

GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Live worship online until further notice
See page 5 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

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515-276-6873
www.gracedm.org

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Thank You

Cleared for Landing

Have you ever been driving somewhere and suddenly you find yourself driving in a storm or fog? I can think of dozens of such experiences growing up in the Midwest. These have ranged from rain and snow, to wind and fog. One thing they all have in common: it can be a very unnerving experience. It is easy to be a closet meteorologist, looking at and the radar and think “this will track North.” You leave only to find part way to the destination that visibility is diminishing until you reach the point where it is difficult to see. Now what?

Truth be told, it is relatively easy to drive during the day when the weather is beautiful, and you can see for miles. It is a little harder to drive when you depart at night with a 10 year old Ford Taurus (speaking from experience here) whose headlight covers have turned a deep shade of yellow over the years, making it difficult to see much of the road at all. It is even trickier when the weather is such that it is difficult to see at all.

Driver Education may teach you how to drive, but it will not necessarily teach how to navigate at night or in bad weather. These classes will prepare you for driving when all is well. Life, or in my case, my Dad, will have to teach us how to navigate things when conditions are less than ideal.

Many have the same experience with faith. Churches often teach us how to be faithful when all is going well. We know the stories of God's goodness. We know what it is to give thanks when all is going well, which is the very way the Book of Leviticus starts, after all. The church has had a more difficult time teaching us how to live by faith when things are not as we wish them to be. How do we navigate our faith in the fog and storms of life? What does that look like?

This Advent, we are going to be diving into a congregation wide curriculum “In Light and Darkness.” This is a study that focuses on the way that Light and Dark coexist. Neither is inherently good or bad. Instead, it is important to learn how to navigate in both, as both Light and Darkness are held by God and are necessary for us to better understand God and self.

The sermon series during Advent is titled: Cleared for Landing; Flying by Faith. It will use aviation as a metaphor for walking through the sentiments of Morning Prayer:

Continued on page 4

Happy December Birthday

- 1 - Sarah Williamson
Deanna Weber
Josh Lund
- 2 - Beverly Anderson
Christopher Barks
- 3 - Martha Page
Ami Bradwell
James Jordahl
- 4 - Carter Woodruff
- 5 - Anna Marie Peterson
Duane Ulrick
Darlis Honnold
Aaron Brandsfield
- 8 - Felicia Adams
- 9 - Joy Averill
Rosemary Randolph
Salvador Rodriguez
- 10 - Steve Young
- 11 - Jamie Chamberlain
Burke Shiffler
Kari Dostalick
- 12 - Evan Justice
- 13 - Sherry Brindley
Bradley Ashton
Thomas Garcia
- 14 - Stacie Holst
Anthony Garcia
- 15 - Mo Grotheer
Norman Iverson
Matt Ziska
- 17 - Tanner Highland
- 18 - Helen Fanning
Payton Lawson
Katja Rahjes
Lucas Scholl
- 20 - Shirley Shiffler
- 21 - John Rudisill
Chris Janson
- 22 - Elizabeth Lewis
- 23 - Nancy Crowfoot
Wayne Curry
Piper Hutton
- 24 - Jon Rutter
Stuart Mitchell
Nicole Nelson
- 25 - Jeffrey Nelson
- 27 - Barbara Berven
Christina Anderson
- 28 - Ryan Randolph
Sarah Chenoweth
Samantha Schmidt
Courtney Vander Plaats

Happy December Anniversary

- 1 – Cindy and Ross Peeler
- 3 – Katharine and Matt Radermacher
- 8 – Becky and Tom Selander
- 14 – Gregory and Darlis Honnold
- 26 – Megan and Charles Reynolds



*Our Sympathies are with the
Family of Marvin Simonsen*

Poinsettia deadline November 30!

**Remember or honor loved
ones with a poinsettia to
enjoy at home!**

This year we'll be offering Poinsettias to decorate your home **before** Christmas. The cost is \$15, and you can reserve a poinsettia using the [online signup form](#) or by sending payment and information to the church office (drop in mailbox or send through the mail). Please let us know by November 30. Please indicate whether your poinsettia is to honor someone or is in memory of someone, and we'll include your names in the announcements at Christmas.

NOTE: You will need to pick up your poinsettia at the church the weekend of **December 12–13**. We will publish pickup times once we know how many have been ordered. We'll offer drive-by contactless pickup in the church parking lot.



December Birthdays Continued

- 29 - Linda Rundle
Kevin Krause
Robin Randolph
- 30 - Marion Nehmer
Drake Carney
- 31 - Jean Thompson
Nicholas Best



Advent Devotions

During the season of Advent we will be using and intergenerational devotional resource from Illustrated Ministries. Each household will receive this packet of materials in the mail and it will also be posted on our website, gracedm.org.



Some information about the resource and the theme-

*In Light & Darkness: The inspiration for our theme comes from the common usage of "light" and "darkness" during Advent, and from exploring how the earth experiences both the very lightest and darkest days with summer and winter solstices during Advent. Scripture focusing on God's light has led to the belief light is the source of goodness and hope. This belief implies darkness is not wanted or needed, it is something to banish or get rid of, or God is not even present in the dark. Barbara Brown Taylor's book, *Learning to Walk in the Dark*, helps us reimagine our understanding of darkness, primarily how Christianity heavily relies on the binary construct of light as good and darkness as bad. Taylor proposes the pair of light and dark exist together in balance, not opposition. She asks, "What can light possibly mean without dark?"¹ We hope our Advent devotional will help you share conversations about your understanding of light and darkness. We encourage you to explore how those understandings influence the way you view God, your faith, and the world. These Advent devotions are written so they can be used intergenerationally, or by youth groups or adult studies. So grab a pen, some crayons or colored pencils, and start working through *In Light & Darkness: An Illustrated Devotional*.*

You will find coloring pages included within the reflection for each week. Make use of these! You are never too old to color and it can often offer a sense of calm and a prayerful posture.

Each Sunday in Advent, there will be an opportunity to gather virtually at 10 am and discuss the reflection for the week, similar to what was done for All Church VBS this Fall.

Families with children will also receive an "Adventures in Advent" Newsletter each week with fun activities and information about how Advent is celebrated in other parts of the world.

We look forward to reflecting upon Light and Dark as a community of faith during this Advent season.

Ellen Rothweiler
Minister for Youth and Family

Lutheran World Relief Update

The Lutheran World Relief Committee has some awesome news to share! We are pleased to report that \$1,000.00 was raised this Fall and those dollars will be sent directly to LWR to support their programs in areas of greatest need. As part of the LWR "Christmas 2020 Matching Gift Challenge" our donation will be doubled making \$1,000.00 = \$2,000.00!

Committee members were very resourceful and continued to work and sew from their homes during COVID-19. We were able to assemble 59 quilts, 200 personal care kits, 78 school kits, 30 baby care kits and 100 masks. Grace joined together with nine other central Iowa churches and delivered the items to a Cedar Rapids ingathering on October 17th. From there they went to the warehouse in the Twin Cities. A big "Thank You" goes out to the VBS participants who helped assemble the 200 personal care kits! Committee members have been busy sewing masks since the beginning of COVID-19 and 400 plus masks had already been sent to LWR prior to the ingathering. We have also heard that kits and quilts that we have donated in the past were shipped to Syria, Burkina Faso and Angola last year.

THANK YOU, PEOPLE OF GRACE! YOUR SUPPORT FOR ALL OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF PROJECTS IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Cleared for Landing, continued from the front page

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

This year may feel like we are flying in fog. We cannot see clearly what is coming. Everything feels a little different. That does not mean that we are lost. In the same way that pilots are trained to follow the lead of instruments and the voice of Air Traffic Control to find there way when they cannot see what is ahead, we will spend time looking at those instruments of faith and the Word of God, which guide us in such times.

Advent, which means arrival, is a perfect time to learn how to arrive at the feet of Christ. We fly by faith, and we are cleared for landing. Join us this Advent Season as we dive into these themes in worship and through the Congregational Advent Study: In Light and Darkness.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike



Silent Night on Christmas Eve

Even though we must worship remotely this Advent and Christmas season, we would like to provide a special opportunity to gather together briefly in-person on Christmas Eve. The one element of Christmas Eve worship many people look forward to most is singing “Silent Night” together by candlelight, so let’s make it happen!

8pm, Christmas Eve, Grace parking lot

Bundle up and head over to the church to sing together – we can even get out of our cars! We’ll be distanced appropriately and candles will be provided. See you there!

Electronic Giving

Our provider for electronic giving will change before the end of 2020. Our current contract with Push Pay ends on 12-31-2020. We will continue to offer the option to give electronically and are planning a smooth transition to working with Tithe.ly. Watch for more updates on when Tithe.ly is available (Mid December) and staff will be available to help make this as seamless as possible. As always, thank you for faithfully supporting your church.

Grace 2021 Endowment Applications

Now available on the website <https://gracedm.org/resources/forms-and-applications/>

Applications are due January 31, 2021. Awards will be announced by March 31, 2021. Requests for specific, finite projects are preferred. The Endowment does not fund operational expenses.

Submit proposal with detailed breakdown of project expenses. If the entire request is not granted this will allow for possible partial funding. A final written report is required to be submitted to the Endowment Fund Committee no later than December 1st of the year of the grant. The report shall include documentation of the expenditures and completion status of the project.

Accessing Online Worship

We will continue to adapt worship to best be a place where we become centered in our faith. We are making changes to the readings and the Prayers of the People to, hopefully, better be present you in this time of growing need.

Written materials and Announcements can be found in the Resources section of the website. Click on the word Resources at the top right of any page of the website and go from there! Or, follow this link <https://gracedm.org/resources/> For those who are not using social media, computers, or smart phones, please call the office and we will happily mail you a copy of the worship materials to use at home.

Worship will be broadcast live at 9:00 a.m. through Facebook and our website.

Worship will broadcast live on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. on Facebook Live and on the permanent Live Player on our website. In the "Welcome to Grace" section on the www.gracedm.org homepage, you will now see a red button "Online Worship". Click on that button to be taken to our Permanent Live Player page. This page will show a countdown to worship, and will start playing when worship goes live. There will also be a link for Facebook Live posted in the "Recent News" section on the www.gracedm.org homepage.

Weekday Morning Prayer on Facebook Pastor Mike will go live weekday mornings at 9:30 a.m. If you are not on Facebook, you can still access the videos at this link: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Religious-Organization/626637384050683/>

Sunday Morning Zoom Virtual Coffee Hour begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday mornings. Links can be found in the Thursday afternoon enews.

What if you aren't on Facebook, and you missed the service?

Simply go to the Resources Page on our website <https://gracedm.org/resources/>

Look for the bubble labeled "Recent Worship Videos" – click on that bubble.

You will be presented with a list of recent service dates - click the date of worship you wish to watch, and it will load for you.

If you are already on the Online Worship Live Stream page, you will see a link that will take you directly to the archive.

Check out the new, easy way to watch worship on our website!

On the front page of our website you will see the following section. If you click on the Stream Worship! During the week, the player will show a countdown to Sunday Worship. On Sundays when we go live the player will show the livestream in progress.

Welcome to Grace

Grace Lutheran Church is a neighborhood church with a place for you, wherever you live, whoever you are. We invite you to get to know us. You can also join us for worship online at the link below.

LEARN MORE ABOUT GRACE

ONLINE WORSHIP

Grace Annual Star Tree Update!

Many of our members have already seen this notice, but we're happy to say that we're more than halfway to meeting all the requests! The list below (current as of Tuesday, November 24) is what still remains to be covered/donated. THANK YOU!

We are happy to continue supporting LSI's Early Development Program and Mosaic local group homes.

LSI's Early Childhood Program provides supportive services to at-risk single mothers from the prenatal period until age five when the child enters kindergarten. *Mosaic* is a faith-based organization serving adults with intellectual disabilities.

If you have participated in the past, you know that usually LSI gives us a list of specific children for whom we buy requested gifts. This year we have been asked to provide Walmart gift cards. Our usual targeted amount is \$25 for 30 children. This is easier for those of us who don't want to shop at this time. So.....you can either buy a gift card yourself and deliver it to the outside church drop box or send a \$25 check to church with Star Tree in the memo line and we'll take care of it for you. Please call Joie Gronert to indicate your intention (check or card) so we can update our progress on the list below. 279-4974—leaving a message is OK. You can also call or text 210-2057.

Mosaic has given us a list of requested items. Please call Joie to choose the gift you want to provide. Once again, 279-4974—leaving a message for me to call you back is OK. You can choose the item(s) on the list that fit the \$25 amount. Call to select your person and to confirm that a specific gift is still available. If you want to buy something yourself, you can deliver it to Joie Gronert in Des Moines or Gail Peterson in West Des Moines (call for address). If you want to order something online, you can have it shipped to Joie's house. If you want us to do the shopping for a specific person, send a \$25 check to church and we'll take care of it for you. OR, Donate online, see page 10 for instructions!

Because of the crazy options and logistics this year, we'd like to have everything finalized by DECEMBER 6th. This is a tight timetable, but if Gail and Joie have shopping to do, we'll need a little extra time—even with Amazon Prime!

2020 is not the best year to have lots of fun but Grace's Star Tree will help others to have some fun!!!

LSI's List for the Early Childhood Program

12 remaining \$25 WalMart Gift Cards requested

18/30 have been donated

Mosaic's list

Steve—cards, board games, books and puzzles—for younger adults

Adam—cards, board games, books and puzzles—or younger adults—also loves magazines and the color red

Chris—sweatshirt/sweatpants—men's L—navy or green

Gary—insulated coffee mug, ground coffee, and flavored creamers and mix-ins

Michael—cards, board games, books and wooden puzzles—for younger adults

Jodi—~~nail polish, body wash, lotion, and soft warm socks—bright colors~~ Elaine—soft fleece throw blanket and plush pillow—soft warm socks

Michael—bird feeder and bird seed

Aim— cards, board games, books and puzzles—for younger adults

Tim— sweatshirt/sweatpants—men's XL—navy or green

~~Tammy—insulated coffee mug, ground coffee, and flavored creamers/brushes, gel pens, drawing paper~~

Darci— bird feeder and bird seed



Kringla**Janet Trentmann**

2 3/4 C flour
2 t baking powder
pinch of salt
Sift together and set aside

3/4 C buttermilk
1 t soda
Combine in separate bowl large enough to allow for expansion

1 rounded sugar
1 stick margarine (room temperature)
1/4 C carnation milk
1/2 t vanilla
Beat sugar and margarine, then mix in milk and vanilla.

Add dry ingredients with buttermilk containing soda, beginning and ending with dry ingredients.
Chill at least 2 hours. On lightly floured board form into Kringla shapes.
Bake at 400 degrees for 10-12 minutes, 385 degrees for 9.

Cardamon Christmas Bread Trees**Michelle Voelker**

One of Rich's favorites, I baked this every year with my mom, Susan Biedron. We usually tripled the recipe, playing with the size of the rope, making different shapes for each holiday, (Trees, Santa, Turkey, or Reindeer), baking in advance and freezing two for easy holiday breakfasts. Serve with sweet butter.

3 1/4 Cup Flour, pre-sifted	1/2 tsp ground cardamom
2 tsp dry yeast	1/3 tsp salt
3 Tbsp warm water	1/2 cup sugar
1 extra large egg, slightly beaten, or 1 1/3 eggs	1/3 cup butter, melted and cooled
5 oz. milk, room temperature	Candied cherries or other fruit for decoration

In a large mixer bowl, sprinkle yeast over the warm water, stir to dissolve. Stir in eggs, milk, salt, cardamom and sugar. Gradually add in 3 cups of flour, until a stiff dough forms. Cover, and let rest for 15 minutes.

Knead dough, using a dough hook, adding in the remaining 1/4 cup of flour. Knead until dough is smooth and elastic. Shape dough into a ball, place in a greased bowl, and cover. Refrigerate 8-24 hours.

Divide dough into 12 equal parts. Roll each into ropes 1/2 inch in diameter, then create a spiral, as you could a cinnamon roll. Arrange spirals next to each other on a greased baking sheet, in the form of a tree, with one or two at the base for a trunk. Decorate the center of each spiral with cherries. Let rise in a warm place 45 minutes, until double in size. Brush with beaten egg, and bake in a 400 degree oven for 15 minutes. Brush again, and bake 5 minutes more – color should be light and golden. Slide onto a rack to cool. If freezing, wrap well. Leave wrapping on while defrosting.

Send us your holiday recipes!

It's that time of year when people are gearing up for holiday gatherings and meals and baking – except this year many aren't able to come together with family and friends to share in those holiday traditions. Well, silver lining, maybe you have more time and energy to try new things in the kitchen if you're just cooking for yourself or a few people. Church family counts as family, so share with us your favorite winter holiday recipes and we can stay connected in this way. Recipes can be as simple or as complicated as you want – every kind is welcome!



Type them up and email to emma@gracedm.org, or send a handwritten version to the church address c/o Emma Stammer and she will make sure they are included in the weekly e-news, Sunday announcements, and Christmas newsletter.



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 to you! This year has been challenging for all of us, and we are grateful for the Iowans who have stepped up just for the sake of giving and helping LSI in 2020. Thank you for bringing the light of Christ to your neighbors who rely on these important services!

At LSI, we know many people experiencing deep darkness. We know parents who feel hopeless, with little resources to raise their young children. We know adults with disabilities who feel voiceless, with no support system or connection to their community. We know teens who are aging out of foster care, who fear they will never have a forever family to love them.

The holidays can be an especially difficult time for our neighbors who are so often overlooked in our society. In the spirit of giving, the spirit of love, and the spirit of working together, let us stand with them and lift them up this Christmas season. If you would like to learn more about how you can support Iowa children and families, contact Deb Whitford, LSI's director of philanthropy and church relations, at 563.676.2065 or Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org. LSI is also available to provide a customized virtual shared ministry opportunity for your congregation. If you would like to share the message of LSI with your community, please contact our Waverly office at 319.352.2630 to get started.

Wishing you a blessed and merry Christmas from LSI!

Our Mission: *Lutheran Services in Iowa responds to the love 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 www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.*

Continuum of Care

As she prepared to celebrate her 18th birthday, Sam was also preparing to age out of foster care. She had lived with her foster mom, Marty, for years and Marty wanted to ensure Sam had a smooth transition into adulthood. That's when they signed up for LSI's Host Homes program.

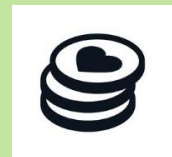
Provided through LSI's Services for People with Disabilities, Host Homes provides personalized care for Iowans with disabilities who find greater success living in a private family home instead of a busier community living environment with roommates. Individuals are carefully matched with a Host Homes mentor and live with them in their home, where they can build strong relationships and become better engaged with their communities.

Marty became a Host Homes mentor so Sam could continue living in her home and receive the same care and support she was used to. Sam is thriving and Marty gets to continue walking alongside her as she builds a bright future full of independence. They work on Sam's goals every day, including cooking and planning meals. Marty especially loves fishing and going on picnics with Sam and as a Host Homes mentor, she can continue serving as a foster parent to other Iowa teens.

Finance Report –October Results

Financial results for October YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$333,007, Budget \$345,983
- Other Income – Actual \$17,853, Budget \$24,250
- Expenses – Actual \$369,722, Budget \$379,942
- Net activity – Actual (\$18,862), Budget (\$9,708)



Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget primarily due a decline in offerings. While October was a strong month, pledged and unpledged offering are both below budget for the year. Continued giving during these uncertain times is appreciated. Maintenance was over budget due to work on the flushing the HVAC systems. Utility activity was under budget due to lack of occupancy.

Contributions to the Capital Campaign of \$60,525 and related HVAC replacement cost of \$59,320 are not included in the above results.

Reminder to turn in your pledge card so that budget for 2021 can be completed.

At the October, 2020 Church Council Meeting:

The Council met utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application.

The Council received and discussed the financial report. The Council moved, seconded, and passed a motion to offer Portico Benefit Company's Gold Plus health insurance plan to Pastor Mike.

The lender for the PPP loan won't start accepting applications for PPP loan forgiveness until sometime next year due to pending changes in Congress. We have 24 weeks from May, 2021 to apply for forgiveness.

It was moved, seconded, and passed (with one abstention) to authorize creation of an account at TD Ameritrade to process handling of gifts of stocks and mutual funds.

Property Committee reported that work continues to reorganize the Property Committee by establishing a "point person" for each area of responsibility. A plan will be presented at the next Council meeting.

The Committee continues to research possible maintenance agreements for the HVAC systems.

Fire Panel Replacement: There was no report concerning the updating of the fire alarm panel.

The Health and Safety Task Force noted that pandemic statistics continue to increase at an alarming rate, which makes plans for a return to in-person worship doubtful for Advent and Christmas services. Ideas for alternatives are being considered.

The Congregational Assessment Project is ready and will be implemented soon.

Personnel Policy/Employee Handbook: A concern was raised by a Council member regarding a possible violation of the Iowa Code. It was moved, seconded, and passed to defer consideration of the Personnel Policy until the November Council meeting so that this possible violation can be further researched.

Next scheduled Council meeting will be November 24th, via zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
David F. Gronert
Council Secretary

DMARC Requested Donations: Cash

DMARC is able to purchase more per dollar in bulk than we can in person, and is both easier and safer for many at this time. Checks may be mailed to the address below, and food donations may be dropped off at the DMARC Food Pantry Network Warehouse, located at 1435 Mulberry Street in downtown Des Moines.

Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Friday 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Donating Online for the Star Tree

If you wish to donate in \$25 increments and have our wonderful Star Tree Committee do the ordering, you may donate using the online payment feature on our website. (Deadline December 6) Here's how:

1. Go to the Give page
<https://gracedm.org/give-to-grace/>
2. Click the red Donate Now button
3. When you are prompted to select a fund, choose "Other" and type "Star Tree" in the Memo Line.



Birds of Pray
photo by Richard Snyder at Grace

Little Free Pantry Donations

Thank you to everyone who has been so generous with stocking the Little Free Pantry this fall! **Special Thanks** to Helen Fanning and Jane (Connie Heuton's Sister in Law) for your generous donations which will be used to place ingredients for Holiday dishes and other needs in the pantry this month.

Luther Park Christmas Wishlist for Trinity Center at Luther Park

Luther Park will once again be collecting gifts for the residents of Trinity Center. Please deliver the new unwrapped gifts* to Trinity Center (1555 Hull Ave Des Moines, IA 50316) by Monday, December 7, 2020. Items not used by Christmas will be used through the year for resident birthdays and bingo gifts. Trinity Center is for those who need Long term and Skilled Care, including those with dementia and Alzheimer's.

If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Walton, Director of Activities at 515-262-5639. We sincerely appreciate your thoughtfulness and continued support. Have a wonderful holiday!

Entertainment items:

Baby dolls (soft, new)
Playing cards
Crossword and word find puzzles, large print
Crayons/washable markers

Clothing items:

Socks/gripper socks
Small lap blankets

Hygiene items:

Kleenex (regular size boxes)
Toothbrushes
Toothpaste
Hair picks
Combs
Nail Polish (light colors)
Hand lotion
Body lotion
Body wash
Non-aerosol deodorant (for men and women)
Hair Ties
Electric Shavers

Other items:

Necklaces
Walker bags
Lap blankets
iTune gift cards
Head Phones
Art Supplies
Stuffed animals (new)
Games
Beads/Sensory Items/Fidget Blankets
Packaged snacks/candy