



The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church

April 28, 2015

Sunday Services

8:15 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Educational Hour 9:30 a.m.

Celebration Sunday Service

May 17, 9:00 a.m.

Summer Worship Services

8:15 and 9:45 a.m.

Begin May 24

Contact Us

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Seasons of Love

I wish I could tell you why exactly that song is stuck in my head, but I cannot. For those of you who do not know, "Seasons of Love" is a song from the Broadway musical, *Rent*. It is not that I am necessarily a fan of the musical, having never seen it myself. My lone encounter with this song was in high school choir of all things. I remember being jealous of the tenor line on the chorus, because the bass line (yes, I was a bass in high school) was, well, boring. I also remember being struck by the lyrics.

The song is about all of the ways that we measure a year. In the lyrics there are a number of ways listed to measure a year. For those of you who are scientific, it is 525,600 minutes. Also listed are the possibilities of measuring by daylights, or sunsets, in midnights...inches, miles, laughter or strife. The song goes on to ponder measuring by truths that are learned, or the number of times that you have cried. The lyrics also include the one that stuck with me the most, cups of coffee. That not only resonates with life as a community of faith, but also thinking about my own life and some of the cups of coffee in the last year. Some were needed to simply wake up, others were shared with loved ones over stories. There were probably over 100 cups of coffee alone that I have consumed while playing "Play-Doh Princesses" with Allison.

If I were to guess why the song is stuck in my head on this day it would have to do with the fact that Celebration Sunday is approaching. **On May 17th** we will gather at **one worship service at 9:00 a.m.** to celebrate God's ministry that is taking place here at Grace Lutheran Church. It marks the winding down of a programmatic year. With that in mind, I find myself thinking a lot about the last programmatic year here at Grace.

There are a lot of ways that we could measure that year. We have spent a lot of time in worship together. We have shared a lot of cups of coffee, and laughs, and tears. We have seen members come and go. We have said "goodbye" to loved ones. We have said "hello" to new friends. Life as a community of faith is not easy, but we have gone through it all, together. I am thankful to walk through life with such a great community.

Which brings us to the chorus of the song. Out of all of the ways to measure a year, the song suggests: How about love? And then later reminding us to remember the love during the "Seasons of Love." That seems to work well when we think about what it is to share a year together as a community of faith. We share seasons of love. We share in the walking through this world with mutual love and care for one another.

Yet even beyond that is the reality that as a church we share in seasons of love as we share in the story of God's love for each of us. We share in Advent, as we hear that God is coming into the world because of God's love for us. We share in Christmas as we walk with God to the manger scene to see the love of God become incarnate in the world. We share in Epiphany as we hear stories of God's love in action. We share in Lent as we see just how much God loves us, a love that draws all the world to God with Christ on the cross. We share in Easter as we see that not even death can separate us from God's love. And then we enter into the season after Pentecost and the time of the church as we explore together ways to respond to God's love for us.

Maybe it is a good song to have stuck in my head after all.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike

Happy April Birthday

- 1 Melinda Stickrod
- 2 Josh Meadows
Lillian Prickett
- 3 Helen Ringgenberg
- 4 Todd Haugen
John Roehrick
- 5 Vernon Fanning
Michael Newell
Dillon Rutter
Jacqueline Wangerin
- 6 Daniel Dinnauer
Hannah Honsey
Ardis Olson
Karla Swanson
- 8 Regan Nelson
- 9 Donna Kennebeck
- 10 Claire Kallestad
- 11 Jeffrey Rudisill
- 12 Charlotte Nielsen
- 13 Sally Preston
- 14 Frances Best
- 15 Katherine Bickel
Laurie Helton
John Kennebeck
Ellen Wonderlin
Dmitri Woodruff
- 16 Laura Wonderlin
- 17 Carol Krause
Meghan Sherer
- 18 Kimberly Fenimore
Lori Fry
Inga Hoifeldt
Tim Nehmer
- 19 Bruce Bergman
Chuck Denton
Megan Jensen
- 21 Kenneth Carlson
Christopher Janson
Brenda Mann
Jacob Nordeen
Kaylee Ringgenberg
Barbara Zimany
- 23 Scott Neal
Jonay Trentmann
- 24 Angela Chapman
Melissa Newman
- 25 Hal Turner
- 26 Devin Ashton
Shirley Davenport
John Schwemler
- 27 Sue Anderson
Courtney Brandsfield
Kate Sherer-Eichner
- 28 Rick Fry
Willa Johansen
Linda Vernia
- 29 Ralf Hoifeldt
Kira Nehmer
Annette Taylor
- 30 Jonathan Fry
Thora Henderson
Kiernan Hutton
Alexandra Marberry
Loree Nelson
- 31 Brianna Adams
Barbara Bergman
Nathan Brown
Lindsev Nelson

Happy April Anniversary

- 6 – Mark and Annette Taylor
- 7– Justin and Carolyn Andersen
Jon and Cherie Rissman
- 9 – Adam and Jessica Christensen
- 11 – Carter and Carol Woodruff
- 14 – Dick and Betty Hirschauer
Steve and Mary McCann
Karla and Drew Tillotson
- 15 – Matt and Amy Ziska
- 18 – Matt and Tammy Hagerty
- 20 - Steve and Melissa Young
- 21 – Michael and Tina Meadows
- 22 – Michael and Susanne Carney
Wayne and Debbie Curry
- 23 – Bill and Joann Jensen
Rich and Michelle Voelker
- 25 – Robert and Prudence Campbell
Harlan and Jayne Mortenson
Robert and Jeanette Ziesman
- 26 – Mike and Carla Peterman
- 27 – William and Linda Biegger
Todd and Angela Ringgenberg
- 30 – James and Kimberly Fenimore
- 31 - Duane and Linda Ulrick



Sympathy is extended to:

Kathy Piltingsrud and her family on the passing of her mother Evelyn.

The family of Helen Ballentine.

Rita Stackhouse and her family for the loss of her mother, Carrie Busch.

The family of Bob Sauerman.

Valerie Culp and her family for the loss of her father John Barkley.



Altar Guild Assistants

Jack and Carleigh assisting with Altar Guild set-up on a recent Saturday morning.

Jack is Connie Heuton's Grandson.

Carleigh is Jane Ridhour's granddaughter.



Garage and Plant Sale!
Saturday May 2, 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Grace Hall,
Grace Lutheran Church



We will have extra plants, coffee and cinnamon rolls, bake sale items, and tables upon tables of treasures!

If you:

- Ordered plants from the youth, you may pick them up beginning at 8 a.m.
- Have clothes, working appliances, or boxes of STUFF you want to donate, please bring them to Grace Hall beginning Tuesday afternoon, April 28. You name it, we'll probably take it – just please no underwear this year? Thank you!
- Would like to donate to the bake sale, please label your items and drop them off in the kitchen on Friday May 1 or by 8 a.m. Saturday May 2.
- Have signed up for a shift: you will receive an email reminding you.
- Are youth or the parents of youth and have NOT signed up for a shift – please seriously consider helping, especially the day of the sale. Youth handle the money, adults help carry things, make sure the tables stay somewhat organized, drink coffee... you'll be out of here by 2 p.m.!
- Have shopping to do? Bring a friend, buy a cinnamon roll to snack on, and see what treasures we have.

All proceeds benefit the Grace Youth Fund and the high school trip to the 2015 and 2018 National Youth Gathering.

Ascension Day Service and Brunch

You are cordially invited to an
Ascension Day Service and Brunch
Thursday, May 14, 2015

Your hosts are the women of Lydia Circle.

Service at 10:00 am, Free Will offering goes to DMARC Emergency Food Pantry

Brunch at 11:00 am. Reservations required for brunch, \$5.00 cost to members and their guests. Visitors will be welcomed without a charge.

Deadline for reservations is Monday, May 11, 2015 at 4:00 pm. Please call Mary 515-255-6433 or Martha 515-255-8961



Congratulations to our 2015 Graduates!

Christina Anderson
Leslie Denton
Tanner Peeler
Nely Ruiz
Natasha Voelker

The graduates will be recognized during the services on May 3. You will have the chance to greet them between the services that same day.

Save the Date!

Grace Fellowship Meeting – You are invited!
May 3, 5:00 p.m. - Grace Fellowship Meeting, light dinner and program: Susan Stroud on her Journey to Israel

Men in Mission
Thursday May 7, 6:00 p.m.
Grace Hall, Host Denny Rehder

New Men's Group Meeting!
Thanks for your interest in forming a men's project group. Responses started coming in shortly after the first communication and then things got busy, but no worries, let's get started! Our goal for this group – "To glorify God by 1) caring for His house, and 2) better understanding His guidance for our lives."

Our first project day will be May 9th at 9:00 AM. Here are some projects that we can choose from – I'll listen for feedback on these or others: * Church pew repairs and deep cleaning * Lawn/landscaping work (Mother's Day is May 10th!) * Organize workspaces for future project work * The Property Committee has a list of possibilities as well. Wear your work-clothes & bring your bible. Aaron and Eric will whip up something for breakfast, so bring an appetite (and your Pepto)!

Contact info: Eric Weber @ 515-210-6960 & Aaron Brandsfield @ 515-681-6239

Celebration Sunday May 17
Volunteers will be recognized during the ONE 9:00 a.m. service.
Following the service will be an Ice Cream Social in Grace Hall. Please join us as we celebrate the end of another successful year!

National Youth Gathering Meeting Four
Sunday May 17, noon – 3 p.m.
We need a parent/group of parents to provide lunch/snacks.

Men in Mission Cubs Game
Sunday June 28, 1:08 game time.
Watch for more information!

Grace Lutheran Church Council Report

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting 3-24-15 at 7:00 PM

Present: Pastor Mike, Kevin Drury, Don Peterson, Cathy Barks, Stacie Holst, Jay Wangerin, Eric Weber, Brad Lint and Karri Brandsfield

Meeting was called to order by Kevin.

Devotion – “Bread for the Journey – Going Beyond our Wants.” We all need to go beyond our needs and wants and find the joys in life. Prayer led by Pastor Mike.

Agenda was accepted as written.

Minutes from the council retreat on March 1, 2015 were accepted as written.

Staff reports and financial reports were accepted as written.

OLD BUSINESS:

- No old business

NEW BUSINESS:

- First Circle of Friends \$400 annual fee to be taken out of \$1400 budget or use Thrivent Choice Dollars.
 - A motion was made and seconded to take the \$400 out of Thrivent Choice Dollars to pay for the First Circle of Friends annual fee. The distribution of remaining Thrivent Choice Dollars will be decided on at a later date.
- The Adult Faith Enrichment Team (AFET) and council will meet on May 10th during adult faith enrichment hour for an informational conversation time with congregation members.
- Council approved giving permission for an annual pet event in the fall to be coordinated through the Social Ministry Committee.
- Decided to table the DEEP discussion for council processes, structure, etc. until next month. Start coming up with some out of the box ideas for this meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Next council meeting will be held April 28, 2015 @ 7:00 PM

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Karri Brandsfield, Secretary

Finance Report - March Results

Financial results for March YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$107,853, Budget \$109,375
- Other Income – Actual \$4,393, Budget \$5,104
- Expenses – Actual \$120,648, Budget \$126,749
- Net activity – Actual (\$8,402), Budget (\$12,270)

Actual net activity was favorable to budget due to offsetting variances. Overages in maintenance (Elevator repairs) were offset by savings from the vacant Youth and Family position.

Additionally, not included in the above results are a \$700,000 estate gift and the use of these monies - \$70,000 (10%) Synod Benevolence and \$160,000 for payoff of bank debt.

Lutheran World Relief Results

Thanks be to God for your generous donations to the Lenten Hunger Appeal through LWR! We raised \$1062 in three weeks and packaged 826 pounds of aid for our neighbors in need around the world. This included 44 quilts, 10 fabric kits, 30 baby care kits, 50 school kits, and 117 personal care kits. \$40 went to the shipping fund to get these items to the warehouse in Minneapolis. These gifts go to hungry people who have the most basic unmet human needs due to natural and man made disasters. For more information, please visit lwr.org



Vacation Bible School News!

Collection items: Want to unload all those *newspaper circulars* that tend to collect over time? Good news – we can use them at VBS! We can use a variety of ad types from furniture to clothing to toys to food, etc. We are also collecting *rolls of masking tape*. If you have either of these items to donate, please drop them off in the container provided in the Gathering Hall. Thanks for your help!

Training reminder:

Tuesday, May 26, 6-8pm: required training for preschool week teachers and station assistants

Wednesday, May 27, 6-8pm: required training for elementary week station leaders and assistants, and small group guides

Contact Stephanie Johnson in the church office with any questions. Thanks for your support of this ministry!

38 slow cookers donated!

Thanks to all who participated in our Lenten hunger drive by donating slow cookers for low income families in the Des Moines area. Last fall we had held our first slow cooker drive for families who participated in nutrition/cooking classes that were taught by a specialist from Iowa State Extension and in partnership with the Coalition in Support of Hungry Children. When word about the classes exploded, we had soon gone through the slow cookers that were donated by generous members of Grace as well as other sources.

Between donations from Grace, others that may have been dropped off by members at other churches, and most recently a load of 11 from Windsor Heights Lutheran Church, we collected 38 additional slow cookers during our Lenten drive. That represents 38 more families who will be taught how to prepare nutritious, low-cost meals for themselves; 38 families for whom the slow cooker class may lead to at least one or two meals a week being more hope-filled than empty-plated.

Loaves and fish. Jesus fed 5000 people with 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. What are 5 and 2 among so many? But the supply kept coming. A need in Des Moines was made known, and loaves and fish in the form of slow cookers kept coming. Who says miracles don't happen today?

Scholarship from Grace Lutheran Church

Grace Lutheran Church has scholarship monies available to assist members of our congregation with college tuition. We will help students who have been accepted by a Lutheran seminary, college or university for the 2015-2016 term.

Scholarships shall consist of a grant of up to \$500 per recipient per year and will be paid directly to the seminary, college or university, along with appropriate notification of the grant. The schools usually provide matching funds.

To be considered, new applicants should

1. Fill out an application form (available in the church office).
2. Submit a one-page essay describing how your church involvement and beliefs have influenced your development and career aspirations, including any specific educational goals.
3. Include a letter of request to the Scholarship Committee.

All forms should be submitted by Sunday, June 7, 2015. All eligible students from high school seniors through graduate student status are encouraged to apply. Applicants should be members in good standing for at least one year prior to the request for assistance.

Thank You!

"Many thanks for your prayers and cards during Mary's recent hospitalization."

Dick and Mary Johansen
Stu and Martha Mitchell





May is National Foster Care Month

Do you know someone who is open-minded, patient, caring, a team player and has a great sense of humor? He or she could be a great foster parent! As a partner agency in Iowa KidsNet, LSI helps find, train, support and license Iowa's foster and adoptive families. Iowa has an urgent and ongoing need for foster families, as children continue to enter the foster care system and foster families leave, often for positive reasons such as adoption or retirement after years of service. Foster parenting could be one of the most rewarding things you ever do! To learn more, visit www.IowaKidsNet.com.

Thank you for your support of LSI and all we achieve together for Iowa children and families!

LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A Dream Team for Brooke

On a spring day in Muscatine, LSI brought together a dream team. A pastor, principal, guidance counselor, teacher, grandmother and mom all gathered for one reason: to make sure a special teen girl knew just how much she mattered.

The girl was Brooke, a sweet, shy 16-year-old who had been struggling at school with poor decision-making and social issues. "Since my daughter was in kindergarten, all I had ever heard were negative comments," said her mom Nicole. "No one else saw what I saw in Brooke until LSI came along."

LSI's Dream Team program brings together all the people who care about a teen. Brooke's team listened to her share her dreams to help animals or help the elderly, and then they responded with love, encouragement and ideas.

"They talked about her big heart and how they could help her reach her goals when she graduates," Nicole said. "Brooke was ecstatic."

Brooke's self-worth has skyrocketed, said Rochelle, an LSI service coordinator.

"You can just see when you talk to her that she feels better about herself. Before you could tell she wasn't happy. Now she has a glow about her."

Brooke also spent months working with LSI's Brief Intensive Services staff to learn how to make better choices. She didn't fail a single subject last year and even made A's.

"LSI convinced us to have her re-tested, and she was diagnosed with Asperger's and ADHD," said Nicole. "Without LSI I think we would be in jeopardy of Brooke not graduating high school."

Brooke is starting to believe in herself for the first time. And that's a dream come true.



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



I am the person that was chosen by Damasiko village to coordinate with the health center. I am working with the Lutheran malaria program.

I find out what type of illness is in the village and take the report to the health center. I organize people for educational meetings. I teach about malaria and hygiene:

cleaning of homes, digging latrines, drinking clean water, and making sure pregnant mothers go for pre-natal checks. I visit homes in the community to make sure they don't have standing water (which attracts mosquitoes) and they use the mosquito nets properly.

I help with HIV testing in my community. Those affected can get treatment from the health center and connect to other health services.

I am making a difference in my village. Women now go to the clinic for pre-natal care, children are immunized, the culture of malaria prevention has grown, there is less HIV stigma in the community. I am happy that when I go to the bore holes (for water) or to the market, people respect me and are very open with me about their health.

Before the LWF malaria program came, I could educate people, but the medication for treating malaria was not there. Ever since LWF came here, we have the drugs we need and we follow the guidelines that have been given.

When I was doing my health work in the village, I found out that my wife was pregnant. I took her to the clinic for pre-natal care, and encouraged her to continue to visit the health center during her pregnancy. I am happy she delivered at the health center, where she received a treated mosquito net and immunizations. That is why my child is very healthy. Before the Lutheran malaria program came, I did not have as much knowledge.

The cases of malaria in this village used to be high, but have now reduced. Now there is proper use of mosquito nets and people go to the clinic to get tested for their health. This is a good change!

Update from the ELCA Malaria Campaign

Five years ago the ELCA joined worldwide efforts to fight malaria by launching the ELCA Malaria Campaign. Our goal: \$15 million by 2015 to support malaria programs of our Lutheran companions and partners. Today, we're 90 percent of the way there!

More than 2 million people have been impacted through the ELCA Malaria Campaign – their lives changed for the better. Together, our work has stretched into 13 countries throughout Africa. We have fully funded our commitments to eight country programs with positive results underway.

Grace Garden

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, April 29 at 5:30.

If you like vegetables, playing in the soil, or just want to know what we are up to, we'd love to have you join us!

Already planted are potatoes, kale, carrots, beets, and radishes. Check out the garden map on the Photo Wall!

Join us at our meetings! We are looking for help in many areas, so you needn't commit a lot of time, or get dirty, unless you want to!

We need help planting. Come to our meeting to find out when, or watch for announcements in the bulletin/on the website.

We need help harvesting now and then. If you are unsure what to harvest, when, or how, someone on the garden committee will be happy to help you. We will also publish in the bulletin when we will be in the garden, or what is ready to be picked.

What do you do with the food once picked? Why, take some home, put some on the table that will be set up in the entryway. The table is for anyone walking into Grace to eat from. Grace Kids Care families, Grace Members, the Postman, and any group that meets here at Grace. If you end up with too much of one crop from your own garden, you are also welcome to place it on the table.

We need help transporting food to the Food Pantry. All you need to do is pick up the vegetables from the table in the entryway and deliver it to one of the food pantries. The garden Group has been frequenting a pantry that is open 5 days a week in an area with little access to fresh food. But you can take it to any pantry you might happen to live near.

Watch for information in the bulletin, newsletters, and website or contact Michelle Voelker at voelker1@mchsi.com

AFET Seeks Your Input

The Adult Faith Enrichment Team (AFET) wants your ideas for Sunday and weekday adult learning opportunities for the 2015-16 programmatic year. **Tell us:**

- What would keep you at Grace after church – or bring you to Grace early?
- What do you hunger to learn more about or experience?
- What would add spark to your faith journey?
- What would persons new to our congregation find engaging or interesting?
- What gifts might you share with others as a person with an idea, an expert in a specific area, a teacher, a leader?

You can provide input in a variety of ways:

- **Drop** your suggestions in the box in the Gathering Hall
- **Write** your thoughts on the Idea Wall on the bulletin board near the church office
- **Fill out** an AFET form found in the church office and on the web
- **Contact** a team member: Tom McCleary, tmccleary@q.com, 967-3767; Cherie Rissman, cherierissman@gmail.com, 205-8939; Stephanie Johnson, stephaniejohnson@q.com, 276-6873 (staff liaison); Ellen Wonderlin, ellenwonderlin@aol.com, 277-9312; or Carol Woodruff, cl.woodruff@mchsi.com, 277-0910.
- **Join** AFET!

Looking forward to seeing you around, and thank you!



Thank You!

Thank you for the Easter Lily, it brightens my day. God Bless you all!
Chris Lehfeld

Dear Friends at Grace
Thank you so much for the Easter Lily that Gladys Peterson delivered to me. It brightens up the house. Thank you for remembering me,
Love, Bonnie Swanson



The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church