

GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH

Sunday Worship

9:00 a.m. Livestream & in-person w/reservations

10:15 a.m. Outside Worship (weather permitting)

Weekday morning Prayers 9:30 a.m.

Reach us at 515-276-6873

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Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-276-6873

www.gracedm.org

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The Church Did Not Close

"When is the church opening back up?" This question, and others like it, have been asked a lot these last months. I have usually responded with a nuanced answer that deals with risk level, infection rates, and a variety of other variables. Now, we are preparing for in-person worship services beginning on June 6th. There is an excitement brewing as the church building is being prepared to welcome people on Sunday once again.

It is at times like this that I am reminded that the building closed for a period (okay, over a year), but the church was never closed. I am proud that we did not miss a single worship service in that time. There may have been weeks that it took two or three tries, but we adapted and found a way for the Word of God to spring forth into the hearts and minds of those gathered through virtual means. I am proud that mission continued. We found ways to support one another locally, while rising in support of LWR and other ministries. Quilts and masks were made and blessed. Cards were sent. Pen Pal relationships were started. The building was closed, but the mission continued.

I am profoundly thankful that we have made it this far. I am thankful that we are preparing to gather in the sanctuary for worship. It has been a long time. I am also aware that there are many that are no longer with us, those who are resting from their labors. I am aware of those who were ill in the last year. I am aware of the thousands of deaths that happened, and countless others who were ill, that brought researchers to the point of a vaccine. The shot may have been free, but the cost to get there was considerable.

Siblings in Christ, thank you for your patience and graciousness as we continue through this journey together. Be mindful of this collective history. Some will be ready to put down the masks before others are. Some will continue to mask because of other conditions or needs. What we see at face value is only part of the story. We must continue to treat one another with grace and love.

We do plan to re-enter the space on June 6th. It has been a long road to this point. It will feel good to be back in the sanctuary and share in worship together. For those of you who will come, it will be great to see you. For those of you who will abstain, it continues to be a pleasure to gather with you through virtual means. Church has always been about the people. I hope and pray that is a lesson of this pandemic that we never forget. I thank God for all of you.

Pastor Mike

Happy June Birthday

- 1 - Danielle Russell
- 2 - Dean Watson
Viola Welty
- 4 - Leslie Denton
Virgil Olson
Erica Schwarz
- 5 - Molly Riordan
Natasha Voelker
- 6 - Debbie Curry
- 7 - Livia Ocken
- 8 - Elijah Lund
Matt Radermacher
Samuel Ruiz
- 10 - Brian Riordan
- 11 - Jacob McCann
- 13 - Abby McNichols
Stacy Speck
Michelle Turner
- 14 - Joshua Habick
Joel Holst
Melissa Lawson
- 15 - Joseph Gutmann
Peter Mattes
Sandra Meyer
Kenneth Schwartz
Zoe Volius
- 16 - Joseph Honsey
- 17 - Curt Johansen
Matthew Jordahl
Eugene Krauss
Rita Stackhouse
- 18 - Arbor Calahan
Marilyn Nizzi
Vivian Swanson
Cecelia Stammer
- 19 - Luis Reaza
- 21 - Paul Kallenbach
Jay Lounsberry
Zayden Appenzeller
- 22 - Martha Mitchell
- 23 - Sharena Appenzeller
Megan Riordan
Delmar Vernia
- 25 - Barbara Tussing
- 27 - Donald Schouten
- 28 - Amber Trimble
Dana Roby
- 29 - Leann Davis
Elizabeth Gronert
- 30 - Steve McCann



Happy June Anniversary

- 3 - Larry and Judy Cramer
Rick and Becky Harmon
- 4 - William and Kristen Marberry
- 6 - Rick and Lori Fry
- 8 - Bruce and Barbara Bergman
- 9 - Matthew and Kara Jordahl
- 10 - Kenneth and Barbara DeBolt,
Kevin and Jeanne Drury
Jon and Jeanine Rutter
- 12 - Conrad and Jean Thompson
- 13 - Greg and Jill Boesch
- 14 - John and Linda Gronert
Robert and Rita Stackhouse
Rick and Emma Stammer
- 16 - Tim and La Vonne Mitchell
- 19 - Nick and Kristin Medhurst
- 24 - Leonard and Helen Ringgenberg
Rev. Gregory and Rita Davis
- 25 - Curtis and Sarah Chenoweth
Eugene and Lucille Krauss
- 27 - Jeff and Nancy Robbins
- 28 - Jeffrey and Patricia Anderson



Sponsor Altar Flowers!

**Upcoming dates available are:
June 20, 27, July 4, 11, 25**

Sign up here:

<https://volunteersignup.org/8EKBK>

Kathy Bowermaster will contact you for wording of the announcements, and to let you know how to pick up your flowers after the service. Cost is \$25 that can be paid by check mailed to the church, or using the online donation system.



Lectors needed!

We are looking forward to beginning in-person worship, and we need volunteers! If you are interested in serving in this way, sign up here

<https://www.volunteersignup.org/3YPK9?classic> or contact Emma, emma@gracedm.org

The 9 a.m. service will be indoors and the 10:15 a.m. service will be outdoor. Please be prepared to wear a mask while reading during the indoor service. Thank you!

Health and Safety Update

When the Congregation Council made the decision to suspend in-person worship last spring, it was hard to imagine the journey that would travel together. This journey has been difficult. We have all longed to be gathered in community in worship, service, education, grieving, and prayer. Our decision to refrain from such gathering has been centered in love, making sure that we do not exclude or alienate those who are at increased risk during the pandemic.

With the high vaccination rates in Iowa, the decreased risk level in Polk and Dallas Counties, and the updated guidance by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Congregational Council has voted to update our mitigation policies.

I am pleased to share the following updates with you.

Outdoor worship service (10:15 a.m.): Masks are no longer required for the outdoor worship service. ***There are two exceptions.*** Due to the comfort level of the Pastor who is supply preaching, masks will be required on June 27th and July 11th.

Six feet of distance is still required between groups of people.

Please also continue to bring your own food and drink to share in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We are closer to being able to safely provide this meal but will continue on this path for the time being.

In Person Worship (9:00 a.m.): Weekly in-person worship will commence Sunday, June 6th. (There will be 3 exceptions to this over the summer. There will be no in person worship on June 27, July 4, and July 11 because Pastor Mike will be on vacation and Continuing Education.)

Things to know:

- The livestream option will continue. We do not anticipate a situation where the livestream ministry would cease.
- We will start with seating for 14 groups.
- Seating will be by reservation so that social distancing between groups can be maintained. We will start with 14 groups. To reserve space in the sanctuary for worship contact either the church office 515-276-6873, or email Emma, our Minister for Worship and Music at emma@gacedm.org.
- Masks are required to be worn at all times in the building and during the service, *except* when receiving communion.
- Singing will be allowed! You may also consider humming the tune with the vocalists.
- **Holy Communion**
-will be provided at this service through prepackaged bread and grape juice. (Unfortunately this is NOT a gluten-free option. We are going to work on solutions other than the prepackaged option and hopefully transition to something else later this summer.)

Other use of the building: We are opening the building to smaller groups, beginning on June 7th.

Things to know:

- Masks are required in all public spaces.
- We are starting with groups of 15 and fewer.
- In order to meet, you simply need to reserve the space.
- The main spaces available are Grace Hall and the Gathering Hall. Other spaces may be considered upon request.

Continued on page 4

- If everyone is vaccinated and the entire group is comfortable, masks may be removed while gathered, but would need be worn when leaving the space.

There are a lot of considerations to make as we look at re-entry into the building. There will be more information to distribute in the next couple weeks, but it was important to place these changes before you right away.

Thank you, again, for your care and patience throughout our journey together. These last months have been very difficult, but there is a break in the clouds and clearer skies approaching.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike,
on behalf of the Staff, the Congregational Council, and the Health and Safety Task Force



Grace Kids Care is hiring!

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



Grace Kids Care Classroom Volunteers Needed.

Read, play, cuddle babies, supervise gym or playground time. Contact
mike@gracedm.org



Thank you, Mary Edwards!

We give thanks for the time that Mary Edwards has been with us as the Director of Grace Kids Care. Mary resigned effective June 18th, citing the incredible strain that this last year has brought. It has been an extremely difficult time to be in daycare and preschool. We give thanks for Mary's leadership and wish her the very best moving forward. Due to safety considerations, we will not have an Open House. Please consider sending a card to church, or email to Mary (mary@gracedm.org), to offer gratitude for all that she has done for our ministry with Grace Kids Care.

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](https://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. Masks are no longer needed for outdoor worship when Pastor Mike is presiding. Here's to spring and consistently warmer weather!

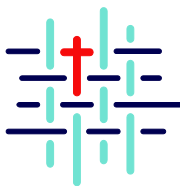
Written materials and Announcements can be found in the Resources section of the website. Click on the word Resources at the top right of any page of the website and go from there! Or, follow this link <https://gracedm.org/resources/>

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.



Masks are no longer required for the outdoor worship service.

There are two exceptions. Due to the comfort level of the Pastor who is supply preaching, masks will be required on June 27th and July 11th.

Thank you for your understanding!

Reservations are now open for indoor worship on June 6, 9:00 a.m.!

Access the sign-up form here <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C44AEAB2DABF8C61-indoor> or contact Emma at emma@gracedm.org.

Things to know:

-Reservations are on a first come/first served basis, capped at 14 individuals or groups. A “group” is defined as people who are comfortable sitting together without distancing. Because of space limitations this can be no more than 7 people. If you have more than 7 people in your group you will need to create an additional reservation.

-The sign-up will be available the Monday before each service (see the [website news section](#) on *Monday May 31*). We are not able to accommodate standing reservations, you will need to renew your reservation each week.

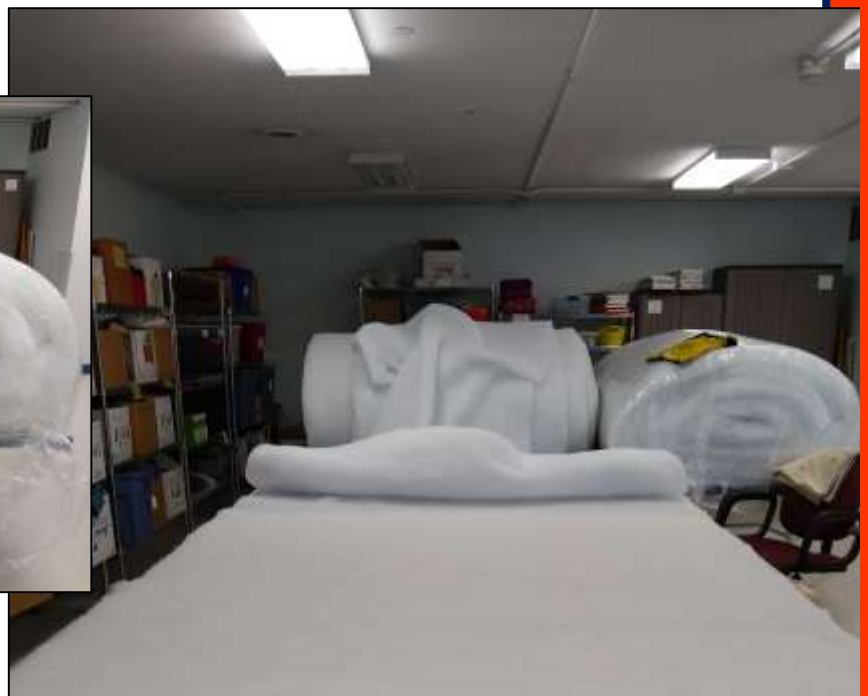
-If you need wheel chair accommodations, please tell Emma directly at emma@gracedm.org or by calling the church office. This will NOT impact your ability to reserve space, it simply allows us to know specifically where to seat you.

-If you would like to cancel a reservation, that is an option through the online system or let Emma know directly.

Grace LWR Quilters

Earlier this year, I applied for, and received, a Thrivent Action Team grant for the Grace LWR Quilters. I would like to thank Thrivent for this grant. With it, I was able to buy 2 rolls of batting (that came very skinny but when unbound, expanded to take over the quilt room), crochet thread to tie the quilts, and flat cotton bed sheets that work for backs. It's an exciting time for the quilters. Especially for me, since we are still tag team quilting, I get to wrestle the batting rolls. It's pretty funny. Thank you, again, Thrivent.

Kathy Piltingsrud



"Sowing God's Love" All Church VBS

From May 16 through June 2nd we explored and celebrated The Parable of the Sower, Mark 4:1-9.

From worship to sermons, an at home journal, videos made by members for our Facebook page, and in-person activities, each week focused on a different portion of the life of a plant after the seeds leave the hands of the sower: Planting seeds, Taking Roots, and Good Soil.

You can find both the worship videos and the VBS videos and resources on the Resources page of our website here: <https://gracedm.org/resources/>



Our "Art of Redemption" Art piece, assembled during VBS worship using recycled items from our homes.



Lenora Iverson and Ellen Rothweiler get messy making Seed Bombs to help spread the wonder of God's Love by planting in surprising places.



During Grace Kids Care VBS week we planted squash and radish seeds in the Grace Giving Garden, and harvested radishes to see their deep roots.

On Wednesday, June 2 at 6:30 p.m. we will be planting a Maple tree on the East side of Grace, along 52nd street.

We will also be making life-sized versions of the Embodying Change Activity from the VBS Journal you received. We'll have chalk for those who want to draw theirs on the sidewalk, and brown paper for those who want to do theirs taped to the building.

Join us as we wrap up this summer's VBS!



During Seed week we blitzed water and recycled paper in a blender, added a little bit of colored paper, and then a variety of flower seeds! On Sunday we had fun shaping the squishy paper into shapes. The dried seed paper will be mailed to our Homebound members, who can plant it in a pot or their yard.



Happy Father's Day!

At Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI), we strive to build up and empower Iowa kids and families. For us, Father's Day is a time to celebrate all the fathers and male role models we see every day.

Through our Early Childhood Services, young men are learning to become dads. They're becoming confident and active in their child's life, and they are creating loving, bright futures for their families.

Many Iowa children entering foster care need a positive male role model in their lives. And through LSI Foster Care and Adoption, our licensed foster dads are there to help guide them.

This is only possible through your support of LSI! If you would like to make a gift, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI director of philanthropy and church relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service!

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.

Finding Paradise

Perseverance is a familiar quality for Mon, who after spending decades living as a refugee from an early age was recently able to place roots in Iowa and succeed in building a life for his family.

After living in a Nepali refugee camp for almost 24 years, Mon's family was able to resettle in the U.S. When they arrived in Iowa, they moved directly into a tiny apartment. But the single room was not sufficient for their family – especially once their youngest daughter was born. They stayed in the apartment for four years, but Mon was determined to create a better home for his family.

Mon secured housing for his family through the Habitat for Humanity program, and through LSI Refugee and Immigrant Services, he was able to get on track and save and earn money towards his goal of homeownership. With guidance from staff in LSI's Match and Save financial program, he was able to open a savings account and develop a monthly savings plan.

Mon and his family moved into their new home last year, and he said LSI and Habitat for Humanity were critical steps in helping him learn about U.S. finances and savings – lessons that will pay off during his journey as a homeowner.

"I felt very sad when I left my country," Mon says. "I felt as if I lost my paradise. But when I got the key and when I entered my house, I felt that I regained my lost paradise. So that was the happiest moment in my life and right now, I, my family, and kids are super happy to live in this new house."

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 May 18th, 2021 Church Council Meeting:

The Council met utilizing the Zoom teleconferencing application. Attending were Aaron Brandsfield, Susanne Carney, Nancy Crowfoot, Val Culp, Alex Davik, Dave Gronert, Tom McCleary, 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, and the PPP money will be counted as income once the loan is forgiven. The church financials show that pledged and other offerings remain approximately \$12,000 below budget. We will need to have plans in place if this trend continues. Once again, PPP money will help once the loan is forgiven, however we need to understand that this is a one-time infusion of income.

The Council discussed options for a path forward for Grace Kids Care following the resignation of Director Edwards.

Property Committee Report: Dean Watson and Aaron Brandsfield are gathering information pertaining to the deep cleaning of the church prior to reopening. On June 2nd there is to be a tree planting in the area of the Little Free Pantry. Some maintenance issues in the music room will be addressed by the men's group when they are able to gather again. Eric Weber has done some minor repairs to Todd's house and is looking into repair or replacement of the HVAC unit.

Health and Safety Update: The Council discussed the return to in-person worship after hearing recommendations from the Health and Safety Committee. The discussion resulted in four motions which were adopted by absence of objection.

- Masks will no longer be **required** at outdoor services due to reduced risk.
- Return to indoor worship will **probably** be June 6th. The number of attendees will be limited and those attending will be required to wear masks. Reservations will be required. An equitable method of taking reservations for these services is being developed.
- Grace Kids Care health and safety protocols were updated to align with the new DHS guidelines.
- Small groups will be permitted to meet in the building, probably effective June 6th. Each group will decide whether to require masks.

Next scheduled Council meeting will be June 15th, 2021, via zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
David F. Gronert
Council Secretary

Finance Report – April Results

Financial results for April YTD are as follows:

- Pledged Offerings – Actual \$122,901, Budget \$137,467
- Other Income – Actual \$7,075, Budget \$7,433
- Expenses – Actual \$153,046, Budget \$155,317
- Net activity – Actual (\$23,070), Budget (\$10,417)



Actual net activity was unfavorable to budget. Offerings are the primary reason for the deficit. While offerings for the month of April was strong, activity for the full year continues to be below budget. 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.

Bias: (abbreviated definition from Oxford Languages)

noun: **bias**

1. prejudice in favor of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

"there was evidence of **bias against** foreign applicants"

verb: **bias**

1. cause to feel or show inclination or prejudice for or against someone or something.

"all too often, our recruitment processes are **biased toward** younger candidates"

A recent story in the media talks about how two different appraisers gave wildly varied values of a house that was going up for sale in a primarily Caucasian neighborhood, depending on whether the seller was black or white. Another shared the different ways a Black wife is treated from her Caucasian husband, including medical care workers asking her husband for confirmation about her own children's birth dates and medical history. Bias is learned, and often shows up in ways we are unaware of. Learned behaviors can be unlearned.

To learn more, read the article <https://effectiviology.com/cognitive-biases/> *

Then take a few minutes to take a few of these simple tests [Project Implicit's Hidden Bias tests](#), created by psychologists at top universities, to uncover some of your own unconscious biases. Remember, having biases doesn't make you a bad person—it only makes you human. *

*Sourced from www.Unitedwaydm.org/Equity-challenge

Summer reading opportunity "So You Want to Talk About Race" by Ijeoma Oluo

As part of our observation of [Juneteenth](#), we will gather a group of people interested in meeting to read and discuss this book. The group(s) will meet weekly for eight weeks beginning the week of June 20. The book is available on Kindle, Audible and in print. Leaders will be Carla Peterman and Mike Hilsabeck. We hope that groups can meet at church in person, but the time of week/day will be determined once a group is formed. If an eight week commitment sounds like a lot, we encourage you to pick up the book any way and take it along on your travels. Meet with the group when you can, but keep reading along when you can't be here.

Contact Ellen (ellen@gracedm.org) to sign up to be a part of this book group.

We Believe

Our street sign at Grace shows a weekly series of We Believe statements paired with a scripture reference that supports that statement.

Previous statements have included: "We Believe that..."

- Black Lives Matter
- Love is Love
- We believe in Truth/Science
- No Human is Illegal

The current signs are "We believe that women's rights are human rights"

We invite you to study along with us. Please call if you would like to further discuss any of the readings.

