



**GRACE
LUTHERAN
CHURCH**

Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Worship
Online only through Feb 20

Morning Prayer Mon, Wed, Fri at 9:30 a.m.
@Gracelutherandm

Office Hours
9 a.m. – noon
Monday - Thursday

5201 Urbandale Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-276-6873
www.gracedm.org

Pastor Michael Schmidt
mike@gracedm.org

Minister for Worship and Music
Emma Stammer
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Groundhog Day – Part 2

I sometimes look back through prior newsletters when preparing to write something for the front page. I am completely struck by the front page from February of 2020. It is both naïve, having no clue of the approaching pandemic, and truthful of the current situation two years later. This image from the movie, one in which Phil is stuck repeating the same events over and over, still fits. Phil had to figure out what needed to be different in order to break the cycle and live into a different future. I believe the church (universal and our community of faith) need to strive to break this cycle too.

In the fall of 2019, we took a congregational survey to discern areas for growth. This is what appeared in the newsletter two years ago:

“The congregational survey was laid forward as a tool to help us gain that snapshot of what is happening in people’s lives and get a sense for the ways that we can learn and grow, the things we need to improve to get it right...Here are a few of the trends:

1. Sunday worship is found to be very valuable
2. There is a disconnect in Education in all generations.
3. There is a desire to make a clearer connection to Outreach.
4. By and large, Grace is doing well.
5. There is a need for greater transparency and communication.

In addition to these trends, there was a great deal of information about individual faith journeys, loss of loved ones, and several people speaking of the current political climate impacting faith in a negative way. There were responses that broke my heart to read, whether work schedules getting in the way, or the quiet ways so many suffer. There were so many that feel the divide in the country because of aggressive political ideologies and the loss of relationships because of it.”

These same areas of growth remain. There is a disconnect in

Groundhog Day, continued on page 3

Happy February Birthday

- 1 - Larry Cramer
- 2 - Dick Johansen
Kathlina Roat
- 3 - William Marberry
- 5 - Todd Ringgenberg
Andrew Trentmann
- 6 - Karri Brandsfield
James Hoffman
Larry Nordeen
- 9 - Virginia Naney
- 10 - Nancy Robbins
Carol Rudisill
Bonnie Swanson
- 12 - Lenora Iverson
Tyler Peeler
- 13 - Timothy Hummel
- 14 - Theodora Brown
- 15 - Isaac McCleary
- 16 - Heather Ashton
- 17 - Gail Peterson
- 18 - Kristen Marberry
Max Palmer
- 19 - Ellen Mumm
- 20 - Jessica Flannery
Max Ringgenberg
- 21 - Judy Cramer
Allison Olson-Schmidt
- 22 - Julie Stuckle
- 23 - Barry Briggs
Jenie Schmidt
- 24 - Barbara Burley
Jonathan Rudisill
- 25 - Shane Artzer
Melissa Young
- 27 - Jerry Westercamp
- 28 - Dana Johnson



Happy February Anniversary

- 14 – Virginia and Jay Wangerin
17 – Deanna and Michael Hummel
19 – Linda and Jim Rundle
20 – Janet and Norman Trentmann
24 – Sally and Paul Thielking



Thanks to the Member Care, Lydia-Martha Circle and the Grace staff for the cards, calls and communications. I really miss seeing everyone.

Gratefully,
Lorna Johns

Souper Bowl Sunday – Stuff the Little Free Pantry

Repeat for a good cause!

Every year we have a Hope Ministries barrel in the Gathering Hall. Except in 2021. Or this year.

However, in 2021, we stuffed the Little Free Pantry with soups, chili, boxes of chicken broth, veg broth, and beef broth, and can openers. So let's do THAT again!

Canned goods are ok – they shouldn't be stored outside in below freezing temps for long. However, the pantry is well used so food rarely stays out long, and the daytime temps will be above freezing this weekend. Still, if you can, choose to donate:

- Boxed soup, lentil soups, and broth.
- Bagged, dry soup mixes that have all the spices included – package them with a shelf stable box of broth and rice or pasta.
- Wholegrain crackers, oyster crackers, & breadsticks
- Cornbread mix (just add water type) to go with the chili.

When you are out shopping, look for other places to donate to: Red Barrels at your local grocery, a Little Free Pantry in your neighborhood. Then share those locations with others!



Worship Update

With the continued surge of the Omicron variant, it has been decided to continue gathering in worship online only for at least three more weeks and will continue to assess the situation. This means we will be online only through at least February 20th. Although there is some indication the variant is slowing, there has not been the drop off that we have hoped to see. With the Polk County Health Department asking for help in curbing the spread, the Christian response is that of care for others. We look forward to gathering in person again. In the meantime, we thank you for your patience and ask you to continue to do what you can and pray for those in greatest need.

Pastor Mike, on behalf of the Health and Safety Task Force.

Groundhog Day, continued from pg 1

Education and Outreach. It has been necessary to pause some things while navigating this lingering pandemic, and it is time to begin planning a path forward. Covid is not going away, and we need to adapt and find ways to move forward together. I would like to form a task force for Outreach, which would work to discover opportunities for mission in our local community and plan events. If you are interested, please call me at the office 515-276-6873, or email mike@gracedm.org.

It feels like we have made progress in transparency and communication and are open to any suggestions on ways to improve. Please contact me, or Michelle, with any suggestions, questions, or concerns.

I am also very aware of the truths in the last paragraph from 2020. There are even more quiet ways that people suffer, and the divisions in our country and community are even greater. We have desired to guide people to live differently through Christ. With the needs of today and tomorrow, we need to be clearer that this is centered around hope and wholeness. It is time to get to work, bringing hope and wholeness through Christ to the world around us.

In Christ,
Pastor Mike

The 2022 Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly needs you!

Friday May 20 – Saturday May 21, currently scheduled for an in-person event in Coralville, may move online if needed.

Grace can send two voting members*, Jessye Flannery has volunteered to go, so we need just one more volunteer. Thank you to Jessye Flannery for volunteering to go!

If you are interested in serving Grace this way, please contact Pastor Mike Mike@gracedm.org

****Grace Member = ANY adult member.***

This includes high school students who have been confirmed.

New Council/endowment member welcome!

The following Grace members were elected to office during the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, January 30, 2022:

Endowment Committee: Kristin Medhurst and Eric Weber

Church Council: Carter Woodruff, Jenny Rehder, Kevin Drury, Mike Hilsabeck
Council will meet February 1 to choose officers, we will reintroduce the entire council to you in March!

Worship, written materials, and other resources.

Sunday Worship now at 9:00 a.m. (every Sunday)
Livestream online

- **On our website:** On the home page, in the "Welcome to Grace" section on the www.gracedm.org homepage, you will 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.
- **On Facebook:** Find worship on our Facebook page – type @GraceLutheranDM into your search bar to find the page. 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.

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/>

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

Worship videos are usually posted on the website within 24 hours.

The video is usually available on Facebook within a few minutes of the end of worship.

Sunday Fellowship You are welcome to use the Gathering Hall for fellowship after worship.

Weekday Prayers are 9:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday on Facebook. If you are not on Facebook, you can still access it by typing @GraceLutheranDM into your browser, or through this link <https://www.facebook.com/Grace-Lutheran-Church-626637384050683/>



February Worship Volunteers Sign-up

Greeters, Ushers, Lectors for Sunday worship at 9:00 a.m.

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

Please be prepared to wear a mask while reading during the indoor service. Thank you!

Are we in-person, hybrid, online only this week?

Stay up to date with calendar changes and planned or rescheduled events!

The Website Calendar is also printable! (We find it works best when using Chrome instead of other browsers)

Go to the website <https://gracedm.org/> and scroll down to see the next three events. Or, at the top of the page, click on the "News and Events" pulldown, select Events Calendar to see all items for any given day. Click on any day to see event times, room locations, and other information, if available.

Receive late-breaking updates with the weekly E-newsletter

Sign up to receive the enews at the same address above – just scroll down the page until you see the Blue Box, enter your email address, and hit the red Submit button. Once you have done that, you will receive the enews every Tuesday, with the occasional weather closing or funeral notice in your inbox.



Lutheran Lakeside news:

In addition to receiving the above recognition from Lutheran Lakeside, Rich Snyder pointed out a detail in article from Lakeside's summer newsletter. The article mentioned that cabins at Lakeside can be adopted and supported by committing \$1,100 over three years. The photo accompanying that article is of a plaque from one of the cabins, with the following message:



"Adopted by The Larsen sisters (Christine, Jean, and Joan) with thanks to our parents, Leonard and Delores Larsen, for our happy summers at camp."

Rich also remembered that Leonard used to accompany the Willing Workers spring volunteer efforts in years past.



Sign up to provide Altar Flowers in 2022!

Currently we are placing one larger bouquet on the altar, instead of two, with a cost of \$25. Sign up at the link provided, and you will be contacted by Kathy Bowermaster. <https://volunteersignup.org/7LBAC> . Alternately, you can contact Kathy by phone at 515-971-6360.

You can choose to send a check to the church, or pay online using the online donation form on our website.

February SS Service Learning: Household Welcome for Afghans Settling in Central Iowa

The Sunday School is sponsoring a service learning opportunity for the congregation during February. Lutheran Services of Iowa is helping to settle Afghan refugees locally. We are collecting household goods to welcome these new neighbors to the Des Moines area. Collection dates will be Sunday mornings, Feb 20 and 27 from 10:00-11:30. If you need a different time, please contact the church office. See the list from LSI for details. A Thrivent Action Grant has been applied for to help fund this project.



In-Kind Donations for Refugee Resettlement

LSI is in urgent need of the following items to assist in directly resettling individuals and families.

Please email Nan Strutzenberg (Nancy.Strutzenberg@LSIowa.org) to coordinate a drop-off time at our Refugee and Immigrant Connection Center, located at 3200 University Avenue in Des Moines.

Kitchen Items

- Cutting boards
- Glass baking dish sets
- Cooking pots
- Tall trash bags
- Trash cans
- Spatulas
- Whisks
- Can openers
- Paring knives
- Meat knives
- Nonstick frying pans
- Stock pot with lid
- Food storage (Tupperware)
- Mixing bowls
- Silverware organizers
- Mixing spoons
- Silverware
- Potholders
- Dish towels
- Coffee mugs
- Drinking glasses
- Bowls
- Plates

Misc. Items

- LED light bulbs (60W)
- Sheets

Cleaning Items

- Dish brush/scrubbers
- Dryer sheets
- Laundry detergent
- Microfiber cleaning cloths
- Multi-surface cleaning products
- Scotch-Brite scrub sponges
- 4-gallon buckets with handle
- Twist mops
- Antibacterial bar soap
- Dishsoap (liquid)
- Paper towel holders
- Paper towels

Bathroom & Trolley Items

- Shower curtain rings
- Liquid hand soap
- Toilet paper
- Bath rugs
- Shower curtains
- Plastic shower curtain liners
- Towel sets
- Always ultra-thin pads unscented
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Tweezers
- Finger nail clippers
- Shaving cream gel (men and women)
- Men's and women's razors
- Men's and women's deodorant
- Toothpaste
- Toothbrush



Happy Valentine's Day from LSI!

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19 Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) mission is about love: responding to the love of Jesus Christ through compassionate service. We give thanks for all the ministry partners, both individuals and congregations, who help share this love for Iowa children, adults, and families!

We see this love in newly adopted children and their families; in teens who are overcoming years of trauma and building bright futures; in Iowans with disabilities who are growing their independence and confidence; in new parents who are raising strong and healthy families; and in so many other moments of joy. You can help carry out our mission of hope and healing by giving a gift and showing love to the Iowa families we serve. For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

Thank you for the love you share and create through LSI. Happy Valentine's Day!

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.

Experiencing Love Incarnate

Penelope had been in and out of residential treatment at various facilities across Iowa for a few years. Her most recent placement was at LSI's Bremwood Residential Treatment Center in Waverly, which provides 24/7 behavioral healthcare and support for children and teens.

Upon her arrival, Penelope was able to build a relationship with the new LSI Spiritual Life Leader, Pastor Kyle. The voluntary Spiritual Life program connects youth on Bremwood's campus to faith-based music and art, youth group, and chapel sessions. After Pastor Kyle had begun to settle into his new call with LSI, he began hosting a worship service each week for children on campus centered around the eucharist. Penelope enjoyed participating in worship and encouraged her peers to join in.

One day while talking with Penelope, Pastor Kyle asked her what got her so excited about worship and why she encouraged her peers to attend.

"Dude," Penelope responded. "It's because we get communion!"

As Pastor Kyle continued the conversation with Penelope, the two discussed the importance of communion and how being fed through the bread of life empowered us to live amongst and for our neighbors.

As we celebrate Valentine's Day this month, Penelope's story about receiving the sacrament of communion helps us to remember that our love for one another is possible through the one who first loved us. No matter who we might receive valentines or sweet treats from on Feb. 14, we trust that all are embraced in love through Jesus Christ.

It is ok to ask for help.

January is hard. February and March too. Days without sun, bills, cold, stuck inside. Add in pandemic isolation and related difficulties - it's OK to ask for help. It doesn't matter if you think someone else is worse off, or has 'more' difficulties than you do, or if you think you 'should' be able to overcome whatever it is that is wearing you down. If you need help, you deserve it. Sometimes just sharing the burden with someone who will listen is enough. If you need more, LSI has health professionals in many different areas of expertise who see past the stigma surrounding mental health. LSI offers therapy in person or virtually through telehealth. Call them. You are worthy of care. Fill out your [initial referral form](#) or call 888.457.4692 today!

January 18th, 2022 Church Council Highlights:

The Council met via zoom application at 6:02 PM. Council members attending were Bruce Bergman, Aaron Brandsfield, Susanne Carney, Nancy Crowfoot, Valerie Culp, Alex Davik, Dave Gronert, Tom McCleary, Linda Moravec, Sally Preston, John Roehrick, and Pastor Mike.

Pastor Mike opened the meeting with devotions.

The Council received and reviewed the financial and staff reports.

- There were no questions or comments concerning staff reports. The Council expressed its thanks to staff members for their hard work during a very difficult year.
- The church finished the year with about a \$15,000 surplus (income vs expenses) due in part to moving the remainder of the PPP funds into income.
- The Capital Campaign account balance is approximately \$229,000, also due to PPP money as well as a significant private contribution.
- The Council expressed its thanks to those members who will have completed their terms of service January 31st, 2022: Susanne Carney, Dave Gronert, Sally Preston, and John Roehrick.

It was moved, seconded, and passed to grant permission to Eric Weber to fundraise through the Congregation in order to provide assistance to several families in Afghanistan to help them get through the coming winter. Eric became acquainted with these families during his tour there and has been helping them as he can ever since.

Annual Congregational Meeting update: The Annual Meeting will be held online via zoom application rather than in-person as previously announced due to the Covid-19 Omicron variant. The date remains January 30th at 10 AM. Instructions and meeting links will be sent out to the Congregation soon.

Health and Safety update: Due to the high numbers of positive tests and hospitalizations in Polk County the Health and Safety Committee felt that extra caution should be exercised at church. We are partially through our three week “fast” from in-person meetings, worship, and Holy Communion anticipating much lower numbers in February.

Pop Machine: It was with heavy heart that Pastor Mike informed the Council that the pop machine will be removed from service soon. Lack of pop sales due to building closure and fewer in-person meetings is to blame.

Next Council meeting will be February 1st, 2022 via zoom (solely for election of officers).

Respectfully Submitted,
Dave Gronert
Council Secretary



Finance Report

The Annual Report with the 2021 year-end budget and financial report were mailed to you in mid-January 2022, and is available in the Resources section at www.gracedm.org. As it is still January at the time of this printing, the January report is not yet available, and will be included in the March 2022 newsletter.

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.

Tuesday, February 1, 2022 is the start of the Lunar New Year, the Year of the Tiger

The Lunar New Year is celebrated by several different cultures, and not just on one day. In China, it is referred to as Spring Festival, or *Chūnjié* in Mandarin. Koreans call it *Seollal*, and the Vietnamese *Tết*. Tied to the lunar calendar, the holiday began as a time for feasting and to honor household and heavenly deities, as well as ancestors. The New Year typically begins with the first new moon that occurs between the end of January and spans the first 15 days of the first month of the lunar calendar—until the full moon arrives.

February is Black History Month

Every President since 1976 has designated February as Black History Month.

The 2022 Black History Month theme is “Black Health and Wellness,” explores “the legacy of not only Black scholars and medical practitioners in Western medicine, but also other ways of knowing (e.g., birthworkers, doulas, midwives, naturopaths, herbalists, etc.) throughout the African Diaspora. The 2022 theme considers activities, rituals and initiatives that Black communities have done to be well. A brief history of Black History Month:

- 1915: Historian Carter G. Woodson and Minister Jesse E. Moorland founded the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. This organization was dedicated to researching and promoting achievements of Black Americans and others.
- 1926: The Association sponsored a national Negro History Week, choosing the week to coincide with the birthdays of Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln.
- 1976: US President Gerald Ford officially recognizes February as Black History Month, and encouraged the public to “seize the opportunity to honor the too-often neglected accomplishments of Black Americans in every area of endeavor throughout our history.”

International Holocaust Remembrance Day was Thursday, January 27, 2022

However, the United Nations has several upcoming programs which you can register for on their Outreach Programme of the Holocaust website, <https://www.un.org/en/outreach-programme-holocaust/page/2022#3Feb>

There’s so much to learn! Where do I start?

It is good to have a dedicated month to highlight Black History, however we can’t JUST study, teach, or learn about Black History during Black History Month. The same goes for the Holocaust Remembrance Day, Indigenous Peoples Day, etc. So where do you start? And who can you ask?

- **Look for local public events:** The library is a good place to start – you can find public notices of local events, and lists of active local organizations to reach out to.
- Visit local History and Art museums.
- Choose a favorite subject – your field or work/study, an area of the arts or sciences (biology, sculpture, music for example) and do some of your own research about notable people of color. Often, the same famous names are held up for honor each year, but there are many others whose important work and discoveries have gone either unheralded, unnamed, or claimed by others. For instance, Selma Burke, a Black American artist whose 1943 portrait of Franklin D. Roosevelt may or may not have inspired his portrait on the dimes in our pockets!
- Ask your friends – of any background – who are their heros, who in history they are inspired by, and why? Few people want to relive the sadness of their collective history day in and day out, but most of us get excited to share those who inspire us.

Feeding the Hungry at Hope Cafe

In response to an appeal from Hope Ministries, we have the opportunity to feed hungry people locally. We will make casseroles, and deliver them during the first week of March to Hope Cafe. This cafe serves three free meals daily to those who come, with no questions asked. Due to a shortage of cafe staff, this ministry has asked for donations of casseroles from the community. Recipes are provided. You can participate in any of these ways:



- make casseroles with a small group at church, dates TBD, spacing will be compliant with Health and Safety committee recommendations.
- make them at home in a 9x13 disposable pan, freeze them and bring them to church by Feb 28.
- donate toward the cost of supplies

There is a group of members forming to work on this. If you would like to help, contact Cathy Watson or the church office. Thank you!

Learn more about Hope Ministries, and sign up for their newsletter here
<https://www.hopeiowa.org/who-we-are/>

The Kitchen oven is off!

With current energy costs, we have opted to turn off the gas to the our 10 burner double oven gas stove, since it is rarely used these days. However, it can easily be turned back on, and we would be happy to do so.

If you or a group (such as the casserole group mentioned above) would like to use the oven, give the office a few days' notice so we can call the provider to turn it on safely.

LSI CONTINUES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF IOWA CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS.

Call your local LSI office for details on local services. Many of our services — including mental health therapy, behavioral health for youth, parent support and early childhood resources, services for people with disabilities, and refugee and immigrant services — are available virtually, by computer or phone.

Call 1.877.558.2609 for COVID information and translators in Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi/Kinyamulenge, French, Burmese, Karen, Karenni, Nepali, Somali, Tigrinya, Kunama, Ahmaric, Nuer, Mabaan, Vietnamese, and Mandarin Chinese.

Call 888.457.4692 to get started in our therapy and behavioral health services.

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.