

Online worship until further notice See page 7 for how to access

Sunday Worship: 9:00 a.m. Weekday morning Prayers 9:30 a.m.

The building is closed - reach us at 515-276-6873

5201 Urbandale Avenue Des Moines, Iowa 50310 515-276-6873 www.qracedm.orq

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Insert: Prayer Doodle Page

When Will I See You Again

There is a catchy tune during the credits of "Wreck It Ralph" with the refrain "When will I see you again?" I have to admit, the sentiment of this song is quite palpable these days. Even earlier today, it brought such joy to see some of the people of Grace Lutheran Church as we gathered for a Birthday Party Parade for Gladys Peterson. It was so refreshing to see familiar faces, even though we remained in the car the whole time. It boosted the spirits of the whole family to see our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Even earlier today, the question became even more real as the Governor's Press Conference held the update that restrictions on religious gatherings have been lifted for much of the state of Iowa. Polk County was not included in that ease of restrictions, but is slated for that restriction to be lifted on May 15.

When will we see each other again? That question has been raised often and in a variety of ways. It is worth noting that we canceled worship services before being required to do so and will continue to suspend on site worship and activities until it is safe to gather again. There is a task force that will continue to monitor the situation and make recommendations to the Congregational Council. We will also be developing a plan for varied phases as it becomes safe to gather again.

I would like nothing more than to be able to gather with all of you. That said, I still believe that the role of shepherd involves protecting the sheep. I take this very seriously. Sometimes taking care of the sheep means keeping them away from the storm. Time and time again we have heard it said that "lowans do the right thing." This would be one such case. We will make sure it is safe and prudent to gather before opening the building for worship and activities. It is true that lowa is home to some of the best people in the world, in my humble opinion. I have also known plenty of lowans who go outside to look for the tornado when hearing the Tornado Warning. There are times when we need a little push to do what is right.

Grace Lutheran Church is such a dynamic community of faith. I am continually humbled by and grateful for of you. The global pandemic has been tough on all of us, but I have seen such generosity and compassion burst forth from my sisters and brothers in Christ. These times are not unprecedented. The world has survived pandemics before. These are, however, new waters for many of us. We continue to encounter rough waters, but we are learning to navigate them together.

The other question that often comes up is:

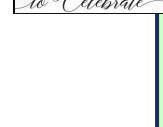
Continued on page 5...

Happy May Birthday

- Melinda Stickrod
- 2 Joshua Meadows
- 3 Helen Ringgenberg
- 4 John Roehrick Todd Haugen
- 5 Jacqueline Wangerin Dylan Rutter
- 6 Karla Swanson Hannah Honsey Daniel Dinnauer
- 8 Regan Nelson
- 9 Donna Kennebeck
- 10 Claire Kallestad
- 11 Jeffrey Rudisill
- 12 Charlotte Nielsen
- 13 Sally Preston
- 14 Frances Best
- 15 Dmitri Woodruff Ellen Wonderlin Wilke John Kennebeck Laurie Helton
- 16 Laura Wonderlin Jones
- 17 Meghan Sherer Carol Krause
- 18 Tim Nehmer Inga Hoifelt Lori Fry Kimberly Fenimore
- 19 Megan Jensen Chuck Denton Bruce Bergman
- 21 Barb Zimany
 Kaylee Ringgenberg
 Jacob Nordeen
 Brenda Mann
 Christopher Janson
 Kenneth Carlson
- 23 Jonay Trentmann Scott Neal
- 24 Melissa Newman
- 25 Hal Turner
- 26 John Schwemler Shirley Davenport Devin Ashton
- 27 Kate Sherer-Eichner
 Courthney Brandsfield
 Sue Anderson
 Alexander Oberhart
 Andrew Oberhart
- 28 Linda Vernia Rick Fry

Happy May Anniversary

- 6 Mark and Annette Taylor
- 7 Jon and Cherie Rissman Justin and Carolyn Andersen
- 9- Adam and Jessica Christiansen
- 11 Carter and Carol Woodruff
- 14 Steve and Mary McCann
- 15 Ro and Barb Zimany Matt and Amy Ziska
- 18 Matt and Tammy Hagerty
- 20 Steve and Melissa Young
- 21 Mike and Tina Meadows
- 22 Wayne and Debbie Curry Mike and Susanne Carney
- 23 Richard and Michelle Voelker
- 25 Harlan and Jayne Mortenson
- 26 Mike and Carla Peterman
- 27 Todd and Angela Ringgenberg Bill and Linda Biegger
- 30 James and Kimberly Fenimore
- 31 Duane and Linda Ulrick



Huniversaries



Our sympathies are with:

The family of Leonard Larsen

Questions about the safety of your offerings mailed to Grace.

We want to assure you that the mail is delivered to a locked mailbox at Grace, and staff is checking that mailbox daily. Once the mail is retrieved, anything that looks to be of a personal nature or might contain money is placed in a secure locked location until members of the finance committee can tend to deposits.

If you prefer, you may use the online giving option on our website, or speak to Denise or your banking institution about other options. We sincerely thank everyone for their continued support during this uncertain time.

Questions? contact Denise@GraceDM.org or 515-276-6873

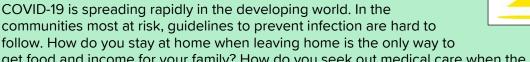


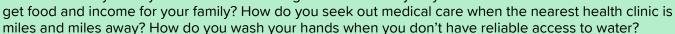
May Birthdays continued

- 29 Annette Taylor Kira Nehmer Ralf Hoifelt Cal Wilner
- 30 Loree Nelson Alexandra Marberry Kiernan Hutton Torry Henderson Jonathan Fry
- 31 Lindsey Nelson Nathan Brown Barbara Bergman Brianna Adams

Lutheran World Relief Covid Response

Dear Friend, I hope this note finds you and your family safe and well. Please know you are always in my prayers.





These are real challenges communities are facing and, fueled by the power of your love, I'm happy to report those are the very challenges we are tackling in our global response. Here is how things are shaping up so far.

In Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, we are working with our Christian Health Association partners to:

- Equip health centers with the information, equipment and supplies to treat COVID-19 patients
- Mobilize church and community leaders to spread the word to families about how to protect themselves and when and how to seek care
- Track data such as confirmed cases and COVID-19 related deaths

Provide personal protection equipment, handwashing stations and more.

In **Tanzania**, you've made it possible for us to rapidly set up a call center with the Ministry of Health so families can ask questions and get the latest information about COVID-19.

In **Peru**, now home to many Venezuelans who fled the economic turmoil in their home country, you are making sure families get critical safety information through an easily accessible mobile platform. Displaced families are among the most vulnerable during this crisis, and you've given Venezuelan families a way to protect themselves.

And in **El Salvador and Indonesia**, you are delivering emergency food packs to families living in communities where market shelves are empty. Because you reached out with love, families won't have to put their children to bed hungry.

As you can see, there is a lot going on — and we would not have been able to do this without you! Your love is truly what is fueling this response.

But so much more needs to be done. We get reports from our staff on the ground that needs are increasing every day.

You've already given so generously to this effort, but the needs grow exponentially by the day. Would you consider making another gift, in any size, to help keep our response going strong?

THANK YOU for the love and compassion you've show for our neighbors in need around the world. Your gifts are hard at work, right now, equipping communities and protecting families. I cannot thank you enough for putting your faith into action during this most difficult of times.

If you have any questions about our response, or about any of our ongoing work around the world, please don't hesitate to hit reply. We'd love to hear from you.

With the deepest of gratitude, Daniel V. Speckhard, President and CEO

Church Council Highlights

At the March 24th, 2020 Church Council Meeting:

The Council met utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application.

The Council discussed a Suspended Services Plan to deal with changes at Grace Lutheran due to Covid-19. Most of the meeting was spent in discussion to generate a Suspended Services Plan to be implemented as needed pending resolution of the covid19 virus outbreak or relaxation of some of the guidelines put forth to control its spread. Discussion had two foci: (1) factors concerning Grace Lutheran Church, its staff, and finances, and (2) factors concerning Grace Kids Care Daycare Center, its staff, and its finances.

Grace Lutheran Church

- 1. Staff is still working, although mostly from home.
- 2. Todd is performing janitorial tasks.
- 3. Church finances are good at this time. We can expect some savings from decreased utility bills and certain unit pay employees whose services will not be required during suspension of formal group worship services.
- 4. The Council expects that pledge offering will continue to come in via USPS or online giving.

Grace Kids Care Daycare:

- 1. The Daycare closed March 19th with plans to reopen April 6th. There are some strong feelings that the Daycare should remain closed another two weeks, until April 17th, perhaps even longer. This decision will be discussed further at the March 30th Council meeting.
- 2. The Council discussed options for meeting Daycare payroll as tuition income stops.
- 3. The Council discussed options for obtaining the necessary supplies to reopen the Daycare (toilet tissue, cleaners and sanitizers, paper towels, hand sanitizers, etc.).
- 4. Underlying all of these issues is the fear of spreading the virus when the Daycare reopens.

The Council agreed to meet via **Zoom** on Monday, March 30th, to continue the formulation of a Suspended Services Plan.

Respectfully submitted, David F. Gronert Council Secretary

Finance Report – March Results

Financial results for March YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings Actual \$106,716, Budget \$102,425
- Other Income Actual \$7,633, Budget \$7,125
- Expenses Actual \$108,765, Budget \$113,987
- Net activity Actual \$5,585, Budget (\$4,437)

Actual net activity was favorable to budget primarily due offerings above budget, continued giving during these uncertain times is appreciated. Maintenance activity was also under budget.



Continued from page 1, Pastor Mike's front page letter

"Would you consider continuing the streaming of services?" Yes. The streaming of services is here to stay. We are installing equipment that will allow us to stream services and events at Grace Lutheran Church. This offering of services has enabled us to reach people that otherwise couldn't attend. There are people joining from the metro area, as well as other parts of the state, other parts of the country, and even other countries. It has been beautiful to see such a global connection in a time of isolation for the greater good.

I want to end with a personal word of thanks. As we navigate these rapids together, you have all shown such a great level of patience with me and others. There have been times where the technology has given us problems. There are times when worship begins late or without sound. Each time we have had a glitch, we have learned from it and improved. This jump to the digital age has had a steep learning curve, and you have all shown great care and patience. Thank you.

It is a joy to continue to serve you as pastor and shepherd.

In Christ, Pastor Mike

A New Grace Lutheran Cookbook!

With all the extra time some of us are spending in our kitchens these days, wouldn't it be great to have new and varied recipes to choose from? Do you have a tried and true recipe you love? Please share!

We would like to compile a Grace Lutheran cook book and need your help. If you would like to share a recipe and the story behind it (if there is one), please either type it up and email it to Emma at emma@gracedm.org, OR write it out and mail to the church at 5201 Urbandale Ave, Des Moines 50310. We will spotlight the recipes received in different ways, and eventually will have it all bound and distribute it as an actual book.

If you have a culinary contribution to make, please share and we can continue to maintain community in this way! Emma has given us a start:

*This recipe has no special background story, it is just an easy and hot meal to make with ingredients many have as pantry staples - hopefully you will not need to make an extra grocery store trip! When my Mom made this recipe growing up it didn't have an official name, so we dubbed it

Good Casserole

Ingredients:

2 C. pasta (we use elbow macaroni)

1 clove garlic, diced

1 yellow onion, chopped

1 green bell pepper, chopped

1 C. sliced mushrooms

1/2 to 1 lb. hamburger/turkey burger

1/2 C. milk

1 can Cream of Mushroom soup

Shredded Cheddar to layer on top

Directions:

- 1. Cook pasta for 12 min., drain, set aside.
- 2. Sauté garlic, onion, pepper, and mushrooms in oil until softened.
- 3. Add burger and stir until meat is browned.
- 4. Salt/pepper to taste.
- 5. Combine pasta, meat mixture, milk, and soup in a greased 9x13 dish.
- 6. Top with cheese.
- 7. Bake uncovered at 375 for 20 minutes.

Prep. time: 35 min. Serves: 8

Youth Ministry - Active Grace

Contact ellen@gracedm.org

VBS Update

For the safety of our members, ALL GRACE VBS will be postponed to the fall.

How are we being the church with and for youth and families right now?

This is a question I ask myself often. I hear from many parents and families that are enjoying this time with their kids that is so de-programmed. A chance to just "be" together. I hear from others that are overwhelmed and "have never been so tired and done so little". Some families welcome resources and activities to add to the enjoyment of time at home, others feel the pressure to do another thing. And this is just the first weeks of this new reality, who know what the next weeks will hold.

So how do we respond? Here are some ways I am encouraging youth and families to be church and grow in faith-

Ongoing Grace Pen Pal communications
Spark Family Sunday School on YouTube
Coloring pages and lesson materials
Stocking the Little Free Pantry
Praying for each other and those in need
Weekly Confirmation Zoom check-ins
Active Grace Facebook Group
Look for ways to serve others

I am encouraged by what I have heard in terms of the creativity of children and youth serving others even in this time of limitation. This is how to be the church, now and always, love God and love our neighbor.

Sparkhouse has a YouTube channel!

Sparkhouse produces the children's bulletins we use on Sundays.

https://youtu.be/Wmo5MOJXypM

Calling all Graduates!

This year, in addition to a callout in the weekly announcements - available on the website and our Facebook page - we want to include your photo and bio in the June newsletter.



Please let us know where you are graduating from (High school, College, Trade schools, Graduate schools), what you hope to do next. Send a clear photo of just you, if you wish.

Send all information to michelle@gracedm.org

Scholarship Applications are now open!

Applicants must be active members of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Des Moines who have been a member for at least one year prior to application.

Applicants must be accepted and planning to attend a Lutheran seminary, college, or University.

Scholarships shall consist of a grant of up to \$500.00 per recipient per year and will be paid directly to the seminary, college, or university, along with appropriate notification of the grant.

Find the application form and additional instructions at this link:

https://gracedm.org/content/uploads/2018/0 4/Scholarship-Application.pdf

Accessing Online Worship

Updates and live links, including those for Holy week, can be found online at

https://gracedm.org/news-events/events-calendar/

For those who are not using social media, computers, or smart phones, please call the office and we will mail you a copy of the worship materials to use at home.

Facebook

For those gathering through Facebook, the Grace Lutheran Church page will go live on Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. and weekday mornings at 9:30 a.m. If you are unable to gather at that time, the service will be uploaded into the video section shortly after the service concludes. If not on Facebook, you can still access the videos at this link: https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious- Organization/626637384050683/ The worship video will start when Pastor Mike starts.

Zoom

For those gathering on Zoom the following instructions will remain valid for the next few weeks.

Sunday Worship:

For those gathering from a mobile phone: One tap mobile+16465588656,,974639467# US (New York)+13126266799,,974639467# US (Chicago)

Or by phone, dial one of these lines, then enter meeting ID: 974 639 467+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) or +1 301 715 8592 US

For those gathering on a computer, you will need to download the zoom app and then proceed to the meeting. Join Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/974639467 Meeting ID: 974 639 467



Greetings!

It is a new kind of challenge to be a parent these days, many of us home with kids who don't particularly care to be there. Before the pandemic I (Ellen) had the idea that perhaps a moms/parents/grandparents book group might be a neat way to connect us and build up that community of caregivers within our faith community. I am thinking that now, more than ever, that shared connection and support might serve as a balm. After discussion with those who responded, we're planning to discuss the book "Searching for Sunday" by Rachel Held Evans.

We will be "meeting" on the first and third Thursday evenings at 7 p.m., and will begin Thursday, May 7. We will discuss the Epilogue, Prologue, Chapters 1-3 (Audible Chapters 1-5). If you want to join in, please contact ellen@gracedm.org

Grace Garden can use your help! Spend some time outside in the sun, play in the soil, get dirty, and do some good! We'd love to have an hour of your time now and then as we grow food for the local food pantries and to share with our members and the Little Free Pantry. We have some plants and seeds in now, so are looking for some extra watering help. At this time we will only be allowing individuals or members of one household at the garden at a time, but will make sure you have all of the information you need before you get started. Sign up here or email michelle@gracedm.org for information. https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0D4BAAAA2CA1F49-grace

From Denise Friesth

I have so much to be grateful during life in the midst of a pandemic! A special thank you to all the Grace Lutheran Church volunteers! Some special thanks to those helping make my work life better:

Nick Medhurst Tom Selander Kathy Bowermaster Chuck and Tammy Denton Kevin Krause Paul Kallenbach Len and Helen Ringgenberg



Happy Mother's Day!

Mother's Day is a time to celebrate the strong, loving women in your life. At Lutheran Services in lowa (LSI), we see thousands of lowa moms through their journey to build the brightest future for their children.

We see moms turning to LSI's Behavioral Health Intervention Services to ensure their child is receiving the coping skills and behavioral supports they need to thrive. In our Early Childhood Services, we see first-time moms who are eager to join our parenting education classes and support groups. In 2019, LSI's Early Childhood programs provided support to 1,282 parents of young children. We are so inspired to hear their stories and see their hard work pay off as they raise our next generation.

As you celebrate Mother's Day this year, remember how many lowa moms are being empowered because of your support. If you are looking for a way to honor your mother this year, please consider making a gift in her name to LSI. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSlowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Our Mission: Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the Iove of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and Facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Raising Healthy Families

As a child, Morgan had endured trauma no one should experience. Addiction, divorce, and difficult family relationships all surrounded Morgan in her childhood home. When she found out she was pregnant for the first time with her daughter, Sophia, Morgan was determined to never repeat the past she grew up with.

She decided to enroll in LSI's Early Childhood Services.

Every week, her LSI worker, Ashley, would bring age-appropriate toys and games for Sophia to play with. She provided Morgan with educational resources to help her track Sophia's development and make sure her daughter was hitting all her important milestones. When Morgan welcomed her second child, Nolan, Ashley was with her every step of the way. It was Ashley who noticed that Nolan had developed a speech delay, and she helped Morgan connect with a speech therapist to correct it early.

Sophia is now in preschool and loves telling her mom about her teachers, friends, and the new songs she learned at school. Nolan is an active two-year-old who is learning new words every day. Morgan is currently finishing her Registered Nursing degree, and she dreams of working in emergency care at a hospital after graduation. And all the while, Ashley has been there to cheer them on.

"She's been more than a worker, she's been a friend when I've needed someone the most," Morgan says. "Being a new mom is hard. Having that extra person there, who doesn't judge you, who doesn't see your flaws, who is just there to help you – you can't put a price on that."

Online Giving

Thank you to all who have been able to continue your giving. See page 3 for the most current Financial update.

Go to our church website: www.gracedm.org

- 1. At the upper right, click on "GIVE"
- 2. Scroll down and click on the red bar "Donate Now"
- 3. Start by entering the dollar amount you want to give; (Can set up as "Give One Time" or "Set-up Recurring"; choose fund; add memo if using Other Fund or Memorials, etc.); Click NEXT
- 4. "Verify your mobile number"
 - a. Can either enter cell phone number and click SEND CODE; will receive a text with a verification code; enter code and click "Confirm"
 - b. Or......if do not have cell phone or do not want to enter it, On the VERIFY YOUR MOBILE NUMBER page, click on "Need Help";
 - c. Then in middle of screen to the right, Click on "GIVE AS GUEST"
 - d. Enter requested information (name, etc.) and click NEXT to continue.

Grace Online Church Directory

Printed copies are available, and being sent to those who we are aware do not use computers or smart phones. If you would like a printed/paper copy, please email Denise@gracedm.org and we will mail one to you. However, if you have a computer, or a smart phone, you can have access to the most updated information any time you log on. No one else is able to access the directory, unless you have an account, or an email added by us. So your information remains inaccessible to anyone outside of Grace.

Go to this address and log in using your email address: <u>members.instantchurchdirectory.com</u> If you want to use the app on your phone, go to you App store, and search for Instant Church Directory to download and open.

The Centering Prayer Group is meeting electronically to pray on Tuesdays at 10:30 until it is safe to come together again. If you would like to meet with them contact Julie Honsey at honsey.julie@gmail.com and she will email you a Zoom invite. If you have questions, contact Julie.

DMARC Launches Food Pantry Delivery Service

The Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) Food Pantry Network is launching a food pantry delivery service to meet the needs of people experiencing food insecurity in Greater Des Moines at this time.

If a person is unable to obtain food by either visiting a food pantry location or by using a proxy to pick up food for them, they may call to request a delivery. DMARC is asking that only those with health, transportation, or other mitigating circumstances use this service.

People can call **1-833-DMARC-20** (**1-833-362-7220**) toll-free to request a delivery. This number will be staffed by trained volunteers and staff from 9:00am to 12:00pm, Monday through Friday. Requests for delivery will be taken on a first-come first-serve basis, and delivery capacity will depend on the number of volunteers available. The service is launching with a maximum of 50 food pantry deliveries per day. Requests for delivery will close at 12:00pm or after 50 spots have been filled.

Once the order is placed, food will be delivered to the person's doorstep with a no-contact drop-off the following business day between 9:00am and 12:00pm.

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 2019 income:

Awards to Grace Lutheran Church:

- \$4,000 for Sidewalks and landscaping for the Pergola & Little Free Pantry & Library
- \$3,000 for Conference room chairs

Other Awards:

- \$1,000 to Grace Kids Care for emergency evacuation strollers
- \$1,000 to Nutrition for Young Children for cooking tools
- \$2,000 to Lutheran Services in Iowa for therapy furnishings for the Mental Health program
- \$4,500 to Youth Emergency Services & Shelter for safety wall coverings

A total of \$15,500 was awarded. Requests for grants totaled \$17,462.

Since inception, the Endowment fund has awarded a total of \$339,197 to 186 projects.

Thank You!

I'd like to thank Pastor Mike and everyone who offered prayers, concerns and notes of thoughtfulness during my hospitalization and recovery. They were very much appreciated.

Jerry Westercamp

Dear Grace Lutheran Church Member Care,

Thank you so much for the notes from you about thinking of me and Easter. I really appreciate the notes. I stay home except to go doctor appointments. Don is working from home. Take care everyone. Stay safe.

Love, Bonnie Swanson

Thank you for sending the weekly messages. I appreciate receiving them!

Virginia Naney

Thank you for sending all the information from church. It means a lot to me to keep in touch. God Bless and Be Safe.

Peace and Love, Nelda Sampel



Left:

The Frost Steps on Easter Morning

Below:

The view you don't see on Sunday morning – another use for hymnals! The current (and soon to be updated) Technology set-up!

