

**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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10 Years

I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks for your continued support. I do not like talking about myself, or drawing attention to milestones in ministry. That said, it seems important, to me, to pause and give thanks. March 1st will mark 10 years since I began my time with Grace Lutheran Church, with the installation anniversary coming up on March 6th.

I remember my first morning as pastor quite well. It was a Tuesday morning, so my first official act was to lead the Tuesday Morning Bible Study. The group was about 17 chapters into Genesis, and I assumed that they would want to spend time getting to know me before we jumped into the text. Much to my joy, the group had little interest in that task; they were eager to dive into the text. I knew that I was "home."

These last 10 years have brought a lot of ups and downs, joys and sorrows. I have found a depth of love of the flock that I did not know was possible. I have found myself absolutely overjoyed at the growth witnessed as youth transition to adulthood. I have shared some wonderful moments in worship and study, moments that I cherish deeply. I have also cried, a lot, over the loss of so many. I remember someone commenting at a funeral early on that "If you're here long enough, you will bury all of us." It is absolutely crushing to witness the truth in that statement. Still, it is such an honor to continue to serve as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church.

You really are quite special. I hope that you know that. I am absolutely amazed at the way that you never back down from a challenge, and continue to pull off extraordinary feats in ministry, whether being one of the biggest givers to the ELCA Malaria Campaign, to raising \$60,000 for an air conditioning unit in the midst of a pandemic. The care you show one another is astounding, whether through organized efforts like Member Care, or the natural, organic ways you carry one another's burdens. The Apostle Paul would be proud.

This last year has been exceptionally difficult. In a couple weeks, it will be a year since we last held in-person worship in the sanctuary. Church as a whole has changed, and I am not sure what it will look like to be Church in the years to come. Although not "unprecedented," these will be new waters for all of us. I believe in this community of faith and our ability to weather this storm, together.

Continued on page 3

MARCH

Happy March Birthday

- 1 - Kristen Bockenstedt
- 2 - Donald York
- 3 - Matthew Heid
Victoria Meillier
- 4 - Kimberley Carballo
- 5 - Dane Christiansen
Brent Culp
Katherine Scholl
- 6 - Pressly Reha
- 7 - La Vonne Mitchell
- 8 - Jack Chenoweth
- 10 - Patty (Flannery) Gallup
Nadine Garcia
- 11 - Tammy Hagerty
- 12 - Rachael Bigg
Andrew Keller
- 13 - Lathrop Preston
Hilary Woodhouse
Kyler Andersen
- 15 - Lydia McCleary
Rachel Miller
Ann Warren
Phoebe Volius
- 17 - Kathy Bowermaster
Beth Flannery
Lisa Friesth
Benjamin Honsey
Melissa Swanson
Tayah Traver
- 18 - Emma Ashton
Tom Selander
- 19 - Haley Turner Bluto
Diane Westercamp
Cleone Oberg
- 20 - Karen Taylor
- 21 - Angela Allen
- 22 - Louie Anderson
- 24 - Beau Brindley
Mary Jo McCleary
- 25 - Laura Gebauer
- 26 - Ryan Nordeen
- 27 - Sierra Carney
Zara Preston
- 28 - Alexson Calahan
- 28 - Charles Reynolds
- 29 - Chadrick Allen
Sharon Schwemler
- 30 - Curtis Chenoweth
Kristin Medhurst
- 31 - Daniel Gutmann
Joan Pritchard
Amy Ziska



Happy March Anniversary

- 15 – Sonny and Kristina Hutton
20 – Edward and Jane Ridnour



A Rose to celebrate the birth of Theodora Anne, born on Valentine's Day to Kelley and Gabe Brown, and big brother Zeppelin.

A Thank You

Hey! I'm having a hard time figuring the exact time, but me and my brother broke into your church to escape the cold years ago, a church member found us, and you guys helped us find a motel to sleep in etc. I just wanted to thank you for that and tell you that unfortunately my brother passed away. But we'll never forget the good work and great faith your church showed us! Under US law we had committed a crime but only because we were poor and you guys showed too much love to us. Thank you!

>PS: I ended up going to Grace Christian University in Grand Rapids, studied missionary work, now I'm working on an engineering degree to compliment that.

Erik



Time change ahead – turn your clocks ahead one hour when you go to bed
March 13!



10 years, continued from the front page

In these months to come, there will be gravity back into our normal ways of doing things. I pray that we do not fall into that sense of gravity. It is a good time to do the work of imagining what God is calling us into. Out of necessity, we have transitioned away from the “programmatic model” of ministry, as well as away from age and stage style of education. We will embark on the collective journey of building an intergenerational community of faith that dives into worship, education, and service, together. We have been isolated far too long, and I pray that when this is over, we claim the strength we have as a community and work to change the neighborhood, city, and world for the better, as we guide people to live differently through Christ.

Thank you for calling me to serve, and for your patience with me these last 10 years. It continues to be a privilege and honor to serve as pastor of Grace Lutheran Church.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike

Health and Safety Update

It is hard to believe that a couple of weeks from now will mark one year since we suspended in person worship at Grace Lutheran Church. It was a decision that we did not take lightly. At the time, it was difficult for me to imagine a couple of months without worship, let alone over a year. Here we are, a year later, and we are starting to see a light at the end of the tunnel. Last Sunday, I spoke of how it has felt like a year of Lent, but Easter is coming, in more ways than one.

We are seeing an elongated decline in cases per 100k people in Polk and Dallas Counties, and are nearing the numbers we were at this last July. We are hopeful that this trend continues. With the decline in cases and the hope of changing weather, we are making plans for some in person worship opportunities in the parking lot. It will be great to see one another as we gather.

This has felt like a year of Lent. That makes it important to check in with others. As we await the conditions to gather again, please consider reaching out to those whom you miss. Whether a phone call, text, card, or letter, it would go a long way as we continue on this journey together.

Pastor Mike

Tag-team Quilting and more with the Lutheran World Relief Spring Drive!

Starting during Lent and going through April, we are collecting donations for Lutheran World Relief. While we are working to keep ourselves and our loved ones safe from Covid-19, we are also remembering our brothers and sisters around the world who don't have clean water and basic healthcare. Many of them are enduring closed markets and locked down communities, too. Lutheran World Relief will use our donations to provide masks, clean water for drinking and handwashing, and emergency food assistance. They will equip clinics to receive and store the vaccine, and train healthcare workers to deliver the doses to people in their communities. The first \$500 we collect will go directly to LWR for these needs. Any additional donations will be used to purchase supplies for disaster relief kits. The kit and quilt shelves have become empty at the LWR warehouses during the pandemic. To fill this need, we are working on tag-team quilting within our homes, and plan to hold a kit-making session for the congregation later this year, when it becomes safe. If you would like to help quilt, please contact Kathy Piltingsrud. If you would like to make a donation, please send your check made out to Grace to the church office, or use the online giving app on our website. Please designate LWR on the comment line. Thank you for your care and generosity! From your LWR Team

March Madness is BACK, and so is our NCAA Bracket Fundraiser

Selection happens on Sunday, March 14th. So, do you feel lucky? Local and regional charities hope so! We will hold the church pool again this year. There will be a \$5 entry fee and the winner will choose which charity will receive the pool monies. Two years ago, Adam Dostalík won and was able to give the \$200 pool to the National Association for Music Educators. So far, we have given away a total of over \$1800 with this annual charity!

To enter simply fill out a bracket and send it to the church office (5201 Urbandale Ave. Des Moines, IA 50310) between Sunday, March 15th and 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 17th with the \$5 entry fee. Brackets postmarked before Thursday, March 18 will be counted. You should also note your chosen charity when you turn in the bracket. Please either include cash, or make the check payable to Grace Lutheran Church with NCAA in the memo field. You could also scan your bracket and send it to mike@gracedm.org

With no clear favorite to win this year, we will again use a scoring system with added points for the Final Four to keep things exciting. The "First Four" games will not be included. Those correctly predicting that a First Four team wins in the round of 64, even if the wrong First Four team, will receive the points. Then the round of 64 teams will be worth 1 point each with bonus points for upsets (difference between seeds). Round of 32 will be worth 2 points, round of 16 will be worth 4 points each. The following rounds will be worth 6 points, 10 points, and then 15 points for the correct Champion.



Lutheran Day on the Hill: Online! Thursday, March 11, 2021

Your voice matters. In 2021, Lutheran Day on the Hill will be conducted as a virtual event in order to safeguard the health and wellbeing of our participants. Even though we cannot be together in person, the goal of the event remains the same: to join our voices together to amplify the needs of people who have been marginalized by our society.

This opportunity is offered at no cost to you.

Registration is open through Wednesday, March 10.

You'll hear from clergy members about the intersections of faith and advocacy. We'll learn about the mechanics of advocacy during a legislative session impacted by COVID, including how to share your story and speak about issues that matter.

You'll also have the opportunity to join a virtual break-out session to dig deeper into one of LSI's 2021 policy priorities:

- Sustainable Funding for Iowa's Children's Mental Health System
- Investing in a Strong Human Services Workforce
- Support for Services that Empower Refugees and Immigrants

Register here:

<http://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?oeidk=a07ehkj0aatec1db383&llr=uurnjsgab>



Grace will continue with Holden Evening Prayer at 6:30 p.m. during the Wednesdays of Lent.

Worship will be broadcast as Sunday worship, on both our website and our Facebook page. See the next page for details if you are new to worshipping with us!

For everyone worshipping along with the Live Broadcast, we would like to offer you a copy of the Holden Evening Worship booklet to use at home. Please email michelle@gracedm.org or call the office if you would like a copy.

Accessing Online Worship

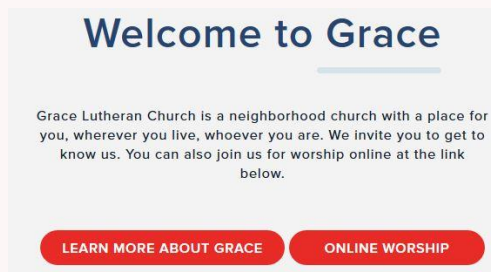
We will continue to adapt worship to best be a place where we become centered in our faith.

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. The logo and a message letting you know you are in the right place will be visible (without sound) for a few minutes before 9:00 a.m. This will allow us time to troubleshoot any technical difficulties that may arise.

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 service will not appear as a scheduled live feed on Facebook. The service will appear as live shortly before 9:00 a.m. as the stream begins. There may be a couple of minutes where you see the logo without sound. If you see that, know that you are in the right place and the service will begin shortly. Thank you for your patience.

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 10:15 a.m. on Sunday mornings in January. Dates, topics, and Links can be found on page 3, and in the Thursday afternoon enews.

Watch or rewatch Worship at any time.

We'll post a link to the most recent worship service within 24 hours – and often faster than that.

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.

To Member Care Volunteers,

I just wanted to share my thanks as the past few years I have received so many wonderful notes and an amazing quilt from your Team at Grace Lutheran Church. Every note just made my day and I wanted you all to know how much I appreciated them.

The summer of 2019 was a challenging one, with the discovery of my brain tumor. But I am pleased to let you know that I have made a full recovery and am doing very well. Thank you all for your care and prayers! It made a difference in my life!

Thank you and God Bless!

Beth Sloan
(Principal of Moore Elementary School)

**March is NIDDA month -National Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month**

Connection, the sense of being in relationship with others and your community, is important to people's overall health. During March, National Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month, learn how you can help people with disabilities feel like an important part of our community and experience better health through meaningful relationships.

Visit [mosaicinfo.org/get-involved](https://www.mosaicinfo.org/get-involved) to learn more.

Discover

The best way to get involved with Mosaic is to attend a Discover the Possibilities tour. These one-hour tours give you a window into Mosaic's transformational work, through the eyes of the people who know it best—the people we support, their families, and the people who serve.

<https://www.mosaicinfo.org/get-involved/discover/>

Volunteer

Volunteer opportunities range from one-time projects to spending time with the people Mosaic supports and raising awareness and support for Mosaic's mission in your community. No matter your abilities or availability, there's a place for you at Mosaic.

<https://www.mosaicinfo.org/get-involved/volunteer/>

Advocate

Regardless of your level of involvement with Mosaic, you can make a difference as an advocate. Mosaic Allied Voices advocates uplift the needs of the people Mosaic supports to elected officials making funding decisions that affect our mission — all you need is an email address.

<https://www.mosaicinfo.org/get-involved/advocate/>

Thank you!

Katie Flippen Public Relations Specialist

e: katie.flippen@mosaicinfo.org

[mosaicinfo.org](https://www.mosaicinfo.org)

Spring Plant Sale Update

Our Greenhouse (Central Iowa Floral) is not offering fund raising this season due to extensive greenhouse damage from the Derecho last August and delayed construction due to Covid. They do have plans to be back next year with a more robust fundraising program.

So at this time we are looking into other options for Grace Youth fundraising this spring. We are sad about this development, but look forward to doing business with them next year.

If you have fundraising connections, please contact Susanne Carney.



Grace Garden Planning!

Carla Peterman has expertly planned what will go in the garden and where for this summer, and the whole team has been ordering seeds and planning for plants. We're all looking forward to the day it is warm enough to add compost, and start seeding! Eventually we'll be watering, harvesting, delivering food, and replacing the fence damaged in last year's Derecho.

If you are interested in being a part of the food pantry garden this summer, please contact michelle@gracedm.org We'd love to have you!

Grace Online Church Directory App

Many of you have been using this resource for the past year, as many of you have been checking on friends, writing notes, and sending cards, but it never hurts to re-share.

If you need to update your address, phone, or other contact information, just:

- Open the app
- Click on the three lines in the upper left of your screen, and choose "Edit my Family" from the menu.
- When you are finished updating the information, click the blue box at the bottom of the screen that says "Submit Edits"

Not yet using the app?

If you have a computer or a smart phone, you can have access to the most updated information any time you log on. Only those members who have an account can access the directory - your information remains inaccessible to anyone outside of Grace.

Go to this address and log in using your email address: members.instantchurchdirectory.com

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.

If you forget your password, requesting a new one is easy using their links. Once you are in the system, look to the upper right hand corner of the screen and tap "edit my Family". There you will be able to upload a photo/new photo, edit family members, current address, phone number, anniversary, etc. Remember,

If you have trouble logging in:

Either you are new (welcome!), or perhaps you have changed your email. If you change your email in the directory, that is the email you need to use to log in - your old email will no longer work. Either way, please email Denise@gracedm.org with the email you would like to use. Once we have added you, we will contact you and you will be able to log in and set a password and get started!



March is National Professional Social Work Month

March is National Professional Social Work Month, a time to recognize social workers and thank them for all they do. At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we are grateful for the many social workers who have dedicated their lives to serving our communities across the state!

Maybe you have never had a social worker involved in your life. Yet, whether you realize it or not, you have had the benefit of their behind-the-scenes work in your community. Social workers help people help themselves by overcoming life's most difficult circumstances or managing challenges of everyday living: poverty, abuse, mental illness, depression, addiction, disability, and many other situations.

Iowa wouldn't be the same without the patience, guidance, and empowerment that social workers provide. Happy National Professional Social Work Month!

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

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 LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

A Path to Hope and Healing

Mike remembers feeling angry and depressed, and his family was at risk of falling apart. When he decided to start Therapy Services with LSI, he questioned the decision. Therapy wasn't easy and when he missed an appointment, he didn't want to go back.

But through working with his LSI therapist, Sherry, for the past several months, he has found ways to grow and heal. During each session, Sherry is there to listen without judgement, and she provides a listening ear for anything Mike wants to talk about. At the end, Mike is always given a type of homework or a lesson to think about until they meet again.

While they originally began meeting in person, Sherry has continued to be available through virtual therapy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The virtual sessions ensure Sherry and Mike can continue meeting regularly, on a flexible schedule and from the safety of their own homes. "Thank God for working through LSI in-person and through telehealth, and especially for Sherry, who helps people like myself who have been lost for years. If I hadn't chosen LSI, I wouldn't have met my therapist who has truly helped me keep my family and stay alive," Mike says. "I look back at the progress I have made and see some light peeking through to the end."

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.

<https://www.dmarcunited.org/donate/food/>

Highlights from the 2021 Annual Meeting

At the 2021 Annual Meeting:

The Meeting was held utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application.

Reports:

- President Denton directed the assembly to review the statistical information on page three of the Annual Report, then asked for questions or comments. There were none.
- The participants were directed to review the Congregational Council President's report and the Pastor's report, pages 5 and 6 of the Annual Report. There were no questions and the reports were approved as written by unanimous consent.
- The participants were directed to review the Staff reports, pages 7 through 12 of the Annual Report. There were no questions and the reports were approved as written by unanimous consent.
- The participants were directed to review the various committee reports, pages 12 through 22. There were no questions and the reports were approved as written by unanimous consent.

Elections:

- President Denton opened nominations from the floor to elect voting members to the 2021 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly. Carol Woodruff and Jess Flannery were nominated and were elected by motion of acclamation.
- Gary Nehmer was elected by motion of acclamation to serve as a member of the Endowment Committee.
- Aaron Brandsfield, Dean Watson, Tom McCleary, and Linda Moravec were elected by motion of acclamation to serve on the Church Council.

Budget:

Kevin Krause presented the Financial Report and the 2021 Grace Lutheran Church and Grace Kids Care daycare budgets (see pages 23 through 26 of the Annual Report). He noted that with the pandemic causing some closure of the daycare and suspension of in-person worship and meetings there were some financial difficulties. Thanks to the Cares Act, the continued pledge offerings, and the hard work of our staff, Daycare Director, Finance Committee, and President Denton we came through 2020 in reasonably good financial shape. Thanks were extended to all involved in working on financial solutions and in keeping the daycare open as much as possible.

- It was moved, seconded and passed to approve the FY 2021 budget for Grace Lutheran Church.
- It was moved, seconded, and passed to approve the FY 2021 budget for Grace Kids Care.
- Special thanks goes to President Denton for guiding the Council through a very difficult year!

**Respectfully submitted,
David F. Gronert
Council Secretary**

Finance Report – January Results

Financial results for January YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$27,751, Budget \$34,408
- Other Income – Actual \$3,040, Budget \$2,375
- Expenses – Actual \$38,746, Budget \$41,279
- Net activity – Actual (\$7,955), Budget (\$4,496)



Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget primarily due offerings below budget.

Anti-Racism: conversations and learning

This will be a place for facts about racial disparities, and definitions of terms. As our Lenten Small groups begin to explore some of these concepts using the Sparkhouse program [Dialogues On: Race](#), we wanted to provide everyone with some of the terminology present in media and our discussions, especially for those who were unable to join us at this time. We invite you to use this as a starting point to examine your own biases, knowledge, research, and discussion, and have re-printed below the short reading list we provided last month as well. Please call the office if you want to discuss any of these topics. The following Definitions and their sources come from <https://www.racialequitytools.org/glossary>

Race

For many people, it comes as a surprise that racial categorization schemes were invented by scientists to support worldviews that viewed some groups of people as superior and some as inferior. There are three important concepts linked to this fact:

1. Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.
2. Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered “white” in the United States today were considered “non-white” in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian, and Jewish people).
3. The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as designated groups, have been used by whites at different times in history to compete with African American labor.

Source:

- 1–2. PBS, “[Race: The Power of an Illusion](#)” (2018–2019 relaunch of [2003 series](#)).
3. Paul Kivel, [Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice](#) (Gabriola Island, British Columbia: New Society Publishers, 2002), page 141.

Privilege

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we’re taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

Source: Colours of Resistance Archive, “[Privilege](#)” (accessed 28 June 2013).

Self-Study Reading List from Ellen and Sparkhouse

For kids and families

- “God’s Dream” by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams
- “Say Something! The World Needs Your Voice!” by Peter H. Reynolds
- “Little Humans” by Brandon Stanton
- “We Are Together” by Britta Teckentrup
- “Anti- Racist Baby” by Ibram X. Kendi
- “All Are Welcome” by Alexandra Penfold
- “Be Who You Were Meant To Be” by Mrs. Lauren Grabois Fischer

For adults and teens

- “White Allies in the Struggle for Racial Justice” Boyd, Drick
- “God is Red: A Native View of Religion” Deloria, Jr., Vine.
- “Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native Expression of the Jesus Way” Twiss, Richard
- “The Warmth of Other Suns” Wilkerson, Isabel
- “We Should all Be Feminists” Adichie, Chimamanda Ngozi
- “Eloquent Rage: A Black Feminist Discovers Her Superpower” Cooper, Brittany

