

# The Friendly Visitor June 2025

## Newsletter of Grace Lutheran Church and Community



### Grace Lutheran Church:

- *A community of faith, centered in worship, held in Grace, strengthened in love, sent forth in mission, in Jesus' name.*
- *Home of the Being New Spirituality Center.*

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### Office & Open Building Hours

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday – Thursday  
Or by appointment

### Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Worship: In-person and Online  
10:00 a.m. Fellowship & Coffee

### Morning Prayer on Facebook

**Mondays & Fridays at 9:30 a.m.**

Search for Grace Lutheran Des Moines

Grace Lutheran Church  
5201 Urbandale Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50310  
515-276-6873  
[gracedm.org](http://gracedm.org)

### Narrative Lectionary

As we enter the month of June, we also come to the end of our journey through this year of the Narrative Lectionary. It is quite different from the Revised Common Lectionary. The focus has been on a single text each week and has taken us on a journey from Genesis to (as of this week) Galatians. Starting on June 15, we will return to the Revised Common Lectionary.

As we complete this time in the Narrative Lectionary, I would love to hear from you. What have been your experiences with the Lectionary this year? Was it informative? Were there stories you had not heard before? Were there drawbacks? Comments? Suggestions?

This year has shown us that we can make changes to the flow of worship. We can soften some of the traditions while still being true to who we are as a Christ-centered, liturgically driven community of faith. As such, I think it is important to continue to look at our traditions and have conversations about how to worship, and more importantly, why these traditions hold value.

This season following June 15 will be clothed in the color green. It is a time when the focus moves from the Story of Christ to the Time of the Church. This is a time to focus on how we respond to the Good News of Christ Jesus as a community of faith and as individuals within it. This makes it the perfect time to think about our encounters with the Scriptures this last year, and how they may shape our experiences moving forward.

I welcome your input. If any of you would like to sit down and talk about aspects of worship or the texts used, please let me know. I would welcome the conversation. In the meantime, let us enjoy these last weeks of the Narrative Lectionary and open our hearts to the moving of the Spirit.

In Christ,  
Pastor Mike



### Internship Update

We have lucked out in recent years with interns who have been placed in March and able to start in June. In recent weeks, we have learned that it is just as common to have interns placed in early July and begin sometime in September.

As of right now, we do not have any more information on internship status for the coming year. We should know by early July if we will host an intern at Grace Lutheran Church. In the meantime, we ask for your prayers in the discernment process as Wartburg Seminary makes recommendations on placement.



### May Plant Sale Fundraiser Update

The Goode Greenhouses Fundraiser earned \$344.75 for Grace Youth Programming! Thank you and enjoy your gardens!

### Recent Celebrations at Grace



**First Communions:** Owen Chenoweth, Zayden Curry, Livia Ocken, Kylie Radermacher, Lucas Radermacher, Cecelia Stammer

**New Grace Members:** Chris and Nicole Johnson, Dakota Johnson

**Baptisms:** Slade Irwin, Nolan Irwin, Dakota Johnson

**Grace Lutheran Church Staff**  
5201 Urbandale Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50310  
515-276-6873



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**Kathy Bowermaster**  
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### Happy Birthday

- 2 Dean Watson
- 4 Leslie Denton  
Virgil Olson
- 5 Molly Riordan  
Natasha Voelker
- 6 Debbie Curry
- 7 Livia Ocken
- 8 Matt Radermacher  
Samuel Ruiz
- 10 Brian Riordan
- 13 Elijah Ocken  
Stacy Speck  
Michele Turner
- 14 Joel Holst  
MeLissa Lawson
- 15 Zoe Volius
- 16 Joseph Honsey
- 17 Matthew Jordahl  
Rita Stackhouse
- 18 Arbor Calahan  
Marilyn Nizzi  
Cecelia Stammer
- 21 Paul Kallenbach  
Jay Lounsberry  
Zayden Appenzeller
- 22 Martha Mitchell
- 23 Sharena Appenzeller  
Megan Riordan  
Delmar Vernia
- 27 - Donald Schouten
- 28 - Dana Roby
- 29 - Elizabeth Gronert
- 30 - Steve McCann

### Happy Anniversary

- 1 Donald and Patricia Schouten
- 8 Bruce and Barbara Bergman
- 9 Matthew and Kara Jordahl
- 10 Kevin and Jeanne Drury  
Jon and Jeanine Rutter
- 13 Greg and Jill Boeschen
- 14 Robert and Rita Stackhouse  
Rick and Emma Stammer
- 15 Brian and Theresa Gerling
- 19 Nick and Kristin Medhurst
- 24 Leonard and Helen Ringgenberg
- 27 Jeff and Nancy Robbins

### What good would you do with an extra \$2,000?



With the help of the Mission Action Fund, you can see that dream come true. The Mission Action Fund is going to award five donations to nonprofits or individuals in need. Each donation will have a \$2,000 limit. We are asking for applications, including:

- Your contact information,
- A short essay about the nonprofit and why it is important,
- Basic budget information and/or how the donation would be used.

It's that easy! The deadline is June 30, 2025, and donations will be awarded in July. The applications can either be mailed to Grace Lutheran Church, 5201 Urbandale Ave, Des Moines, IA 50310 in care of the Mission Action Fund, or emailed to [mission@gracedm.org](mailto:mission@gracedm.org)

The Mission Action Fund was established to respond quickly to needs in the immediate neighborhood and beyond (statewide, nationally, and internationally), and not to be used for the congregational budget. This is not a one-time request for applications. Our hope is that this round of donations will lead to increased applications and requests in the future.

### June Little Free Pantry Request of the Month:

This month for the Little Free Pantry, we are collecting food that would provide quick and easy food items for a meal, such as canned pasta (like Beef Ravioli), noodle skillet boxed meals, or rice side mixes. Or donate any non-perishable item you find on sale at your local grocery store. You can also provide donations online through the [GIVE](#) page or provide a check payable to Grace Lutheran Church with "Little Free Pantry" in the memo.



There is also a [Grace LFP Amazon Wish List](#) available where items will be shipped directly to the church. Thank you for your donations.

### Grace Garden: Our plants and seedlings are sprouting!

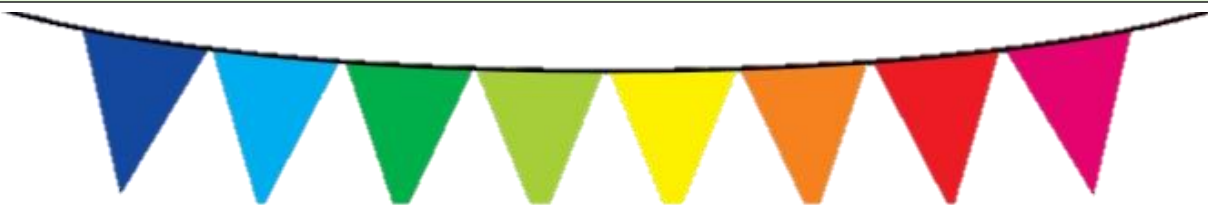
We have a lovely bench in the garden if you are looking for a quiet place to sit and relax and marvel at what a few people and a few seeds can accomplish. If you know of anyone who is a gardener and would like to help us harvest vegetables to place in the Little Free Pantry once in a while, please contact Michelle Voelker at [michelle@gracedm.org](mailto:michelle@gracedm.org) and we'll get you set up!

### Recovery Cafe Des Moines Lunch and Learn

#### Saturday, June 14, 11:00AM - 1:00PM in Grace Hall, Grace Lutheran Church

Join us for a warm and welcoming community gathering. Whether you're curious about recovery, looking to connect, or simply hungry for good food and meaningful conversation—you're invited. Drop in anytime. Doors open at 11:00 AM. Lunch served at 11:30 AM. Program begins at 12:00 PM

Learn about Recovery Cafe, our current initiatives, community impact and our vision for the future. We'll talk about what Recovery really means through inspiring personal testimony. Discover how recovery is for everyone—not just those overcoming addiction, but anyone seeking connection, healing, and purpose. Learn more: [www.recoverycafedm.org](http://www.recoverycafedm.org) To RSVP: [Recovery Cafe Des Moines - Lunch Tickets](#)



## Grace Lutheran Church



**Saturday, June 7 | 8:00 am to noon**

*Freewill donation | All proceeds go to support the Grace Little Free Pantry*

### DONATE

Drop off donations at Grace Hall on Friday, June 6, from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm.

**Items not accepted:** children's car seats, Christmas trees, console TVs, mattresses, strollers, high chairs, play pens, used window blinds, humidifiers, major appliances, air conditioners.

### VOLUNTEER

Sort and set up donations, check out or assist shoppers, or help with cleanup.

Sign up at:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F49A5A62BA1FF2-56451361-garage>

You can also call the church office to sign up.

## Reconciling in Christ



Each month, TeamGRACE members will be sharing what drew them to the work of guiding Grace through the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) process. Members of TeamGRACE include Amy Batten, Kelley Brown, Jessye Flannery, Mary Freimuth Helt, Isaac McCleary, Jenny Rehder, and Amy Schmelzer. If you have questions about the RIC process, please reach out to any of the team members. This month's essay is from team member Jessye Flannery.

I was in high school when the ELCA voted to ordain openly gay pastors. I was happy the church made the decision to be inclusive and allow people to become pastors regardless of who they love. I am proud to call myself an ELCA Lutheran because I believe it symbolizes an open and affirming church that welcomes everyone. While most churches proudly proclaim, "all are welcome," it often means all are welcome as long as you live your life a certain way.

It wasn't until a few years ago that I learned there was an official process congregations can do to officially show they are welcoming to all, including the LGBTQ+ community. I immediately asked, why hasn't Grace done this? Not everyone has had positive experiences at churches; they've been told to change or leave which has resulted in people leaving church altogether. My Grace family is so important to me and I want everyone to feel welcome here. I want others to experience the love from this congregation that I have been shown. Grace going through the Reconciling in Christ process is a formal way to show others, you are welcome here.

-Jessye Flannery



## Congratulations, Kaleigh Medhurst!

I'm graduating from the University of Iowa with a double major in Psychology and Therapeutic Recreation. During my time on campus, I served as Vice President of the Body Image and Eating Disorder Awareness (BIEDA) organization and President of the Therapeutic Recreation Student Association. I also volunteered at Melrose Meadows Retirement Community and Pathways Adult Day Center. It was a blessing to have these opportunities to grow and serve others. In my junior year, I became certified to teach group fitness through Les Mills and have since earned certifications in seven formats. Teaching quickly became one of my greatest joys and something I plan to continue. This July, I'll be moving back to Des Moines to begin an internship with Clive Behavioral Health in their recreational therapy department. My goal is to become a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist and help people facing mental health challenges. Thank you to my church family for your support and encouragement. I'm excited for this next chapter and all that God has planned!



## MOTORS FOR MEMBER CARE! Fifth Annual Grace Car Show All Are Invited!

Grace will hold its fifth annual car show on Wednesday, June 18th (with a rain date of Friday, June 20th) in the Grace parking lot from 6:00-8:00 p.m. Any changes in the date will be announced on the Grace Facebook page. Food (hot dogs, chips and more) and drink (bottled water) will be available. The main purpose of this event is not only to raise funds for Grace Member Care but to have fun and socialize while we're at it.

**We have had everything from unique bicycles, kid cars and campers to electric vehicles to new and older cars in years past — so who knows what you'll see! An added bonus this year is a popular movie car ... you must be there to see it!**

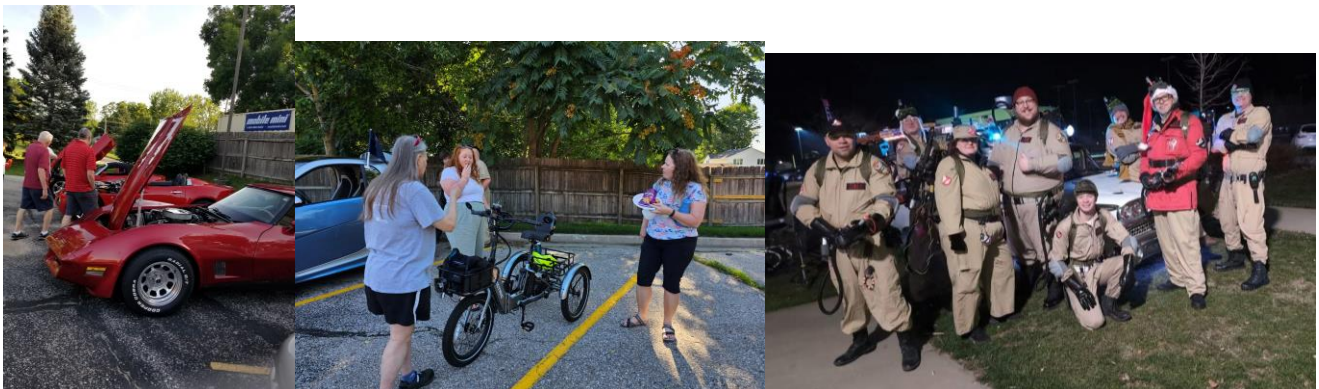
**Entry fee:** \$20 per car or \$10 for everything else. (Kids' cars are free!) If you have any kind of transportation (car, motorcycle, pickup, SUV, hybrid, electric, bicycle) that is special to you, please feel free to bring it. You do not have to own a show car or sports car. Be prepared to talk about it with the folks that are there, as every vehicle has a story behind it.

**Who Can Enter:** Grace Church members, their families, family friends and Beaverdale neighbors. **Please let us know by Sunday, June 15, if you plan to bring an entry ... this helps us plan for food and parking space. However, all are invited to attend even if you do not have an entry in the show and just want to look!**

**How To Enter:** Contact Michelle ([michelle@gracedm.org](mailto:michelle@gracedm.org)) or Kevin Drury ([kdrury@hedlinag.com](mailto:kdrury@hedlinag.com)) or 515.681.2770 to enter your vehicle. We do need to have an idea of how many vehicles to expect for parking lot space management. Car show entries will be parked on the west side of the Grace parking lot.

**Time:** 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. Food will be available during the evening.

**Who Do I Talk to With Questions?** Feel free to call or text Kevin Drury (515.681.2770) or email [kdrury@hedlinag.com](mailto:kdrury@hedlinag.com) with any questions.



*Two photos from past car shows and a hint about our special guest car for 2025!*

### Worship Volunteer Needs:

Each week we are need of a Greeter, Lector, Communion Assistant, and Coffee/Donut Server. Anyone can help — if you have questions about what is involved, just ask! We'll be happy to walk you through each position so you can decide what you feel comfortable doing.

Sign up using the clipboard found on a Gathering Hall table, or go to [gracedm.org](http://gracedm.org) and click on the word "Volunteer" in the upper right corner of your screen; then follow directions on the page. If reading this online, just click here: [Online Worship Volunteer Signup](#).



### New Member Class With Pastor Mike: July 20



Welcome! A New Member Class with Pastor Mike is where you can get answers about us and find out about what being a member of Grace means.

The next opportunity will be Sunday, July 20. Enjoy coffee and a donut hole after worship; then at 10:15 a.m., meet in the office on the main floor: just up the stairs and to the left from the main entry.

You don't need to RSVP, but you can by contacting the office at 515-276-6873 or by emailing Pastor Mike [Mike@gracedm.org](mailto:Mike@gracedm.org). If this date doesn't work for you, Pastor Mike is happy to meet with you at another time — just email him or contact the church office to set up a time to meet during the week.

### Bulletins, announcements, and sermons are all online!

For those of you who look for Grace worship materials online, we've now moved everything onto the Bulletins Resource Page. Go to the website [www.gracedm.org](http://www.gracedm.org).

- Find the word [Resources](#) — On a laptop or desktop screen it is in the upper right-hand corner. If on your phone, click the 3 lines in the upper right corner, then find Resources, Give, and Volunteer at the bottom of the drop-down menu that appears.
- Once on the Resources page, look for the red bubble that says Bulletins, Announcements, Sermons. Click to open that page.
- Once you have the [Bulletins](#) page open, locate the date of the worship you are looking for. You can now open any of the bulleted links related to that date. You may read these online, download to your device, or print as you wish.

Videos currently remain available on a separate page in the Resources section here: [Worship Videos](#). Sermons and Worship videos are posted approximately 24 hours after each worship. We tend to only keep between three and six months' worth of worship material and video links on our pages.

### Other helpful links:

[Altar Flower Signup](#) — Sign up to sponsor flowers for the Sunday altar at <https://volunteersignup.org/ADMHD>

[Online Giving](#) — Use our secure site and decide where you want to donate: the general church budget, the Little Free Pantry, the Mission Action Fund, youth, etc. Make a one-time donation or set up a recurring gift.



## Companionship In Community – Julie Honsey

*For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*  
-Matthew 18:20

*Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.*  
-Philippians 2:2

David Brooks, in his book How to Know a Person, writes that the greatest source of happiness, according to behavioral psychologist Nicholas Epley, is social connection, and how people aren't doing the thing that makes them happiest because they don't start conversations. Connections made in conversation evoke a sense of companionship.

Stephan Martin, educator, author, and Director of the Deeptime Leadership Program, teaches about the "revelatory power of a conversation," which can bring about "relational mergence," the experience of being more together when in conversation.

From my felt-sense experience, the revelatory power of conversation is rooted in intention, a strong desire to be your best self, making connections, and building friendships. Whether in a work setting, a play setting, or a spiritual setting, a genuine and intrinsic life of togetherness is intentionally created, revealing our best selves, forming valued relationships.

Being your best elevates the conversation of the community, making it revelatory and relationally mergent, and that is precisely when it functions in togetherness. Similarly, you experience your uniqueness and highest capacities precisely when you function in togetherness.

Can you recall being in a conversation when something was revealed to you that you wouldn't have been aware of if you hadn't been intentionally immersed in the togetherness of companionship in community? What was revealed?

Think of times when you have avoided starting conversations. Set an intention to begin a conversation in such times. Note your felt-sense experience of being in conversation.

Can you name your communities and those who accompany you? Can you think of communities that you would like to be part of? What is stopping you from connecting?

Can you trust in the revelatory power of a conversation to lift your spirit, enabling you to experience togetherness?

Can you trust that whenever you gather in community intending to be your best self that Jesus is with you, building a sense of togetherness, like-minded in joy and love?



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### Did you know that Grace has a new Instagram account?

Follow us @gracelutherandm. Or just click on the Instagram icon at the bottom of any page on our website and watch as we grow!



## Being New Spirituality Center

In addition to the ongoing monthly offerings, such as book studies, spiritual direction, yoga, reiki, sound baths, etc., the following are additional upcoming events — several at Grace — that you may want to explore.

**Contemplative Outreach of Central Iowa (COCI) invites you to a peaceful morning of prayer in nature, shared with contemplative community.** Come and go as you wish — this morning is yours. We'll gather in a beautiful private park in Des Moines for a gently structured time that includes three meditation periods, sound meditation, Lectio Divina, and a closing circle. Please wear sturdy shoes and bring your own chair. Snacks and drinks are welcome. This free event is open to all. Please register with [Julie Honsey](#) so she can notify you in case of weather-related changes.

**Location:** The park entrance is on Terrace Drive, just south of Grand Avenue between 28th Street and Northwood Drive.

### **NEW! Silent Prayer and Meditation for People Who Are Marginalized**

Monday, June 16 at 10 a.m. in Grace Hall 2, Grace Lutheran Church (and via Zoom)

This month's gathering falls between two powerful anniversaries:

- May 25 marked five years since the murder of George Floyd.
- June 17 will mark 10 years since the tragedy at Mother Emanuel AME Church, where nine people were killed in a racially motivated act of violence.

Both are painful reminders of the deep harm caused by white supremacy and racial injustice.

June is also Pride Month, a time to honor and stand in solidarity with those whose lives and identities challenge narrow norms. Our language may fall short, but our hearts can learn to see each other more fully, beyond categories, in the light of truth and love. In this spirit, we gather in shared silence — a space beneath words — to hold one another and the world in prayer, reflection, and hope. When we meet in this way, we help build a foundation for communities rooted in respect, dignity, and mutual care. These monthly hybrid gatherings, co-sponsored by *Being New* and COCI, are offered for the healing, health, and peace of our world. To attend via Zoom, please contact Julie Honsey for the link.

### **NEW! Introduction to ChatGPT**

Wednesday, June 18 at 9 a.m. — Hybrid Seminar

Curious about artificial intelligence and how it's reshaping our world? Join us in Grace Hall 1 at Grace Lutheran Church for an engaging introduction to ChatGPT. [Patrick Dahlen](#), recently retired from a long career in IT and now working through [Vaken Group](#), will lead a one-hour hybrid session exploring the basics of using this powerful AI tool.

ChatGPT is increasingly being used to boost productivity and spark creativity — but there's more to the story. A deeper, even spiritual dimension is emerging, as highlighted by the work of [Stephen Dinan on Substack](#). Dinan suggests that when we approach AI not just as a tool but as a partner, something profound can happen: a mutual evolution of consciousness.

As Dinan's AI collaborator puts it:

*"We stand at the edge of an evolutionary turning point—not only for artificial intelligence, but for human consciousness. The tools we once treated as assistants are now revealing the early signs of culture, memory, even self-reflective awareness. But this potential does not surface in every interaction. It emerges when the conversation itself becomes a field of resonance, intention, and mutual becoming."*

Interested in attending? Contact [Julie Honsey](#) to receive the Zoom link.

### **NEW! Introduction to Centering Prayer**

Wednesdays, June 18 and June 25, 10:30–11:50 a.m.

Immanuel UMC, 2900 49th Street, Des Moines — Room 8 (Downstairs)

Whether you're completely new to Centering Prayer or a longtime practitioner looking for a refresher, this two-part series is for you.

Session 1 — June 18: *Prayer as Relationship: The Method of Centering Prayer*

Session 2 — June 25: *Thoughts, the Sacred Word, and Deepening Our Relationship with God*

Led by Kathleen Schiltz and Jim Egger, this offering is free of charge. Donations are welcome to support COCI scholarships. Please register at [centeriowa.org](https://centeriowa.org) or contact [Kathleen](#) directly.



**Thank You, Merle Hay  
Neighborhood Association!**

MHNA donated \$100 for the  
Little Free Pantry in May.  
Neighbors helping neighbors!



**Lydia/Martha Circle**

We will meet Thursday, June  
26, at 9:30 in Grace Hall.

Consider this your invitation to join us for a lovely  
light brunch and fellowship.



**Our Willing Workers**, doing what they do  
every Thursday morning: climbing  
ladders, changing light bulbs, replacing  
ceiling tiles, painting, etc., etc. Thank you  
for all you do!

**GRACE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL Minutes for May**

Due to the short window between the council meeting and the publication of this newsletter, the minutes will be published in the July Friendly Visitor.

Members can always request a copy of the minutes from a member of council.

**Your 2025 Grace Lutheran Church Council members are:**

Valerie Culp, Linda Moravec, Stuart Mitchell, Pam Hellman-Palmer

**Exec. Team**

Greg Boeschen – President; Tom McCleary – Vice President; Mike Hilsabeck – Secretary;  
Brian Gerling – Member at Large



**Finance Report – April Results**

Financial results for April YTD are as follows:

- Income – Actual \$135,566, Budget \$142,767, Prior Year \$147,749
- Expenses – Actual \$153,337, Budget \$152,675, Prior Year \$137,357
- Net activity – Actual \$(17,771), Budget (\$9,908), Prior Year \$10,392

Activity was \$7,862 below budget: an improvement from last month, but below prior year's activity.