: Ardis Schmelzer, Stacie Holst, Cathy Barks, Pastor Mike Schmidt, Jay Wangerin, Mary Helt, Don Peterson, Sandy Briggs, Barb Zimany, Kevin Drury, Kristin Medhurst and Karri Brandsfield

Started meeting off with our name, how many years we have been members of Grace, years on council and something interesting about yourself or your family.

Pastor Mike Schmidt had us write down while we were eating the Mission Statement for Grace Lutheran Church and below that the Purpose of Grace Lutheran Church as it relates to the Mission Statement. This led us into the revisioning discussion that will be happening here at Grace. He touched base on that there will be three parts to this revisioning process.

1st Meeting – Discuss the history of Grace which will lead to the council laying out a 4-5 page narrative. This will be about a 1 to 1 ½ hour guided conversation that will be recorded and held directly following the 2nd service with some sort of meal being served. (potluck, etc.)

2nd Meeting – Will lay out neighborhood and determine where they intersect with Grace.

3rd Meeting – Last step is to layout the findings to the community of faith and determine where we want to head as a community of faith.

Selection of committee members for 2014 were chosen as follows:

Officers will meet with Pastor Schmidt at the beginning of committee night to discuss agenda for the meeting before heading off to their assigned committees.

Pastor Schmidt would like to have the committees be more forward thinking going forward. He had each council member associate themselves with the car part that would best represent them. The Council then associated which part of the car would best represent each committee to see who would be a good fit for each of these committees.

Personnel Committee – Jay Wangerin as council Vice President and Mary Helt

Finance Committee – Kevin Drury

Social Ministry Committee – Ardis Schmelzer, Sandy Briggs and Barb Zimany

Youth Ministry Committee – Eric Weber and Karri Brandsfield

Worship & Music Committee – Kristin Medhurst

Education Committee – Mary Helt and Stacie Holst

Evangelism Committee (invitational & fellowship ministry) – Cathy Barks & Sandy Briggs

Stewardship Committee – Jay Wangerin

Property Committee – Don Peterson

Concluded the meeting @ 2:45 PM with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted,
Karri Brandsfield, Secretary

Spring is coming! Imagine hanging pots of Mandevilla or wave petunias and ivy; borders of impatiens, dusty miller, and marigold; or containers filled with sweet potato vine and pansies.

Order now during the Youth Plant Sale. You will find order forms in the Friendly Visitor and on the [church website](#).

Order forms are due Sunday, March 30

Flowers will be delivered on Saturday May 17 and available for pickup beginning at 8 a.m.

Mothers Day is the week before delivery. We welcome you to make out your own gift certificates.

We'll be less likely to have snow on May 17!

A Place at the Table

Join the Social Ministry Team at Grace in hosting a night at the movies for sister congregations in Conferences 10 and 11 at **6:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 2**. We will be showing the movie *A Place At the Table*. The movie depicts some of the circumstances of 50 million Americans (1 in 4 children) who don't know where their next meal is coming from. It will change forever how you think about the hungry. All congregations in the Southeastern Iowa Synod are being encouraged by the synod to show the movie with Grace anxious to lead the way by offering up an opportunity for congregations in the Des Moines area to gather together to view the movie and learn about hunger in the United States. Sarai Rice, the Director of DMARC, will give opening comments and lead a discussion about how congregations can work toward eliminating hunger in the Des Moines Area following the movie. Popcorn and drinks will be provided.

Pastrix: The Cranky, Beautiful Faith of a Sinner and Saint

"Pastrix" a book written by Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber, a presenter at the 2012 National Youth Gathering, is available in the church Library. Many of our youth along with adult chaperones were captivated and blessed by Pastor Nadia's message. This past January, we also had several Grace members travel to St. John's Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls to hear Pastor Nadia.

Author Frank Schaeffer describes her book best, "Nadia has written a wonderful, rule-breaking, stereotype-smashing book that succeeds as a memoir, as a sermon on love, and as a welcome home "letter" to the rejected. With this book, Nadia will become America's favorite pastor to those alienated from religion but who still crave transcendent purpose and meaning in their lives."

If you are looking for an inspiring book of personal testament you will find faithful company in this book and with the cranky, yet beautiful author.



Share Your Collection

Have you seen the tea sets in the Gathering Hall display cabinet yet? If not, take a minute to enjoy them sometime. They were placed in there by Kathy Bowermaster and include her own as well as those of her mom, Pat Rehder. It's a delightful collection!

Do you have something to share, too? If so, consider signing up for a couple of months and set up your items inside the locked cabinet. We would love to see your treasures and favorite things. The sign up sheet can be found on the wall near the cabinet, and the key is kept in the office.

First Communion Classes

First Communion classes will be held on April 2 and 9 at 5:30 p.m. The students will all be third graders this year. On April 16 at 5:30 p.m. a Seder meal will be held for First Communion families.

Narrative Lectionary Texts

March 2 John 9:1-41
March 9 John 11:1-44
March 16 John 13:1-17
March 23 John 18:12-27
March 30 John 18:28-40

Stewardship Message

All of life is connected, to the past, the present and the future. We are all connected to one another as we try to find our personal paths through this life. Our Holy Bible tells us, in broad strokes, of our calling to live as good stewards of the resources over which we have been given some temporary control.

In Genesis we humans are given dominion, not domination, over our world and all the creatures in it. As good stewards we need to urge conservation, not destruction, of our planet. We must protect the air, the land, the water, animals and resources for the sake of generations to come.

God calls us to support and care for our holy places, our worship spaces. Sheep and goats may no longer be appropriate contributions, but our time, talents and financial support most certainly are.

Jesus has taught us we must care for the poor and the unfortunate in our society. It's hard for us as individuals to get assistance to the needy, but by financially supporting organizations such as Lutheran Services of Iowa and others we can help achieve that goal.

As children of God, we must always revere the good from the past, share our goods in the present and strive toward a good future for all creatures on our only livable planet.

Finance Report – January Results

Financial results for January YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$40,632, Budget \$36,638
- Other Income – Actual \$1,436, Budget \$1,592
- Expenses – Actual \$42,324, Budget \$42,678
- Net activity – Actual (\$256), Budget (\$4,449)

Actual net activity was favorable to budget. This was primarily due to offerings above budget - certain full year pledges were received during the month. Expense activity was comparable to budget. Overages in utilities and maintenance were offset by numerous areas under budget due to timing.



Baskets of Promise: LWR

"[Jesus answered] As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." –John 9:5 (NSRV) For three weeks during Lent, we will walk with people around the world who are affected by war, displacement, and poverty. Beginning March 23, we will become baskets for Christ as we pray for these people and for the work of Lutheran World Relief, collect donations, assemble and display kits and quilts. Baskets will be available to collect toothbrushes (ask your dentist for an extra one!) and donations in the Gathering Hall. Yellow envelopes will be available in the pews and at the display for your donations. Please make checks out to Grace Lutheran Church with LWR on the comment line. On April 6, we will celebrate LWR Sunday together. Please prayerfully consider how you will participate.

Lutheran Day on the Hill

Join with LSI on Monday, March 10, for Lutheran Day on the Hill as they meet with legislators about critical issues facing children, families and adults in Iowa. The day begins with an advocacy overview from guest speakers before moving to the Capitol to meet with legislators. Contact Julie Honsey at honsey.julie@gmail.com if you are interested in being part of a group representing Grace. The deadline for registration is Thursday, March 6. For more details visit www.LSIowa.org/LDH or call 866-584-5293.

The Kingdom and the Cross Book Study

Please join us for a six-week study of the book, "The Kingdom and the Cross." We will take a Lenten journey with author James Bryan Smith to experience a closer understanding of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

We will meet on Sundays during the Education Hour (9:30 - 10:30 a.m.) **March 9 through April 13**. We welcome you to join us for all six weeks or whenever your schedule allows. The discussions are easy to engage in without attending every meeting or even reading the material. However, we encourage you to read the short chapters for your own pleasure and growth. The reading does enhance great discussions. Please contact Cherie Rissman (270-0278) for further details and for the book.

Malaria Campaign expanding to 13 countries!

With the addition of Namibia and Burundi, the ELCA Malaria Campaign is now working with Lutheran companions and organizations in **13 countries in Africa** to support community-based programs to prevent and control malaria. The ELCA Malaria Campaign has raised over \$10 million so far, and plans to raise a total of \$15 million by 2015 to support programming implemented by Lutheran churches and organizations in sub-Saharan Africa. *Grace Lutheran Church has contributed over \$8,000 towards this effort, and we're not done yet!* Thank you so much to all congregants who have contributed in support of this effort so far!



The Grace campaign will culminate with a celebration in conjunction with UNICEF's World Malaria Day on April 25. The celebration will take place during worship and in Grace Hall, between Sunday services on April 27. Between now and then, we are planning a number of educational activities and campaign support opportunities during the Lenten season. Having surpassed our original goal of \$5000, we are in pursuit of a \$10,000 challenge goal for this campaign. (For more information about the Grace campaign, please contact Stephanie at stephaniejohnson@q.com)

Below is a brief profile of efforts that are just getting underway in the two newest African countries, Namibia and Burundi. These efforts were made possible by the burgeoning generosity of ELCA congregations across the country, including Grace.

NAMIBIA Malaria programming in Namibia will take place under the umbrella of the LUCSA Regional Malaria Program. LUCSA—the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa—is a sub-regional expression of the Lutheran World Federation, of which the ELCA is also a member. The LUCSA Regional Malaria program is already operating successful country programs in Angola, Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and the program in Namibia will benefit from the experiences of those existing programs.

Since malaria is a key health issue in the northern part of Namibia (Ovamboland), the Lutheran Malaria Program in Namibia will work primarily with the Evangelical Church in Namibia (ELCIN), whose congregations are mostly in the north.

Malaria concerns in Namibia are exacerbated by widespread hunger. Lutheran churches in Namibia are currently working to ameliorate the effects of a severe and long-lasting drought emergency that is causing 14 percent of the Namibian population to suffer from food insecurity. Through Lutheran Disaster Response, the ELCA is helping the Lutheran churches in Namibia to provide economic assistance to those in greatest need.

ELCA Global Mission is working with LUCSA and our companions in Namibia to finalize a malaria proposal. Programming is expected to begin in 2014.



Malaria programming in Burundi will be implemented by Lutheran World Federation, in conjunction with the malaria program in Uganda.

BURUNDI The small country of Burundi has been hit hard by malaria. Burundi has by far the highest rates of malaria in the Eastern Africa region. Despite the great need, Burundi has not received adequate support for its malaria initiatives and lags behind other countries in the region in progress toward its health-related targets. With support from the ELCA Malaria Campaign, Lutherans in Burundi are stepping up to help close this gap.

The Lutheran World Federation is active in Burundi, and plans are in place to integrate malaria work within the framework of existing projects and networks and staff in Burundi. Because there is an active Lutheran Malaria Program in neighboring Uganda (underwritten by the ELCA Malaria Campaign and implemented by LWF), the Burundi program can be run with existing structures and oversight. This makes the Burundi malaria program a very economical one that will deliver maximum impact for a minimal cost.

Programming in Burundi will begin immediately.

This article includes content excerpted from Jessica Nipp's blog post on the ELCA website.



A Passion for Changing Lives - March is National Social Work Month - a time to recognize and celebrate the many highly trained professionals who dedicate their lives to helping others through the field of social work. Social workers are found in all areas of community life, helping millions of struggling families and individuals find resources, discover their strengths and access tools needed to build a better life. LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and proud to have so many dedicated social workers bringing life-changing services to Iowa communities. Your support and prayers help us carry out our mission of responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service.

Keep up with LSI's 150th anniversary news at www.LSIowa.org/150. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Sharing the gifts - Your support and prayers help LSI's (Lutheran Services in Iowa) social ministry programs give new hope and new opportunities to Iowa kids, families and adults. Have you ever thought about how the people LSI serves also bring wonderful gifts to their communities? Our LSI staff would like to share some of these gifts with you and how they are inspired daily:

- "Our elderly group gives the gift of warm welcomes to anyone who enters the Refugee Community Services building."
- "A woman I support through our services for people with disabilities is actively involved as a volunteer for food drives, fundraisers and many other activities. She feels an obligation to give back to her community as a thank you for the services she receives."
- "One of the moms I support has the best work ethic I have ever seen!"
- "One of my proudest moments was hearing a girl who has struggled greatly with self-harming in the past share her story to her peers and become a mentor to them. She encourages them to respect themselves and value their self-worth."
- "One of our moms gives the gift of knowledge to friends and family about the parenting skills she has learned through our program."
- "One of the people I support gave up his place in line to an elderly woman. You should have seen the pride on his face when she complimented him!"

Thank you for supporting critical human services in your community and making stories of hope, healing and wholeness happen every day!

Become an ESL Teacher

Do you have a desire to help people from all cultures and backgrounds gain the skills and tools they need to thrive in a new country? Volunteer as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher with Lutheran Services in Iowa and make a difference! LSI will provide extensive training and all curriculum and teaching materials needed. Previous teaching experience is not required, and a one-year commitment is preferred. Pick up a flyer at Volunteer Central, and contact Lauren Gentry at Lauren.Gentry@lsiowa.org or 271-7387 for more information.



SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS!

With a winter storm on the horizon as we prepare this newsletter, what better time is there to start thinking about summer?? Registration forms are available on Grace's website (www.gracedm.org) and will be available in the Gathering Hall by the beginning of March, and more information will soon be coming. In the meantime, please note the following dates:

Ages 3-5 (potty trained): June 9-13 – 9:00 a.m.-noon.
Registration deadline: June 2 (or earlier if spaces fill)

Grades K-5: June 23-27 – 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
(aftercare available until 5:30 p.m.)
Registration deadline: June 16 (or earlier if spaces fill)

Please note that preregistration *by the deadline* is mandatory. Due to the high enrollment and the preparation required we cannot take walk-ins or registrations after the deadline. We encourage you to register your children early to avoid disappointment. Please call first as the deadline approaches if you are wondering about available spaces. Thank you for your understanding. It's going to be a fun summer *imagining and building with God!*



**Thrivent Financial
for Lutherans™**

***Thank you, Thank you, Thank you....
Together we are making a difference through
Thrivent Choice!***

One act of generosity leads to another. And the impact grows. Thanks to members of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, that's what we've experienced through the Thrivent Choice program. Many of you directed your designated 2013 Choice Dollars to Grace Lutheran Church. Through your individual recommendation, you have made a difference. Collectively, Thrivent Financial members contributed \$1,400 to help fund First Circle Friends and the Companion Congregation. **Thank You** for your generosity and support of these two Grace ministries.

Direct Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31

Thrivent Choice Dollars grant funds can help support organizations you care about. Don't let your designated Choice Dollars expire. Eligible members of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans who have designated Choice Dollars: if you haven't already done so, be sure to direct your designated Choice Dollars by March 31, 2014. After that date, any undirected Choice Dollars will expire. Don't miss this opportunity to help support Grace Lutheran Church. You can go online to: www.thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 800-THRIVENT and state "Thrivent Choice".

**GVU Alumni, Staff, and Friends Continuing Education Trip
to St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia
July 28 through August 12, 2015 (tentatively)**

You are invited to join Grand View University faculty, alumni, staff, and friends on an exciting trip to St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia from July 28 through August 12, 2015. See the palaces and churches of the Tsars (such as Peterhoff Palace and St. Isaac's Cathedral), world-class art museums (such as the Hermitage), historic Red Square in the Kremlin, the Yusupov Palace (where Grigory Rasputin was assassinated), and dozens of other places you've read about in history and heard about in the news. Additionally, you will have the opportunity to visit places not frequented by tourists such as a hospital, a school, and the St. Petersburg State University. You will learn about Russia in ways most Americans never do. Tour hosts include Professor Dmitry Yarushkin who was raised in St. Petersburg. You can be confident that you will have an expert navigating you through Russia. Your official tour guide, Sergey Fedorov, is an expert on Russian history, culture, and trip logistics, as well as an effective communicator with Americans. Total cost for the trip is approximately \$4,000.00 per participant, which includes not only airfare to Russia and train fare within Russia, but also double occupancy hotel rooms, three full meals a day, visas, the tour guide, and tickets to all the museums, performances, and local transportation. Don't miss out on this opportunity. Become acquainted with Russia, and its magic and charm, for an unforgettable, life-changing experience.

The experience of a 2006 participant: "I enjoyed traveling with the Grand View group. Each participant brought a wealth of experience to the trip. Walking the streets of St. Petersburg, seeing where the Revolution occurred and other historical sites, such as the Church on Spilled Blood, as well as the Kremlin and Red Square in Moscow, enlivened my imagination. Attractions included visiting a hospital and enjoying an evening concert. The tour guide was excellent and helped me challenge my preconceptions about Russia. Indeed, the warmth of the Russian people was a highlight. "
Mr. Leonard Larsen, retired from Lutheran Services of Iowa

Further information can be found at this link: <http://www.grandview.edu/asp/audience/content.aspx?pageid=347&aid=6>
Any questions? Don't hesitate to contact Dr. Mark Mattes, Grand View University, at mmattes@grandview.edu or Prof. Dmitry Yarushkin at dyarushkin@grandview.edu. Hearing from you before March 15 will help us determine the total number of participants.



Attention Music Fans!

The Drake Choir and Chamber Choir, conducted by Aimee Beckmann-Collier, will kick off their regional tour with a home concert on Tuesday, March 11, at 7:30 p.m. in Sheslow Auditorium on Drake's campus. The performance will feature music by contemporary American, Latvian, and Irish composers as well as works by Handel, Bruckner, Debussy, and others. There is no admission charge for the concert.

Winter Jam (Christian Rock Concert)
Wells Fargo Arena, March 28, 2014, 7:00 p.m.
Cost is \$10 at the door (no presales)
Please contact Eric Weber at ericjweber6@gmail.com