



The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church

November 24, 2015

Worship Services

8:15 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. in the Sanctuary

3010 52nd Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-276-6873

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An Advent Prayer

There is something very special about the season of Advent. Literally, Advent means "coming" or "arriving". It is a time when we look forward to the Nativity of our Lord, celebrated on Christmas Eve. It is also a time when we look forward to the return of Christ in glory. Simply put, it is a time of looking forward to something that is coming. Even as we recount the story of the birth of Christ, it is done in such a way that it is looking forward instead of recalling something from the past.

In that way, Advent almost stands in contrast to our culture. Christmas songs are on the radio, decorations are in stores and on homes. It feels as if the Christ child is already here, and in some ways he is. But Advent stands alongside that, reminding us all of a future in God. It reminds us that God may well have something larger in store, something beyond what we are able to imagine. God is not bound by what we are able to dream. No. We have a God who can truly make all things new.

This isn't always done in the ways that we would like, but God continues to make all things new. God is at work in ways that are both seen and unseen. I have witnessed God at work in lives within this community of faith. I have seen God change lives. I have watched as God has walked with those in grief. God's desire to walk with you through the whole of your life is why God came near in Christ. That is why God became incarnate and dwelt among us. And during the season of Advent we look again at what God has in store for each of us through Christ our Lord.

This Advent, I find myself in awe as I pray about what the future holds, for Grace, for me, for my family. It feels like a time when anything is possible. I look out at those gathered together in worship and study and I see the face of Christ looking back at me. I get excited thinking about what this next year will look like, both professionally and personally. My family and I are definitely living into the spirit of Advent.

My hope for all of us this Advent season is a simple one: to find time to be with God. There are so many things that pull at our schedules, and most of them can be a lot of fun. There are gatherings and parties, get-togethers and sing-a-longs. There are food and treats, eggnog and cider. It is a great time indeed. However, it will all be lost if we lose sight of the reality that the season came about because of God's deep desire to be near you, to spend time with you. Jesus put the Christ in Christmas, but to God, *you* are the reason for the season.

Find time in these weeks leading up to Christmas to be with God. It might be in prayer, or a walk, or in silence, or reading. Whatever speaks to you, let God speak. Be reminded of the love that God has for you. Look together at the future God has for you.

Blessed Advent,
Pastor Mike

Happy December Birthday

- 1 - Josh Lund
Deanna Weber
Sarah Williamson
- 2 - Bev Anderson
Christopher Barks
Sean Calhoun
- 3 - Ami Bradwell
Martha Page
- 4 - Carter Woodruff
- 5 - Aaron Brandsfield
Darlis Honnold
Anna Marie Peterson
Duane Ulrick
- 7 - Gus Berven
- 8 - Felicia Adams
Robert Ziesman
- 9 - Joy Averill
Rosemary Randolph
Salvador Rodriguez
- 10 - Steve Young
- 11 - Kari Dostalick
Burke Shiffler
- 12 - Evan Justice
- 13 - Brad Ashton
Sherry Brindley
Dorothy Duleepsingh
Thomas Garcia
- 14 - Anthony Garcia
Stacie Holst
- 15 - Mo Grotheer
Norm Iverson
Matt Ziska
- 17 - Tanner Highland
- 18 - Helen Fanning
Payton Lawson
Katja Rahjes
Lucas Scholl
Paul Weaver
- 19 - John Farver
- 20 - Nathan Bickel
Richard Naney
Shirley Shiffler
- 21 - Chris Janson
John Rudisill
- 22 - Quinci Chapman
Elizabeth Lewis
Harold Mann
Donald Moon
- 23 - Nancy Crowfoot
Wayne Curry
Piper Hutton
- 24 - Stuart Mitchell
Nicole Nelson
Jon Rutter
- 25 - Jeffrey Nelson
- 26 - Marlene Bang
- 27 - Christina Anderson
Barbara Berven
- 28 - Sarah Chenoweth
Ryan Randolph
- 29 - Kevin Krause
Robin Randolph
Linda Rundle
- 30 - Drake Carney
Marion Nehmer
- 31 - Nicholas Best
Tina Bickel
Verda Swanson
Jean Thompson

Happy December Anniversary

- 1 - Ross and Cindy Peeler
- 3 - Matt and Katherine Radermacher
- 8 - Tom and Becky Selander
- 14 - Gregory and Darlis Honnold
- 27 - Bob and Dorothy Jensen
Donald and Gloria Moon



Sympathy is extended to:

The family of Craig Schuff, Ellen Wonderlin's cousin.

Thank You

To all our friends at Grace Lutheran Church,
Thank you for your expressions of sympathy and prayers. Also, to all of
you who helped at Dick's memorial service and luncheon. It was a
wonderful Celebration of his life.

The family of Dick Sampel

The Star Tree

Choose a star and make someone's Christmas special - someone from
Mosaic's local group homes or someone from LSI's Early Development.

Please select a star from the Star Tree in the Gathering Hall. It will be up the
weekend after Thanksgiving. Items should be returned, unwrapped, to Grace
by Tuesday December 15. Please limit toys and gifts purchased to about \$25.

LSI's Early Childhood Program provides supportive services to at risk single
mothers from the prenatal period until age five when the child starts
kindergarten. An LSI family support worker visits regularly in the home to
teach parenting skills and to ensure the proper development of the child.

This is a highly effective preventative service that helps
mothers break the cycle of family dysfunction and reduces
the chances of child maltreatment or neglect in later years.
Studies have shown that for every dollar invested in these
early childhood programs we save between \$12 and \$17
later in services that won't be needed. Thank you for
helping to provide a merrier Christmas for these children.

Mosaic residents, all of adult age, have specific gift
requests. They have so much fun opening their gifts on
Christmas morning. The feedback from this mission is
rewarding. Both residents and staff are very appreciative.

Contact Joie Gronert at 279 - 4974 or Jackie Holmes at
276 - 6873.



Holiday Music!

Let Chancel Choir, Grace Brass, and Grace Bells share with you some Christmas cheer as the birth of Christ approaches! Dates to remember:

December 13 - during the 8:15 service Chancel Choir will present a special program of music in celebration of the Christmas season.

December 20 - Join the Bells and Brass for our annual Christmas program! This year it will be held on Sunday morning from 9:30-10:30 am.



Songs and Stories of Christmas-presented by Grace Children and Youth

The annual Christmas program will take place during 10:45 worship on Sunday, December 13. We hope you will join us to hear this story of hope as told through song and scripture.

Opportunities to Celebrate



Grace's festival of trees is happening again this year and anyone who would like to adopt and decorate a tree for the season is welcome to do so. The corridor of trees will be set up on Dec 2, and this year it will be in the Gathering Hall instead of Grace Hall. Please notify Michelle in the office if you or your group would like to reserve a tree. Trees will be reserved on a first come, first served basis.



Ladies Night Out Christmas Party – Thursday December 3, 6 p.m. – Gathering Hall

We had a great turnout for the inaugural November event, the Christmas Party should be hoppin'!

Bring an appetizer or dessert, and yourself ready for fun and laughter! There will be a blind gift exchange for anyone who wants to participate – the spending limit is \$20. Bring your gift wrapped, and please bring something you would like to receive yourself. We will draw numbers to determine who chooses a gift first. **Please RSVP with your intended dish to Donna Trickel, 515/778-7251.**



Holiday Carols in Concert – Friday, December 4, 2015, 7:30 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church

The Southwest Community College Chamber Singers will present works by Bach, Mendelssohn, Puerling, Mattson, Maddux, and Christiansen. A free will offering will be taken.



Grace Fellowship Catered Christmas Dinner - Sunday December 6, 5:00 p.m. – Grace Hall I.

The committee will be taking reservations in the Gathering Hall before and after the service through Nov. 29. The cost is \$10.00. Make your reservation now!

Joni Bell at Great Caterers of Iowa has planned a mouthwatering menu of Turkey, Ham Balls, Dressing, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Vegetable, Cranberry Jello Salad, and Rolls. Dessert will be served and entertainment will be 45 RPM - a Barbershop Quartet! Make your reservation now!



Advent Worship Service and Dessert Fellowship

“The Colors of Christmas” A reflection of Preparing for Christmas

Monday December 7, 6:15 p.m. at Windsor Heights Lutheran Church 1240 66th Street, Windsor Heights.

View the beautifully decorated tables in Parish Hall starting at 6:15. Worship Service at 7:00 p.m. Candlelit dessert to follow. No charge, but reservations are required. Freewill offering collected during worship will go to DMARCC Food Pantry. They are also collecting new unwrapped gift items for the residents of Trinity Center at Luther Park - a list can be found on the Office News bulletin board or in the October 27, 2015 issue of the Friendly Visitor.



Longest Night Service,

A Service of Hope, Strength & Community

Monday, December 21, 7:00 p.m. at Saint James Lutheran Church, provided by Hospice of the Midwest.

This ecumenical worship service focuses on the themes of, “Light in the midst of darkness” and “Hope in the midst of sadness.” See the flyer on the Office News bulletin board across from the office.

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting

10-27-15 at 6:00 PM

Present: Pastor Mike, Kevin Drury, Eric Weber, Barb Zimany, Brad Lint, Sandy Briggs, Cathy Barks, Stacie Holst, Don Peterson and Karri Brandsfield

Devotion and Prayer led by Pastor Mike.

Consent agenda reports from previous month were accepted and seconded as written.

- Discussed forming a task force to come up with ideas for the use of the Malmin funds.
- Council will work on updated Mission Statement and Tag Line

OLD BUSINESS:

- New sound system is installed and up and running. It has been very well received by the congregation. The system will be dedicated on Sunday, November 1, 2015.
- Pastor received three bids for video equipment for the sanctuary.
 - A motion was made and seconded to approve a bid from Zygo Sound in West Des Moines along with the electrical work that is needed. The motion approved the use of funds given by the Marvin Malmin Estate for this purchase. The motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Discussed updated facility usage/fee policy as well as the wedding handbook.
 - A motion was made and seconded to accept and implement the changes. The motion carried.
- Discussed insurance options for Grace to offer Pastor Mike. The ELCA offers Platinum, Gold, Silver and Bronze levels.
 - A motion was made and seconded to offer Pastor the Gold level. The motion carried.
- Discussion on meeting dates.
 - December 22, 2015 council meeting will be moved to December 15, 2015.
 - January 3, 2016 or January 10, 2016 will be another discussion with council during education hour.
 - January 17, 2016 will be budget discussion during education hour
 - January 24, 2016 will be annual meeting date with election of new officers to follow
- Four current council members' terms are expiring this January and all are eligible for another term. Along with two other open council positions, up to six new congregational council candidates may need to be identified if the four current council members decide not to run for re-election.
- The council continued discussion on same sex marriage, working towards a decision on two key questions.
 1. Whether or not we as a congregation will allow a same sex marriage to take place at Grace.
 2. Whether or not we as a congregation will allow our pastor to officiate a same sex marriage offsite.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Next council meeting will be Tuesday, November 24, 2015 @ 6:00 PM.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Karri Brandsfield, Secretary

Finance Report – Oct Results

Financial results for October YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$352,818, Budget \$370,917
- Other Income – Actual \$15,426, Budget \$16,125
- Expenses – Actual \$398,555 Budget \$416,788
- Net activity – Actual (\$30,110), Budget (\$29,747)

Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget due to several variances. Pledged offerings are below budget primarily for the month of July and September. Unpledged offerings have been below budget the entire year. Significant savings is being realized from the payoff of the bank debt (\$38K). Additionally, there was certain savings from the vacant Youth and Family position. These savings were offset by overages in maintenance (Elevator, AC repairs and painting of the custodian house), new office construction, office furniture and equipment purchases.

Additionally, not included in the above results are a \$711,407 estate gift and the use of these monies - \$70,000 (10%) Synod Benevolence, \$160,000 for payoff of bank debt, and \$18,949 media system.



Merry Christmas from LSI

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." – John 1:5

As Christmas approaches, we give thanks for you! Every day, as a ministry partner of LSI, you help bring the light of Christ to others.

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know adults with disabilities who have no caring family presence in their lives. We know families in Des Moines who spent twenty years living in refugee camps and are finally regaining some hope for the future. We know teens who are aging out of the foster care system and fear they will never belong to anyone or have a family to love them. LSI's work is Christmas work, shining love, compassion and light in places of darkness, despair, abuse, neglect, addiction and crisis. We could not do this important work without you, and we are so grateful. Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

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.

Monique Finds A Place for Hope

On a rainy morning, the radiant laughter and smiles of two young sisters fill the room.

"My daughters are very energetic," said their mom Monique, with a tired smile.

Monique began partnering with LSI's HOPES (Healthy Opportunities for Parents to Experience Success) when her oldest daughter was just a couple months old.

"I was a first time mom and young. I was so scared I would be the worst mom possible," Monique said.

When parents enroll in HOPES, they are connected with a family support worker who visits them in their home to offer parenting support, track child development and help families achieve their goals.

"The people at HOPES are my family. I couldn't tell you where I'd be without them," Monique said.

Monique was struggling to provide for herself without a high school diploma, adequate transportation or family support.

"She was kicked out of her house and has been on her own since she was a teen," said Linda, an LSI supervisor. "She was forced to grow up really fast. She had to sink or swim, and she chose to swim."

With support from LSI, Monique earned her GED and went immediately into CNA (certified nursing assistant) classes.

Today, Monique needs less support than she once did, but LSI is still there to provide a listening ear and guidance. Her family is now happy, healthy and thriving with optimism for the future.

"Our futures look very bright. My new goals are to go back to school, work on buying a house, and get my kids into a really good school. Because of LSI, my family will succeed in life."

Adult Learning Opportunities



November 29 – Advent Celebration

We invite you to observe and celebrate the beginning of the Advent season with fun and meaningful activities in Grace Hall for **God's children of all ages**. We hope you will take this opportunity to mark this season of light with your church family. If you have questions, contact Developer of Youth & Family Ministries Ellen Rothweiler, ellen@gracedm.org.



December 6 - Let the art speak!

In this season of waiting and hope, we have the opportunity to experience God alive through the art of long-time Grace member, the late Kay Barks. This unique opportunity will take place during the education hour on Sun., Dec. 6, 9:30-10:30 a.m. in Grace Hall.

Kay's husband, Bob, and daughter-in-law, Cathy, have arranged a silent auction of numerous pieces of Kay's abstract watercolors and collages to benefit Grace the first two weeks of December. (See information on the silent auction on page 6.) Using a select number of these pieces, scripture readings, and the "Talking Canvas" concept used in many elementary schools, we will view Kay's art and talk about what we see and how we experience God's presence through this art.

No two pieces are alike, and none have titles. Come as you are. No expertise in art is required. It is, as they say, a blank slate with an Advent promise to be so much more.



Sunday, December 13 - Advent Traditions

Please join us on Sunday, December 13th during the Adult Faith Enrichment time, 9:30-10:30, in Grace Hall I. We will be sharing Advent Traditions – yours! You are invited to bring symbols, stories, art, pictures, or anything else that you or your family uses during Advent to prepare your hearts and minds for the coming of the Messiah. Perhaps it is a special Advent wreath, maybe a scripture verse or devotional tradition. Do you have an Advent calendar that has been handed down generation to generation? Traditions bind us together as a family and faith community and sharing those with each other can strengthen those ties.



Religious Discussion group meets in the Conference room 6:30 p.m. Led by The Rev. Roland Zimany Wednesdays November 18, December 2,9,16. 2016 dates are on the office and website calendar.



Adult Bible Study meets Tuesday mornings from 8:45-10:15 in Grace Hall II. Pastor Mike leads. **Morning Prayer** begins at 8:30 in the Upper Room on Tuesdays.

Advent Service Learning

During the season of Advent youth grades 6-12 will have several opportunities to serve others and learn about the needs in our community and the gifts they have to offer. Take a look at what we have planned:

Sunday, November 29- Amanda the Panda Cheerbox delivery

Wednesday, December 2- Hope Ministries Sandwich Club (Confirmation Students) –Help Needed!

We are looking for donations of cookies/bars for these sack lunches. If you are a person who enjoys baking and would be willing to donate 1 or 2 dozen cookies/bars contact Ellen at ellen@gracedm.org by Sunday, November 29.

Sunday, December 6 – Cinnamon Roll Sunday

Enjoy warm cinnamon rolls with your coffee – perfect for a December morning as you view the Art Display. Proceeds will benefit the Youth Trip Fund.

Wednesday, December 9-Moore Elementary Christmas Care Shopping (High School and Middle School)

Wednesday, December 16- Moore Elementary Christmas Care Wrapping (High School and Middle School)

Please keep the youth and those they serve in your prayers this Advent season.



ART DISPLAY AND SILENT AUCTION

WATERCOLOR ABSTRACTS

By Kay Barks

On display with Blind Auction
At Grace Lutheran Church
3010 52nd Street
Des Moines, IA

Sunday, December 6 from 12:00-4:00 p.m.

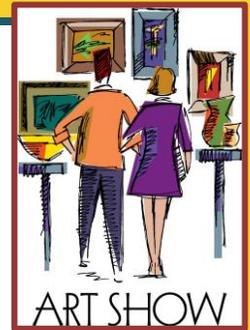
Closed on Monday December 7

Tuesday, December 8-Friday, December 11 from 6-9:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 12 from 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Blind Auction concludes, December 12, 4:00 pm

All Sale proceeds go to Grace Lutheran Church



Kathryn (Kay) Barks began her art career by taking an art class at the University of Wisconsin in 1953. Shortly after her marriage to Bob Barks in 1954 Kay began taking classes at the Des Moines Art Center in drawing, painting, watercolor, sculpture, and eventually silver jewelry. Kay had been fortunate to be influenced by such as Jules Kirschenbaum (painting and sculpture), and Jean Sample (silver jewelry). Kay's instructors encouraged her to enter amateur art shows, however, after receiving honors in many shows she was told she must move into the professional level art shows and exhibits. Included among the numerous honors Kay had received were:

Esther and Edith Younker Memorial Award
21st Iowa Annual Art Show, Des Moines Art Center
"Triangles", an out-from-the-wall painting in red, blue, yellow, and white

Best in Show Award (Purchase Prize)
Iowa State Fair, Des Moines, IA
"Witch of Agnesi I", a sculpture of stainless steel, brass, and polyurethane foam

In 1972, due to health problems Kay was forced to discontinue large painting and sculpture. She then commenced her work handcrafting silver jewelry, or as Kay was fond of saying, "Silver sculpture". Kay's work had been featured in many Midwest galleries and shows, including the Des Moines Art Center, Joslyn Art Center in Omaha, Brunnier Gallery at Iowa State University, and the Percival Gallery in Des Moines.

While still able, around 2006, Kay continued to find new ways to express her creative instincts by combining various elements into marvelous framed watercolor abstracts. Her art lives on even after her death in October, 2009.

Planning Ahead: Year End Deposit

Please make sure any contributions that are mailed or left at the church office for deposit in 2015 are in by 11:00 a.m. on Wednesday December 30. This will be our final deposit of the year. The office will be closed December 31.

Prayer Quilt

A new ministry has begun at Grace, and on occasion you will be a quilting frame in the Sanctuary. Each quilt will be finished with the exception of the knots. When you see a

quilt, we invite you to tie one of the knots and say a prayer for the recipient and their family as you do. The recipient will be announced during the service, or noted in the written announcements that week. The quilt will be delivered after all the knots are tied, and the recipient will know that each knot represents a prayer. Please consider sharing in this symbol of support.

Grace Lutheran Men in Mission: Thursday December 3rd

Our December meeting will be Thursday, December 3rd in Grace Hall with dinner starting at 6:00pm. Our guest speaker will be from the AARP Fraud Watch Program. Call Max Palmer for reservations – 255-3304.

Altar Guild Meeting

The Altar Guild will be meeting on Saturday, December 5 at 9:00 am. We will be cleaning, going through the Christmas decorations and decorating the sanctuary. Anyone interested in learning more about Altar Guild is welcome to join us.

Grace DMARC Food Pantry Sunday

At Grace the 3rd Sunday of each month is designated as Food Pantry Sunday. Although donations are accepted throughout the month, on the 3rd Sunday Grace members are especially encouraged to bring food items and monetary donations for the Des Moines Area Religious Council Food Pantry. In the most recent issue of the DMARC The VOICE it was reported that during the 2015 fiscal year 17,700 families and 41,135 individuals received assistance, providing 2.5 million meals. During June and July this year more individuals and families visited DMARC food pantries than any other summer in the last 40 years. Due to an increased demand, during August 2015 it was necessary to reduce the monthly food provided from a 4-day to a 3-day supply. With a focus of ending hunger in Polk County our continued support is needed and appreciated. DMARC president, Tom Fischer writes In The VOICE, "We cannot win this fight alone. It will take all of us working together. With your help, we can envision a community where everyone has enough to eat."

December Volunteers

Altar Guild: Cindy Peeler, Gail Peterson
To volunteer, please contact Gail Peterson.

8:15 Ushers: Linda Biegger, Dee Hummel, Tim Nelson, Larry Nordeen
10:45 Ushers: Mark Stumme, Jay Wangerin, Tom McCleary

If you are interested in helping as an usher, please see Jay Wangerin on Sunday morning.

To volunteer to serve coffee on Sundays, or serve as lector or communion assistant, please use the online signup site here: <http://volunteersignup.org/BAKWD> or check out the signup sheets at Volunteer Center in the Gathering Hall, or contact the church office at emma@gracedm.org.

For those interested in learning more about being a liturgist, please contact Pastor Mike.



Grace Lutheran Confirmation Class of 2015

Back row:
Anthony Garcia, Sarah Voelker, Sage Speck, Kyler Medhurst, Pastor Mike

Front row:
Robert Briggs, Hannah Jensen, Sierra Carney, Benjamin Wonderlin, Yaritza Marquez

The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church



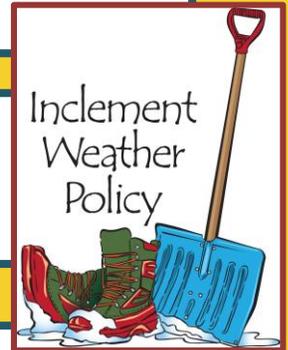
The church is decorated each Christmas by the donation of poinsettias from members at Grace. This year the poinsettias will be white and red. If you would like to purchase a poinsettia to decorate the church, complete the order form found in the Friendly Visitor or in the church bulletin, and place in the offering plate or turn into the office. Additional order forms are in the church office. Cost is \$10.60 per plant and payment is due with the order. ***The last day to order poinsettias will be Wednesday, December 9th.***

Advent Devotions

Devotions will be emailed daily, if you would like to receive these, please email Michelle at michelle@gracedm.org. Copies of the first week's devotions will be made available at Volunteer Central on November 29. You will find each week's devotions there each Sunday.

Winter Weather Policy

With our recent snow, it's time to remember Grace's inclement weather policy. When the Des Moines schools are dismissed early or cancelled due to snow, activities at Grace will also be cancelled. We'll post information here, and send notices out by email as well.



Willing Workers



The willing workers enjoy their coffee time on a recent Wednesday morning after completing various jobs around the building. Randy Taylor, Leonard Larsen, Todd Haugen (Grace Custodian), Bill Kallestad, Norm Iverson, Ralf Hoifeldt (left photo), Cindy Caylor (bottom photo, Grace Kids Care Kitchen Manager), Mike Peterman, Jerry Westercamp, Jay Wangerin.

