

The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church

April 7, 2016

Worship Services

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

Office Hours 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday through Friday

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P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

These are the words that mark the beginning of worship as we celebrate the Resurrection of Our Lord, commonly referred to as Easter. These are words that we proclaim each and every year, words that bring excitement each year. I think back my childhood coming to worship on Easter and hearing the pastor say these words, which were always followed by the same person each year doing a grand sforzando at the start of a long and slowly building timpani roll until the sound was echoing off of every wall in the room, and then the brass ensemble began the rousing introduction to "Jesus Christ is Risen Today." Everyone would stand and sing with gusto. It was truly fun and joyous.

These words are central to our theology, central to our faith, central to all that we believe. Jesus has been raised from the dead. He is alive. Back a few years ago I received a phone call from a salesman from the Discovery Channel asking me if Grace would be interested in a documentary series on the historical Jesus. I simply responded, "No, the Jesus we believe in is still alive...risen from the dead." He wasn't sure how to take that at first, and then he realized I was serious. We have a living Lord. What I found in that phone call is the very tension that is part of the Gospel text for Easter morning this year, spoken by one of the men in dazzling white at the tomb of Jesus, saying, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" It is simple.

Yet, it is all too easy to start to look for the historical Jesus instead of the one who is alive.

Truth be told it is far too easy to look for Jesus among the dead. This is often either the pursuit of the historical Jesus, or limiting Jesus to the one who welcomes loved ones when he/she dies. We sometimes think of Jesus as doing heavenly things in a heavenly place and miss the beauty of the Gospel, the Good News that Jesus was raised from the dead. Jesus is alive and through the gift of the Holy Spirit, is active and seen in the world around us.

Stop looking for Jesus among the dead. Look around. He can be seen and witnessed all over. This will be the theme throughout the Season of Easter this year: Sightings. We will venture through the lectionary texts and see the many ways that we see Jesus in the world around us. The series will start on Easter Sunday and continue through Pentecost Sunday, May 15th. We will talk about seeing Jesus in a variety of settings, at work, at a fearful situation, at church, mission, outreach...even in love and betrayal.

Join us these next weeks as we share in sightings of Jesus in the world around us. If you, or someone you know, struggles with seeing Jesus, or maybe has difficulty seeing how Jesus is relevant now in 2016, this will be a great time to come and be in the presence of God. I have seen God at work in so many ways and places and I am excited to share parts of that journey with all of you these coming weeks.

It is such good news that once isn't enough:

P: Alleluia! Christ is risen!

C: Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia! *(It is perfectly ok to respond out loud.)*

In Christ,
Pastor Mike

Happy April Birthday

- 1 - Easton Ziska
- 2 - Michael Heid
Rev. Bill Kallestad
- 3 - Ellen Batten
Dolores Johnson
Colleen McKinney
- 4 - Darlene Johnson
Kevin Stinn
- 6 - Bonna Oldson
- 7 - Carolyn Andersen
Bradley Moon
John Nelson
Maya Uehling Lint
Emily Woodruff
- 8 - Jennie Wonderlin
- 9 - Kelley Bowermaster
- 10 - Brett Brindley
Matt Hagerty
Lanette Kennebeck
Jared Nelson
Cherie Rissman
Mark Stumme
DeVee Trickle
- 11 - Mira Voelker
- 12 - Vanessa Bloomberg
Alex Davik
Kyler Medhurst
- 13 - Mary McCann
Mark Meyer
- 14 - Prudence Campbell
- 15 - Michael Flannery
Matt Speck
Erin Warren
- 16 - Ernest Weatherington
- 17 - Alton Calahan
Cynthia Gronert
- 18 - Mary Donnenwerth
Justin Fenimore
- 19 - Kerrie Gutmann
Emma Stammer
- 20 - Kevin French
Cody Gebauer
Jenny Rehder
- 24 - Eric Nelson
Charla Preston
- 25 - Amy Wonderlin
- 26 - Aden Artzer
Mike Carney
Howard Kulzer
Nathan Scholl
- 27 - Cathy Barks
Bill Jensen
Gladys Peterson
Fletcher Reynolds
- 28 - David Gronert
Abbey Nelson
Anna Shay
- 29 - Kathy Piltingsrud
- 30 - Alysse Adams



Happy April Anniversary

- 7 - Kathy Piltingsrud and Paul Nelson
- 10 - Deanna and Eric Weber
- 12 - Sandra and Barry Briggs
- 21 - Carol and Mark Mattes
- 23 - Ellan and Mark Wonderlin
- 24 - Andrea Lynn and Matthew Harbaugh
- 29 - Curt and Kathy Johansen
Bonnie and Franklin Peterson



Sympathy

The Family of Stephen Sampel

The Family of Norma McWilliams
(Ellen Batten's sister)



Thanks to the Women of the church for their gifts at Christmastime! I enjoyed them all.
Cindy Wheeler

Thank you to the church for their thoughtfulness and Charlotte Nielsen for delivering the lovely Easter Lily. We can't get to Grace due to transportation needs and we really miss everyone.

LaRue Buihner and Leanne Davis

We would like to thank the people of Grace Lutheran Church for the gifts and well wishes surrounding Samantha's baptism. The diaper cake was absolutely beautiful, and extremely practical! The cards were such a wonderful expression of care and we all feel embraced by this community of faith. Thank you for your promises to Samantha, and to our family, promising to hold us in prayer as you do for each of those baptized here at Grace. It was such a wonderful day, and we were thrilled to have you all share it with us.

Pastor Mike, Jenie, Allison, and Samantha

To the Member Care Team,
You are incredible! We wish to offer thanks for the meal and prayers at a time when they were truly needed. Your ministry is such a beautiful expression of what it is to be part of the body of Christ. Also, whomever brought forward that lasagna recipe, it should be shared with the world. It was delicious!

Thank you! Pastor Mike, Jenie, Allison, and Samantha

To my dear friends at Grace,
Words cannot express well enough how thankful I am for your visits, cards, and prayers, and the Prayer Quilt is very much appreciated. Taking me to the doctor, bringing me food, calling me. You have done so much, and I thank you. My best birthday ever was when Pastor Mike came to visit and served me communion. He also came to me in the hospital and here at Calvin. I don't know how long I will still be on this journey, but I know the destination. Thank you for all your help to me and my family.

In Christ, Bob Barks

Many Thanks to all who said a prayer, sent a card, gave me a call, or who were otherwise invaluable to me as I recovered from my recent surgery. What a wonderful family I have here at Grace.

Lynn Niemuth

Thank you for the beautiful prayer quilt made for Bob and his family. We shall treasure it forever.

Dorothy and Anita Jensen

In pursuit of a pictorial directory

During April we'll again work on developing a pictorial directory. Currently, we have 90 pictures loaded into our on-line directory. But, 48 at best could be considered current or in a format that is suitable (square or horizontal). Plan for a photo session between services with either Matt Jordahl or Denny Rehder April 17, 24 or May 1. You may also provide an individual or family picture you like. Although some of you are using the on-line directory, only those with an email address can access it. On April 10 between services, check your status in the Gathering Hall. We'll be set up to show you what we have and what we need. Our list of 375 families or individuals undoubtedly needs to be edited as well. Let's see if we can move this project forward!



2016 Registration is now active and online!

Preschool week will be June 6 - June 10
Elementary week will be June 27 - July 1

Links to the online registration for both weeks can be found on the Grace website at www.gracedm.org under both the Links and Education tabs.

There is also a medical form that must be printed, filled out, and dropped off or mailed into the office. That link is also found on the Education and Links pages.

VBS volunteers needed

for both weeks - please contact Ellen at ellen@gracedm.org if you want to help!!



Adult Learning Opportunities

Sundays 9:30 a.m. – Grace Hall

- Apr 10 – bible character trivia game
- Apr 17 – The Book of Acts – Pastor Mike
- Apr 24 – The Book of Acts continued
- May 1 – To be determined

May 22 – Celebration Sunday (artist Paul Om an) – watch for more information in the next newsletter!

Sundays 9:30 a.m. – Cafe

Hidden in Christ Book Study continues! Led by Cherie Rissman.

Morning Prayer begins at 8:30 in the Upper Room on Tuesdays.

Adult Bible Study Bible study meets on Tuesdays from 8:45-10:15 in Grace Hall II, led by Pastor Mike.

Centering Prayer Group is led by Julie Honsey and meets on Tuesdays from 10:30-11:30 in the Upper Room.

Wednesday Evening Religious Discussion Group meets at 6:30 in the conference room. led by The Rev. Dr. Ro Zimany, the upcoming discussions will be:

April 13: John 10:22-30, Acts 9: 36-43, Revelation 7:9-17.

April 20: Highlights of Hinduism

April 27: Highlights of Hinduism

May 4: Who was Jesus, Really?

Youth Learning Opportunities and News

High School Bowling! Sunday, April 10 from 5:00-7:00 pm at Merle Hay Lanes.

Invite friends!!!!!!! If you intend to go make sure to let Ellen know! Cost to you is \$10: that includes shoe rental and unlimited bowling for the two hours we are there.

Parents of Acolytes: There is a new, online sign-up form. You can sign up for spots, and create your own account to receive reminders and even change dates as needs arise. Check your inboxes for an invite from Stacy Speck! ***In the meantime we need one more acolyte for each service on April 17.***

Love Like Jesus service leadership event for High School Students
Thursday, June 16, 2 pm-Sunday, June 19 9:00 am at Grand View University

Cost: \$150 per person. Register now and pay a \$50 deposit (deadline 5/22)

Confirmation Camp for Middle School Students

Sunday, July 17 – Friday, July 22 (Week III) at Lutheran Lakeside Camp

Cost: \$435 - register ASAP at lutheranlakeside.com

Endowment Fund Report

The purpose of the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church Endowment Fund is to promote faithful Christian stewardship by providing a congregational plan to receive grants, gifts or bequest of money to be used to enhance the total program and mission of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church beyond that supported through regular giving and apart from the general operation of the congregation. The Endowment Fund Committee acts as custodian of the Fund.

The Endowment Committee approved the following distributions of 2015 income:

Awards to Grace Lutheran Church:

- \$5,915 for carpet replacement in lower level corridor
- \$2,620 for carpet replacement in main west entry
- \$300 for a new coffee cart
- \$848 for two sewing machines for the Grace quilters
- \$800 for prayer quilt supplies
- \$1,000 for scholarships for Msindo/Mararo students
- \$1,000 for Msindo most vulnerable children project

Other Awards:

- \$2,500 for a utility trailer for the global greens farm with Lutheran Services in Iowa
- \$1,440 for furniture for a group home with Mosaic

A total of \$16,423 was awarded. Requests for grants totaled \$17,923.

Since inception, the Endowment fund has awarded a total of **\$291,065** to **153** projects.

Finance Report – February Results

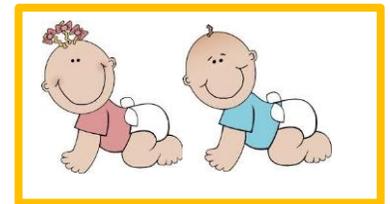
Financial results for February YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$72,964, Budget \$67,600
- Other Income – Actual \$2,497, Budget \$3,033
- Expenses – Actual \$72,396, Budget \$78,369
- Net activity – Actual \$3,066, Budget (\$7,736)

Actual net activity was above budget primarily due to pledged offerings. Certain full year pledges were received and acknowledged in late 2015 but recognized for financial purposes in 2016. Utilities and snow removal activity has also been below budget.

Diaper Drive April 17 – May 8 Young Women's Resource Center

The Young Women's Resource Center is a non-profit organization that supports, educates and advocates for young women ages 10-21. Through small groups and individual support, the Young Women's Resource Center provides programming for all young women, no matter what they may be going through.



One of the programs of YWRC "provides a broad range of perinatal services for pregnant and parenting young women ages 13-21. At a time when young women can feel most alone or in need of help, the Young Women's Resource Center can bring some comfort and stability through its programs and classes. These programs are designed to equip the young mom or expecting mom with the skills to address the challenges of parenting so that she can focus on its joys."

The Social Ministry committee is sponsoring a Diaper and Baby Wipes Drive for YWRC's Young Moms program beginning April 17 through May 8. **At the present time there is a greater need for small size diapers.** Your donation of diapers and/or baby wipes may be placed in the box near the display in the Gathering Hall.

Monetary donations will also be accepted. Special envelopes are available at the display. Checks should be made payable to Grace Lutheran Church with "diaper drive" written on the memo line. Envelopes may be placed in the offering place or taken to the church office.

For more information about YWRC please visit www.ywrc.org.



National Child Abuse Prevention Month

According to Prevent Child Abuse Iowa, more than 7,400 Iowa children were found to be abused in 2014. The most common forms of abuse included denial of critical care, physical injury, exposure to illegal drugs and sexual abuse. Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) helps combat child abuse through prevention, safety and stability services and mental and behavioral health treatment.

LSI's early childhood programs prevent child abuse by giving parents support and resources to build a healthy, stable home environment for their children. In 2015, LSI made more than 15,000 home visits to parents of infants, toddlers and preschoolers!

LSI's Family, Safety, Risk and Permanency Services help children and families already involved in a crisis or abuse situation to become safer and more stable, and LSI's residential programs at Beloit and Bremwood serve many children and youth who have experienced trauma from past abuse or neglect.

You make a direct impact on these children and families through your support of LSI. Thank you!
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.

All About the Love

The heartbeat of Syntesha's home is made up of three little words: *I love you. I love you. I love you.*

"I tell my son all day, 'I love you,'" she said. "I didn't know what love meant until I had my baby. The definition of love has changed for me."

Syntesha grew up in a troubled, violent home. Her childhood involved fights. Skipping school. Living with one grandparent, then another.

"I wouldn't even call it a home," she said. "My mom and dad were in and out of jail growing up. They were young. I'm 21, and my mom is 35. I've been through anything you can name. Physical, emotional, sexual abuse. Homeless. Shelter. Evicted."

At 18, she was barely ready to take care of herself, let alone a child. So when she was seven months pregnant, she signed up for LSI's home visiting services. LSI helped this motivated young mom with potty training, budgeting and positive parenting tips and encouraged her college dreams.

"If you're a single mom, I think this is the absolutely best program," Syntesha said.

Now a full-time college student, Syntesha is working hard for her dreams while also preparing to welcome another child into her family. She hopes to help local youth who face the same struggles she once did. "I want my son to know there are bigger and better things out there in the world."

What a big, brilliant, beautiful kind of love.



In Memory

To honor the memory of Diane Jessen her family has gifted to Grace the Paschal Candle, stand and liquid Eternal Light that are being used for the first time this Easter Sunday. These gifts remind us of Diane's faithful and dedicated service to Grace through her long-time membership in Grace's Altar Guild. We want to thank the Jessen family for these gifts that will continue to enhance our worship at Grace.

Bread for the World Offering of Letters

The Hunger Working Team will be hosting an Offering of Letters Drive sponsored by Bread For the World.

Each year Bread For the World conducts an Offering of Letters campaign inviting people to correspond with their legislators and encourage them to adopt specific legislation that can make a real difference to people struggling with hunger and poverty.

The 2016 Offering of Letter's theme is Survive and Thrive with the focus on good nutrition in food assistance. Grace will be joining with others who care about feeding hungry people by accepting the invitation to host an Offering of Letters Drive on Sunday, April 3rd. Packets will be available in the Gathering Hall before and after both services to help you in writing your letters.

Letter packets were handed out on Sunday, April 3. Letters can be sent any time this spring, so if you did not pick up a packet, stop by the Gathering Hall and grab one of the remaining kits from Volunteer Central



Grace Kids Care now hiring for afternoon staff positions. 330-6 pm every day. Must be 16, dependable and love to work with children. If you or someone you know are interested contact Heather at heathernelsondc@msn.com or 515-276-0943.

NCAA Charity Bracket Winner

Marty Dostalik takes the top spot with 140 points after choosing Villanova to win. The Johnston Band Parents Association will benefit from his win. Congratulations Marty! Check out the full lineup on the photo wall to see where everyone else landed in the lineup, and to check out all the different charities our members support!



Ladies Night Out:

Dinner and a Show, Saturday April 23.

Open to all Women of Grace

Dinner requires an R.S.V.P., you will purchase your own tickets for the show.

The Dinner: 5:30 p.m. at Malo's (Latin American). R.S.V.P. to Tammy Denton (chastam@mchsi.com, or 515-779-0301) by April 9 so she can make dinner reservations.

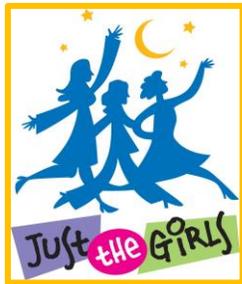
The Show: Drake Carney is performing in Romeo and Juliet (Des Moines Young Artists) at the Kum & Go Theatre located behind the Des Moines Social Club/Malo's restaurant downtown.

Seats are unassigned, so everyone can purchase their own tickets for \$19.75 (with the service fee) from <http://www.midwestix.com/organizations/des-moines-onstage>

The performance runs from April 15 - 24 for anyone else who might be interested!

Martha Circle –

May 28 9:30 a.m.
Gathering Hall



Men's Group Meets April 9

The men's group will be meeting April 9 at 10:00am. We will meet for breakfast and devotions at McDonalds in Grimes. After devotions, we will have a little fun at MB2 raceway in Grimes for go-kart racing. All are welcome.



Grace Fellowship Meeting & Program

May 1 fellowship meeting: 5:00 p.m. Light Luncheon and Program. Many of us listen to the Bonnie & Van Show on WHO Radio in the early morning - Van Harden will be with us, discussing his book "Life in the Purple Wedge". Attendees will be able to purchase his book.



Grace Youth Annual Garage, Bake & Plant Sale

Saturday, April 30 • 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Grace Lutheran Church • Grace Hall



Garage Sale

Donate your gently used clothing, housewares, furniture, books, games, toys, electronics, CDs/DVDs, holiday decorations and more! (Please make sure electronics are in working condition and that clothing isn't stained.) Items may be dropped off in Grace Hall starting Tuesday, April 26 (noon) through Friday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m.



Plant Sale

Plant orders may be picked up outside the church from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Bake Sale

Attention all bakers! We are looking for baked goods – breads, cupcakes, cookies, bars, muffins and more – to sell during the garage sale. Please wrap items in Saran wrap and place 4 - 5 to a plate. Bring goodies to the church kitchen on Friday, April 29 or by 8:00 a.m. on Saturday, April 30.



Volunteer to Help!



We are looking for individuals/families to sort through donations and to help set up the garage sale during the afternoons/evenings on Tuesday, April 26 through Friday, April 29. In addition, we could use some extra hands throughout the garage sale on April 30. We also need 10 individuals to help unload plants and sort the orders from 6:45 to 8:00 a.m. on April 30.

Interested in volunteering? E-mail Kari Dostalick at kdostalick@msn.com or call 252-1892.

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

Grace Garden Update!

The garden has been tilled, peas and beets, radishes and carrots have been planted and potatoes will shortly also be in the ground! Keep your eye on the announcements for more upcoming planting dates. We'd love to have your help with a little harvesting this summer.

Julie Honsey and Marion Nehmer combined their love of planting with a First Circle Friends activity, even though rain kept them inside!

Thrivent Habitat for Humanity Build

Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity is building a house that is sponsored by Thrivent Financial. They are looking for groups to come out and volunteer on the house they are sponsoring.

The dates for this build are: **May** 10, 14, 21, 31, **June** 4, 7, 11, 14, 18, **July** 19, 23, 26, 30.

Shelby Vraspier, Volunteer Coordinator

Greater Des Moines Habitat for Humanity 515-471-8686 x107
svraspier@gdmhabitat.org | www.gdmhabitat.org

Meals from the Heartland Spring Break

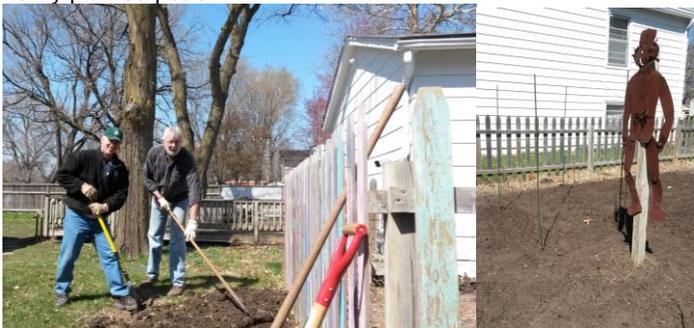
Thanks for serving over Spring Break!

That week, all volunteers together helped package **844,766 meals** and raise **\$5,427.21 in donations.**



Grace Garden

Tilling, slinging compost, and the scarecrow standing guard over newly planted peas!



Men's Group

Members hard at work on a Saturday morning!



Easter Breakfast! And "Kids" Activities

Following a breakfast of pancakes, sausage, eggs, and fruit, there were games to play and arts to create! Fun was had by all. Proceeds of the breakfast support the Grace Prayer Quilt Ministry.



The Friendly Visitor

Grace Lutheran Church

Grand View University Trip

Grand View University (GVU) would like to invite you to join a cross-cultural and professional development trip to China, Hong Kong, and Macau.

The group of 25 individuals is tentatively scheduled to depart Des Moines, IA on June 3, 2017 and return on June 16, 2017 (departure from other cities is available).

The group will spend 5 days in Beijing, 1 day in Shijiazhuang (sister city of Des Moines), 3 days in Hong Kong, 1 day in Macao, and 2 days in Zhuhai. In addition to extensive sightseeing programs in each of those cities the group will tour well known historical, cultural, and religious sites dating back to the Ming dynasty.

The itinerary also includes professional development opportunities consisting of interaction with the staff and students of the local university, high school, library, and local government officials. The cost for the all-inclusive trip (visas, airfare, hotel accommodations, meals, tour services, transfers and etc.) is \$4,500 per person. The first organizational meeting for the group will be held in the middle of September 2016 on GVU's campus (details will be provided to interested individuals in August).

Additional information about the trip is available by pasting this link into your browser (or, you can find an active link at www.gracedm.org on the links page, labeled Grand View University China Trip): <http://my2.grandview.edu/documents/AsiaTrip/ProfessionalDevelopmentTriptoAsiaJune2017GVUALumniandFriends.pdf>

The trip will be led by two GVU Professors, Mark Mattes, Professor of Theology, and Dmitry Yarushkin, Assistant Professor of Business Administration. Local English speaking guides will accompany the group in each city.

Please contact Mark Mattes at mmattes@grandview.edu for more information and to reserve your space in the group. Space is limited to 25 individuals.



Easter Seals Bridge Camp

Bridge Camp is a week-long day camp for children 6-12 years old. Eight week-long sessions are held each summer and cost \$150 per week. Bridge Camp provides an integrated setting where children with and without disabilities learn and grow together. Bridge Camp is designated for campers who can maintain a 18 staff to camper ratio.

Bridge Campers enjoy all Easter Seals Iowa Camp Sunnyside has to offer including canoeing, a zip line, fishing, and animal farm, horseback riding, archery, nature trails, the Variety Club Rec. Center, swimming in an accessible indoor pool and a tree house.

Themes this year include:

June 5-10: Rock and Roll Week

June 12-17: Superheros/Fantasyland

June 19-24: Western Week and Extreme Nature #1

June 26 – July 1: Rainbow Connection/Camp Explore

July 3-8: Sunnyside Olympics/Around the World and Extreme Nature #2

July 10-15: Movin' and Groovin': Music through the Decades

July 17-22: Splash Off!

July 24-29: Sports Extravaganza

For additional information visit www.easterseals.com/ia/camp or call 515-309-2375

