

**GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

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

Sunday Outside Worship
10:15 a.m. weather permitting

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

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Des Moines, Iowa 50310
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www.gracedm.org

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10... Love your neighbor, Graduate Invite,
Merle Hay Neighbor Association,
Thank Yous
Inserts: color page, plant sale forms

Bunny Hop

I cannot remember where I first encountered the Bunny Hop. It was likely in an elementary gym class or a wedding reception. I do, however, remember the simultaneous feelings of exhaustion (that was a lot of jumping), frustration (at the slow progress), and a hint of fun (enjoying the occasion with others). We were all linked together, moving around the room in a human chain. The Conga Line was a lot more fun and moved more quickly. As an introvert, Line Dancing was preferable to either. The thought of freestyle dancing was terrifying.

There are times in life, like gym class or a wedding reception, when we have little control over what happens next. Whether the teacher, or the DJ, someone else is guiding things and it is up to those participating to make the most of what they are given. Looking back on those experiences there were some important lessons learned from the Bunny Hop.

- Stay in rhythm with those around you. It is easier if you stick together.
- Don't jump too high or far. You will not get any further, but you will tire quickly.
- Make sure to look back occasionally. You really are making progress.
- You will step on someone's foot, and yours will be stepped on too. It is OK.
- There will be times you lose count. Take a breath and find the groove again.
- Don't stress about doing the dance perfectly. Smile. We all look like dorks.

This pandemic is tiring. The last 13 months have felt like we are part of a large-scale cultural Bunny Hop. As we continue through the journey with COVID-19, racism, and division, it feels like we are taking steps forward, then backward, then forward again. It is easy to feel like we are not making progress. It is easy to feel like this will go on forever. It is simultaneously exhausting and frustrating. There are also hints of fun as we meet neighbors and find fun and safe things to do together.

As we continue through this journey that feels like the Bunny Hop, it is important to keep these lessons in mind. Stay in a sustainable rhythm with those around you.

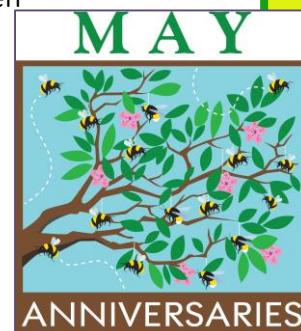
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Happy May Birthday

- 1 - 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
- 10 - Claire Kallestad
- 11 - Jeffrey Rudisill
- 12 - Charlotte Nielsen
- 13 - Sally Preston
- 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
- 25 - Hal Turner
- 26 - John Schwemler
Devin Ashton
- 27 - Kate Sherer-Eichner
Courthney Brandsfield
Sue Anderson
Alexander Oberhart
Andrew Oberhart
- 28 - Linda Vernia
Rick Fry
- 29 - Annette Taylor
Kira Nehmer
Ralf Hoifeldt
Cal Wilner

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
- 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

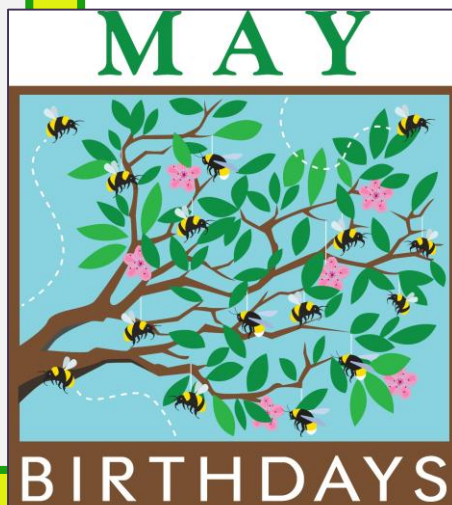


*Our Sympathies and prayers
are with*

the family of Neva Moravec,
mother of Linda

May Birthdays continued

- 30 - Loree Nelson
Alexandra Marberry
Kiernan Hutton
Torry Henderson
Jonathan Fry
- 31 - Lindsey Nelson
Barbara Bergman
Brianna Adams



Health and Safety, FAQ

These may not be “Frequently asked,” but these are some of the questions we are getting.

Worship

When will the sanctuary be open for in person worship?

The Health and Safety Task Force and Congregational Council are waiting for the risk level in Polk and Dallas Counties to be at Risk Level Yellow or below. This can be tracked easily at www.globalepidemics.org. This metric is based on the number of new cases per 100k people. Green <1, Yellow 1-9, Orange 10-24, Red >25. The current levels (as of April 21) are Dallas County 11.5 and Polk County 15.

Why were there people in the sanctuary on April 18?

When we made the decision to celebrate Affirmation of Baptism on April 18, we decided to continue whether the service was outdoor or moved into the sanctuary due to weather. There were five confirmands from three families. The service was attended, but it was limited to immediate family, sponsors, and mentors of the confirmands.

Why does it have to be at least 50 degrees to have outdoor worship?

Although participants in worship can bundle up and even wear gloves, it is not possible to do so while facilitating congregational singing on the piano. The keys get too cold and the change in circulation to the hands creates numbness. In consultation with Rich and Emma, we set the threshold at “feels like” 50 degrees.

When will the decision be made to move to livestream only because of weather?

The formal decision will come no later than 8:00 a.m. on Sunday morning. That said, if the forecast leaves little chance of being above 50 degrees, the decision will be made before Sunday. This Sunday, April 25, for example, has a forecasted overnight low of 36 with 10-20 mph winds on Sunday (as of the time this was written). If this forecast does not change the outdoor worship service will be cancelled before Sunday.

Will the livestream continue after we are in person?

Yes. The livestream of the 9:00 a.m. service will continue. This will be a permanent offering of Grace Lutheran Church.

Smaller Groups

When can smaller groups of 2-10 people start to gather?

With the vaccination effort becoming a large factor in lowering the risk, we are starting to open the building to smaller groups from within Grace Lutheran Church if 70 percent or more of the group is considered fully vaccinated. This threshold would be determined within the small group. This WILL NOT be something monitored and regulated by the staff. These small groups can gather as long as masks and social distancing measures are followed.

If you are part of a smaller group from Grace Lutheran Church that would like to meet in person, please contact the Church Office.



NCAA Annual Fundraiser Results!

Chuck Denton did not pick Baylor, but he had enough points to secure the victory. The real winner is the Food Bank of Iowa, and they will receive the \$105 in entry fees. Thank you to all who participated in the fundraiser this year! Second Place went to Rich Voelker, Third Place to Carol Woodruff, Fourth to Leslie Denton, and Fifth to Allison Olson.

Bunny Hop, continued from front page

We need each other. Don't try to do too much. We are all tired from the new routine and rhythm. Gym class All Stars do not excel at the Bunny Hop. Make sure to look back. It may not always feel like it, but we have made a lot of progress. You will step on toes, and others will step on yours. We need to approach one another with grace. Mistakes happen. In those moments you lose concentration or focus, take a deep breath, and find your groove again. Even while trying to manage and track safety protocols, it is important to remember to smile. We are all learning. That simple change in demeanor can make a huge impact on yourself and others.

Siblings in Christ, take heart. You are not in this alone. The Bunny Hop may not be the dance of choice, but we are in this together. Forward, back, 1,2,3.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike



Grace Kids Care is hiring!

Full time toddler teachers, part time openers and closers.
Please email mary@gracedm.org to learn more!

ATTENTION PARENTS AND MEMBERS

GRACE KIDS CLOSET GIVING GUIDELINES

We appreciate your donation of items appropriate for the age and stage of children served by Grace Kids Care

**TOYS, PUZZLES, GAMES, BOOKS
DIAPERING, NURSING, FEEDING
NURSERY AND DECOR
CLOTHING (SIZE NB TO 5T)
SHOES (SIZE BABY TO LITTLE KID)
MATERNITY CLOTHING**

All items should be clean with no holes or stains

Grace Kids Closet!

We have improved upon the Tuesday Table idea and created Grace Kids Closet as a way of sharing children's items we no longer need. The Closet will have a more permanent home in a classroom downstairs next to the Explorers and Discovery classrooms. The door to the room will be open and daycare families are welcome to donate or shop any time during drop off or pick up.

A reminder of our donation guidelines-

We appreciate your donation of items appropriate for the age and stage of children served by Grace Kids Care

- Toys, puzzles, games, books,
- Diapering, nursing, feeding,
- Nursery and décor,
- Clothing (size nb to 5t)
- Shoes (size baby to little kid),
- Maternity clothing

All items should be clean with no holes or stains

As my daughter Mable and I like to say "sharing is caring"!

Sunday Worship

Sunday Worship now at 9:00 a.m. (every Sunday) and 10:15 a.m. (weather permitting)

9:00 a.m. Livestream online, regardless of weather.

- **On our website:** On the home page, 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. If you see our logo, know you are in the right place and worship will begin shortly. There will also be links to our Facebook page in the website news if you want to watch there, and comment, or say hello to others watching along with you.
- **On Facebook:** The service will not appear as a scheduled live feed. 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.

10:15 a.m. Outdoor worship - weather permitting - not livestreamed or recorded.

- Worship will be held outside at 10:15 a.m. if the temperature is scheduled to reach 50 degrees, no rain and no high winds. We will make a final call no later than 8 a.m. every Sunday, if we cancel the outdoor worship, we will post it on the website and Facebook. Bring a lawnchair to sit in, and bring something to eat and drink for the celebration of communion. We do also respectfully ask that you wear a mask. Here's to spring and consistently warmer weather!

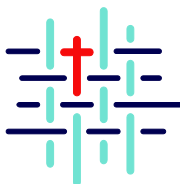
Written materials and Announcements can be found in the Resources section of the website. Click on the word Resources at the top right of any page of the website and go from there! Or, follow this link <https://gracedm.org/resources/>

We also send them by email every Thursday/Friday if you are signed up for the weekly enews. – sign up near the bottom of our homepage <https://gracedm.org/> 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.

Missed a worship service? [Find and watch them here.](#)

Worship materials are emailed on Thursdays, as well as posted on our website. Find out how on our [website](#) in the [News Section](#), or [worship Resources](#).

Sunday Virtual Coffee This event is on hiatus while we make the move to two services through the warmer months, weather permitting. We will send out notices for any special events that may occur before we return to in-person worship.



Upcoming Worship Celebrations:

Sunday, May 16: Recognition of Graduates
Please send your photos and Bios
to ellen@gracedm.org or michelle@gracedm.org

Sunday, May 23, Pentecost
Wear Red!

It's Time! Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser May 3-9!

We are doing things differently this Spring because our usual greenhouse is not offering fundraising this year.

Instead, we are partnering with Goode Greenhouse (1050 NE 50th Ave., Des Moines). Grace Youth will receive 10% of the pre-tax sales of anyone who brings the enclosed form, or an image of it into the store May 3-9 and presents the code at checkout. If you are planting gardens this week, consider saving a few beds or planters for next week and do your shopping at Goode. Mother's Day is coming so think about getting hanging baskets for the mother figures in your life. Also, share this form with friends and family and invite them to do the same.

We had thought there were distanced options for shopping, such as curbside pickup. Goode is not offering that service this year, but you can shop online and pickup in the store to cut down on time inside. Also, if you are concerned about being around people it might be good to avoid the weekend rush and go during the week.

All the funds raised from this, and all of our youth fundraisers, go to support the cost of youth trips including the ELCA Youth Gathering that will take place in Minneapolis July 24-28, 2022. I will be in touch with details on how to sign up for this trip in June.

Thanks for your support!
Ellen Rothweiler

Link to the Plant Sale form here <https://gracedm.org/content/uploads/2021/03/Goodes-Fundraising-Grace-Lutheran-Church-Youth.pdf>

Companion Congregation Update - A recent message from the new pastor in Msindo.

I would like to thank Almighty God for tender care he took upon us for long time until now. Many greetings and prayers from Msindo to you our friend in Christ in this quaresma time. It is long time since we had communication through mail or other means. Though it is late but still we wish you a happy new year 2021.

Firstly I would like to apologize for silence because of exchange of pastors in our diocese. I am a new pastor of Msindo since January 2021 and in our parish we have some changes also. We have new evangelist Isaya Mtegwa who finished school last year and posted to work as an accountant instead of Azza Mmbaga. My name is John Joseph Mshana. We also have new members of companionship Committee, due to our constitution we elect new members every four years from parish to diocesan level. Their names are Niarira Amos, Godson Mduma, Francis Mnguruta, Navoneiwa Johnson and Regina Mbonea. We have some new members but also experienced one.

Secondly I want to inform you that our chairperson Azza Mmbaga passed away on January and we are very sorry for this big loss of our experienced person in companionship; indeed we get a big gap in our parish and you also. Most of things are new for us because he left without handing over therefore it is tough job but now we are almost settled.

Lastly we are welcoming you in Msindo especially after this challenge of Covid pandemic because we are still fighting against the situation, we lost a lot of people but now somehow we are settled and the situation is not bad. We invite to visit us our friend, We missed you a lot and we need you our friend, we pray for you that God guide you abundantly .

Once again I apologize for this silence but I assure you that we will keep in touch every time to know your situation and also give you our proceeding and updates.

We wish you a good Easter, convey our greetings from brothers and sisters of Msindo to Grace Lutheran Church.

Yours in Jesus name,
Rev John Joseph Mshana

Join us for All Church VBS at Grace!

May 16 through June 2, with in-person and virtual opportunities as we explore the Parable of the Sower. We're sow excited!

Sundays May 16, 23, 30

Look for in-worship stories and videos.

At the 10:15 a.m. outdoor worship there will be an active part for you to play during the prayers. Bring a piece of 'garbage', something you might recycle that is plastic, cardboard, paper – no glass please.

After worship hands-on activity for ALL ages. (20 minutes)

Wednesday evenings, May 19, 28, June 2

Hands-on activities appropriate for ALL ages 2-102 around the grounds of Grace, as we explore all the ways God plants seeds and nourishes roots of faith. (We estimate about an hour each week.)

Every day between: you will have a journal of activities that explores each weeks theme, and we'll have some short videos to share online as well.

Rain Dates: we'll announce plans closer to the date.

Comfort levels and busy schedules: While we are looking forward to meeting with you in the open air, we invite you to take part in the ways that feel the most comfortable to you. If you need to miss a date, you'll be able to participate in the dates that work for you.



Lutheran World Relief Thank You

Our Grace Lutheran World Relief tag team quilting group finished 57 quilts that have been blessed and are on their way. Included in the blessing, were 101 masks. As always, I am amazed and grateful for all of our wonderful needle warriors who created these gifts of love, kindness, and compassion for complete strangers in need. So, thank you to my quilters: Cathy Watson, Helen, Mary W, Allison, Beth, Jill, and Gail. Thank you, also, to the others that aided us.

I, personally, would like to thank those who have donated to the LWR fund raiser, and, especially to the anonymous donor. I am grateful for the generosity of your gifts. The impact this will have on others is amazing. Again, thank you!

Kathy Piltingsrud





Happy Mother's Day!

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

We see moms turning to LSI 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 2020, LSI's Early Childhood programs provided support to more than 1,097 families 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 Iowa 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@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.

Wrapping Care Around Iowa Children

Martha and Marti first became foster parents in September of 2018, after their biological children expressed that they wanted to provide foster care as a family. They decided to become licensed through LSI Foster Care and Adoption and soon after, they welcomed a sibling group of three into their home.

"Our kids really wanted to look into foster care as a way to be able to help others as a family," Martha says. "Everybody had to sacrifice and pour in, and everybody was needed and brought something to the table."

The siblings stayed with the family for almost two years, until the opportunity came for them to find a forever home through adoption. Over the years, the siblings had become bonded to Martha and Marti, as well as their extended family and friends. The siblings are currently in the process of officially being adopted by a family close to Martha and Marti, so they can continue to stay connected to the important relationships they built in foster care.

The family has found a passion they can all share, and it's making a difference in the lives of Iowa children.

"We always explain fostering as 'good' and 'hard.' You never want to take one away from the other, because it's both. It's the hardest thing we've ever done, but it's the best thing we've done," Martha says. "We've had the privilege of having the kids in our home and you have the responsibility and the privilege to take care of them in their time of need."

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

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

Friday 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

At the April 20th, 2021 Church Council Meeting:

The Council met utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application. Attending were Aaron Brandsfield, Val Culp, Alex Davik, Dave Gronert, Tom McCleary, Linda Moravec, Sally Preston, John Roehrick, Pastor Mike, and Dean Watson.

The Council received and reviewed the financial and staff reports. The Daycare is still in the black despite a shutdown last month. The church financials show that pledged and other offerings remain below budget, although fiscally the month of March showed improvement. While this is not yet a concern it will bear watching. Alex Davik suggested providing a drop box to receive offerings during outdoor services. Tom McCleary will recruit counters to handle these offerings.

Property Committee Report: Pastor Mike and Don Peterson put together a team to implement deep cleaning of our facilities prior to a return to indoor worship. Pastor Mike, Don, Rich Snyder, Emma Stammer, and Dean Watson have volunteered to serve on this committee.

Eric Weber completed a walk-through of Todd's house focusing on utility usage.

Health and Safety Update: The Affirmation of Baptism service last week has piqued interest in a return to indoor worship. It should be noted that this service was a very special private event, similar to a baptism. We are getting closer, but the numbers of infections are still too high, even as vaccination numbers increase. Pastor Mike indicated that we are still gathering voluntary information on vaccination rates within the congregation. An anonymous survey on vaccination and comfort level with gatherings may be considered. The Committee is looking at ways to be safe when we do go back to in-person worship.

PPP Update: lending institution will begin accepting paperwork for loan forgiveness in June. Paperwork is on hand and will be filed when the bank gives the go-ahead.

Daycare is looking to hire an assistant director to help ease the load on Director Edwards. The position is currently vacant.

Next scheduled Council meeting will be May 18th, 2021, via zoom.

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

Finance Report – March Results

Financial results for March YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$83,583, Budget \$99,375
- Other Income – Actual \$5,427, Budget \$5,575
- Expenses – Actual \$114,796, Budget \$114,062
- Net activity – Actual (\$25,785), Budget (\$9,112)



Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget primarily due offerings below budget, continued giving during these uncertain times is appreciated. All prepaid offerings are being recognized over the fiscal year versus the entirety in the month received.

Love your Neighbor: Growing in understanding

This column is place for facts and resources about racial disparities, definitions of terms, and information about current events. We invite you to use this as a starting point to examine your own biases, expand your knowledge, do research, and for discussion.

The Lenten Study Small groups have finished their study, and are working on ways to move forward in a meaningful way. We've learned a lot, some of it shocking, some of it familiar, some about the harm caused by others, and reflected on harm we as individuals have caused or can change. We realize we are all coming from different starting points, and the communications & listening skills we have learned and practiced during this study have and will continue to help us through these next stages. Opportunities to be involved in future efforts will be made available as the groups move forward. Contact the office if you are interested in participating or joining another book study.

Resources recommended by Carol Woodruff:

- Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption - Book and movie about Bryon Stevenson, who was referenced in our book. Very good!
- Amend: The Fight for America - 6-part mini-series on Netflix. Hosted by Will Smith a look at the fight for equal rights through the lens of the 14th Amendment. Also Very Good!
- Roll Call with Austin Channing-Brown & Holy, Wild & Free – (the blog is a subscription). You can also follow her on Twitter.

Kayleigh Medhurst would like to thank the congregation of Grace Lutheran Church for fulfilling their Baptismal vow of guiding her through her faith journey. Please help her celebrate her graduation from Waukee High School on May 16, 1-4 pm at her house. You can find her address in the congregational directory, or call the office.



Thank you Merle Hay Neighborhood Association!

Recognizing that 2020 was difficult for many families, and 2021 is shaping up to be just as difficult for struggling families, the MHNA held a fundraiser to benefit DMARC, The Food Bank, the Little Free Pantry at Immanuel Methodist, and the Little Free Pantry here at Grace. A member of MHNA has been stocking the pantry with goods and toiletries collected, and we received a check for \$123 to purchase other goods for the pantry as needed!

Thank You!

Thank you so much for the thoughts and prayers for my mom, Neva Moravec. They were felt and deeply appreciated.
Linda Moravec

Dick Johansen really appreciated the Easter cards and appreciates all the mailings that he gets from his Grace church family. He had a Happy Easter in spite of having distance restrictions still in place. He writes, "We must always be thankful for the many mercies we are given!"
Love, Dick Johansen

Joanne Johnson sent a beautiful thank you note with the sentiment "Let us be grateful to people who make us happy. They are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom." Marcel Proust. Joanne writes "Please know how much I have appreciated receiving cards, phone calls, and notes from all of you. It has made me very thankful to have the love and support of Lydia-Martha Circle, the Care Committee members, and the individuals who have sent me cards and calls. I remember you all with gratitude and with prayers for God's blessings on our beloved church. Sincerely, Joanne Johnson

