

The Friendly Visitor July 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.*

In This Issue ...

- 2 Staff Contacts, Sympathies, Celebrations
- 3 Internship update, Little Free Pantry, Excess Garden Produce, Sunday Announcements
- 4 Reconciling in Christ Essay, Library News
- 5 Council Minutes
- 6 Finance Report
- 7 New Member Class, Worship Volunteer Needs
- 8 Contemplative Corner
- 9 Being New Center offerings
- 10 Lydia/Martha Circle, Garage Sale results, Wanted: Office vacation help and New Member Guides, Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival

Submission deadline for the

August Newsletter: July 17

Publication Date: July 24

Office & Open Building Hours

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday – Thursday

Or by appointment

Office only – Closed Thursday, July 3

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

Disorientation

The world we live in is quite disorienting these days. The unrest in the Middle East now sees direct involvement by the U.S. Human rights are being taken away. Masked agents are arresting and detaining people, leading to great uncertainty within our immigrant and minority communities. Disorientation feels like an accurate way of describing the world we live in.

In this time of disorientation, I have noticed an increase in individuals asking how to even pray in such times. “How do I start to pray when I do not have words?” “Are there places in the Bible that give answers or help?” It is often accompanied by a feeling of helplessness as the world continues to spiral.

Each time, my response is to “Look to the Psalms.” The Book of Psalms is more than a collection of poems and songs. It speaks of the essence of being human. There are psalms of joy and psalms of lament. There are psalms of teaching and psalms of doubt. There are psalms of faith and security, and psalms that lay bare the realities of depression and anxiety. This collection of 150 psalms speaks to the breadth of the human experience.

Dr. Walter Brueggemann, in *The Message of the Psalms*, writes that the Psalms can be split into 3 categories: Psalms of Orientation, Psalms of Disorientation, and Psalms of New Orientation. In many ways, the psalms of disorientation speak to our current reality. The world is changing faster than we can comprehend and it feels very disorienting. So, in addition to the advice of “Look to the Psalms,” I am including some specific examples here.

These psalms of disorientation come in two groups: personal lament and communal lament.

- Personal Lament includes Psalm 13, Psalm 22, Psalm 35, Psalm 42, Psalm 86, Psalm 88.

Continued on page 2

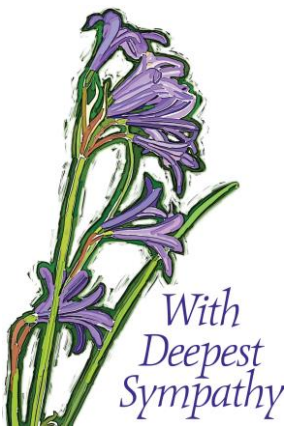
Disorientation, continued from page 1

- Communal Lament includes Psalm 12, Psalm 44, Psalm 58, Psalm 60, Psalm 74, Psalm 79, Psalm 137

There may be a feeling of disorientation, but we are not alone. We continue to walk together and hold one another in prayer.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike



Prayers and Sympathies

We hold the families and loved ones of the following people in our hearts and prayers:

The family of Carol Baker –
mother of Kristin Medhurst

The family of Karen Taylor

The family of Georgette Kay Bauman –
mother of Denise Friesth

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

Pastor Michael Schmidt
mike@gracedm.org
Ext. 203

Bookkeeper Mike Hilsabeck
mike.h@gracedm.org
Ext. 200

Organist Richard Snyder
rich@gracedm.org

Custodian Todd Haugen
515-520-4450

Acting Property Manager
Brian Gerling
Ext. 205

Minister for Communications
Michelle Voelker
michelle@gracedm.org
Ext. 201

Office Assistant for Worship
Jessye Flannery
Jessica@gracedm.org

Piano Accompanist and
Music Ensemble Coordinator
Kathy Bowermaster
kathybowermaster17@gmail.com



Happy July Birthday

- 4 Sawyer Shiffler
- 5 Levi Wilner
- 8 Donna Trickle
- 9 Carleigh Ridnour
Henry Jordahl
- 10 Michael Nizzi
- 11 Wren Lewis
- 12 Melissa Petty
- 14 Amador Medina-Ruiz
Eric Selander
Heather Honnold
Bailey Woodruff
- 15 Hannah Jensen
- 16 Tracy Justice
- 17 Jayne Mortenson
Christie Rosheim
- 18 Anders Nelson
Adam Friesth
Eric Friesth
- 19 Deanna Snyder
- 20 Krista Nelson
- 21 Christian Culp
- 22 Kathryn Schaller
- 23 Linda Biegger
- 24 Declan Holst
- 25 Justin Anderson
- 26 Morgan Mortenson
- 27 Jeff Robbins
- 29 Genaro Ruiz
- 30 Gary Denton

Happy July Anniversary

- 13 Cheryl and Monte Wilner
- 15 Jenie and Michael Schmidt
Rhonda and Bill Jensen
- 21 Loree and Tim Nelson
- 22 Cathy and Dean Watson



Internship Update

We received word this morning (July 1st) that Grace will host an intern again this year. The official letters have not yet been sent. We do not know a start date either. What I can share is that the intern placed at Grace is a second-career student who was born in Tanzania after spending years doing music ministry throughout Kenya. His life dream has been to become a pastor, and his move to the United States opened doors for his educational pursuits.

Pastor Mike

July Little Free Pantry Request of the Month: personal care items.

Personal care items can be deodorant, shampoo, dry shampoo, conditioner, brushes and combs, bars of soap, lotion or sunscreen, baby and personal care wipes, hand sanitizer, tampons, pads, diapers, nail clippers, toothbrushes, floss, and toothpaste.

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.



Is your garden overflowing?

Bring produce to the Little Free Pantry at Grace or to one of the pantries in front of any of several local schools.

Leaving on a vacation and have produce, unopened milk or yogurt, or other unopened/unexpired groceries? For items that require refrigeration, or that may wilt in hot weather (lettuce, herbs), consider donating to one of the nearby Community Fridges:

- 5720 Urbandale Ave (St Andrew's Church)
- Franklin Library, 5000 Franklin Avenue, just inside the main entrance.

Find [other locations](#) near you.

Why are the Sunday announcements not in the bulletins?

We have received several requests from members to separate the announcements, so we have done just that! This allows those who use the screen prompts during worship to pick up the announcements and prayer concerns without feeling as if they are wasting a bulletin they don't use. Some members read the announcements online prior to Sunday and only want to take the bulletin. Some of you prefer both! Office staff will adjust how many we print as time goes on.

If you don't see the announcements, please ask the ushers for a copy: This is new for them as well.

Reminder: We also have large print bulletins and children's bulletins available each week.



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 Isaac McCleary.

My reason for joining TeamGRACE is that one of my best friends came out as pansexual right after high school. This particular friend and I had always had theological discussions about whether Christians accept people with all different forms of sexuality. This was often a point of debate and was a regular point of discussion, especially since this friend became an atheist as they grew up, primarily because of not being accepted. This led that same friend to adopt a general negative view of Christianity. I learned that this was a common occurrence since the very same friend and several other friends, who are also part of the LGBTQIA+ community, also felt negatively about the religion as a whole. That is why I think what our team is doing is an important step in the right direction towards making everyone feel welcome and/or at least have a better view of Christianity. Hopefully, through collaborative efforts with other like-minded people, we can normalize that Christians are accepting of all people regardless of sexual orientation, instead of the other way around.

-Isaac McCleary



Library News

The library space has not been used much as a library for some time. We are re-imagining the space as a more intimate spot for Bible Study, Centering Prayer groups, small group meetings, etc. The space will also continue to be a private gathering spot for families prior to weddings or funeral services.

Rest assured, we will be keeping some shelves of books, which will remain accessible in that space or another location yet to be determined. Historical documents are being saved and catalogued, especially as we look forward to our 100th year celebration in 2027. The Puzzle Exchange will also continue, whether in this space or another. This will not be a rushed or quick transition, but a well-thought-out project.

What about the books?

The Grace Lutheran Church Library was created and curated with care by the members of Grace and several dedicated volunteers over the years, and we will honor that care as we work to create a more compact collection.

If you have donated books to the library: We have set aside all the books that have been donated — identified with nameplates on the inside cover — and are offering you the first opportunity to take them home if you wish. You can find these books on the children's table in the library. If you would like your donated book but cannot make it to Grace during July, please email or call us to make other arrangements and we will happily set your book aside.

Watch for the next step later this summer when we will be offering all members a chance to choose favorite books to take home.

GRACE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL – Meeting Minutes May 27, 2025

Meeting came to order at 6:10 P.M.

Members in attendance – Greg Boesch (president), Stuart Mitchell, Val Culp, Tom McCleary, Brian Gerling, Pastor Schmidt, Vicar Hershberger, Pam Palmer, Mike Hilsabeck

Also, Tammy Denton joined to participate in the 3-year Collaborative Learning Intern Option agenda item.

Call to order

Adoption of agenda – Pam moved, Brian seconded, Council Approved

Intern Update –

- Consideration of entering a 3-year Collaborative Learning arrangement for the next Vicar. This is a 3-year part time (20 hrs/wk) Intern program vs. our current 1-year full time program.
- Pastor Mike outlined the process, schedule, potential compensation / other costs
- Tammy attended as representative of the Internship Committee
- The group discussed the pros/cons of the 2 programs.
- The council determined that we would continue with the current 1-year program

Devotions - Greg

Approval of previous meeting's minutes – Stuart moved, Tom seconded, Council Approved

"Ideas that will get you fired"

Staff Reports – minimal discussion

Review/Approve Finance report – Reviewed, with some discussion. – Brian moved, Tom seconded, Council Approved

Unfinished business

- Capital Needs (reviewed prioritized needs spreadsheet)
 - Reviewed list of prioritized maintenance needs – A, B, & C priorities.
 - Agreed A-priority needs to be done – totaling approx. \$503,000. Roof and boilers area a large part of that amount. The B-priority list totals approx. \$107,000.
 - Greg will contact the Finance Committee to set up a time to meet and discuss funding options.
- Boiler Replacement – discussed as part of capital-needs discussion
- Church building insurance changes – Tom
 - We discussed the following proposed additional coverage:
 - Employment Practice Liability.
 - Employee Benefits Liability.
 - Directors and Officers Coverage.
 - We will need to adjust the Building Coinsurance from 90% to 80%. Deductible Building & Personal Property Losses from \$12,500 to \$20,000.
 - Motion to proceed with changes as outlined – Greg moved, Pam seconded, Council Approved
- Staff Support Committee formation
 - Motion to appoint Cherie Rissman and Mary Jo McCleary
 - Stuart moved, Brian seconded, Council Approved
- Elevator repair/maintenance, work started 5/15 – now completed
- Property Manager update
 - The new Property Manager, Sherri Hansen, will delay starting her full part-time position while she addresses other commitments. In the meantime, she will be working 1 day per to begin training with Brian.

Continued on page 6

GRACE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL Minutes, continued from page 5

Tabled until further notice

- Discussion about handling large memorials/bequests

New business

- Emma has resigned from council for personal reasons. She had been serving as Council Secretary.
 - Mike H was nominated new Council Secretary - Greg moved, Pam seconded, Council Approved
- Option for house while we wait for new vicar - - Vicar Jesse will continue to occupy the rental while she awaits determination on her next position.
- Library repurpose
 - Vicar Jesse has been organizing and downsizing the book space. This would leave remaining space for smaller sized group meetings.
- Space sharing inquiry from Resurrection Community Church
 - Discussed some logistical and doctrinal concerns.
 - The council decided to let them know we do not wish to pursue further this at this time.
- Mission Action fund projects update
 - \$2,000 awards to 5 people/groups in need
 - God's work our hands project - filling the food pantries in our area

Adjournment

- Tom moved, Brian seconded, Council Approved

Next meetings

6/24/25 Meal – Tom, Devotions – Mike H.

GRACE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

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



Finance Report – May Results

Financial results for May YTD are as follows:

- Income – Actual \$171,514, Budget \$177,421, Prior Year \$182,447
- Expenses – Actual \$181,949, Budget \$185,275, Prior Year \$168,614
- Net activity – Actual (\$10,435), Budget (\$7,854), Prior Year \$13,834

Activity was \$2,581 below budget – an improvement from last month.

This was primarily due to lower pledged offering than budgeted. During the year significant expense has occurred for repairs of the boiler. If replacement is needed, the cost will be significant. Additionally, Capital Campaign monies were used to fund \$11,200 for gutter replacement and \$42,400 for tuck pointing of brickwork.

Worship Volunteer Needs:

Each week this summer we are need of a Greeter, Lector, TWO Communion Assistants, 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 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. 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.

- 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.



July 2025 - Contemplative Corner:
Inner Hospitality: The Welcoming Practice
by Joan Fumetti

The Guest House
by Jelaluddin Rumi

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness—
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice—
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

The first time I read Rumi's poem, I couldn't make sense of it. I was working hard to fix my negative, uncomfortable feelings—doing everything I could to avoid actually feeling them. The idea of welcoming them? It felt completely backward.

But over time, I began to wonder if there was something here worth sitting with. There's a bit of wisdom that says, "What we resist, persists." That rang true in my experience. When I tried to fight shame, justify anger, or ruminate over long-held resentments, those feelings didn't dissolve—they lingered. They squeezed into the quiet corners of my mind, displacing the peace that might have lived there instead.

That's when I discovered the [Welcoming Prayer](https://wisdomwaypoints.org/resources/the-welcoming-practice/) (https://wisdomwaypoints.org/resources/the-welcoming-practice/). It's a gentle, embodied practice of acknowledging our feelings—of letting them take a seat at the table. It doesn't mean we accept the situation that triggered them. If we learn, for example, that we have cancer and fear floods in, we don't "welcome" the cancer—we welcome the fear. We work with the feeling. And once that emotion has had its space, we can begin to move forward with clarity and grace.

The practice itself is beautifully simple, and through it, something profound is revealed:

We are not our feelings.

When we identify too closely with every emotional wave, we can find ourselves on an exhausting, never-ending roller coaster. That ride drains the energy we might otherwise use to live more deeply, more peacefully, more fully. But when we step back—when we observe rather than react—we begin to reclaim something essential: the spiritual energy that had been lost in our resistance.

Continued on page 9

Contemplative Corner, continued from page 8

In this way, we learn to meet each internal "guest" with a kind of sacred hospitality. Cynthia Bourgeault describes it beautifully:

*"By welcoming, you create an atmosphere of inner hospitality.
By embracing the thing you once defended yourself against or ran from,
you are actually disarming it—removing its power to hurt you
or chase you back into your smaller self."*

When we fail to address the turmoil within, we often end up projecting it outward—adding to the wider chaos already shaking the world. But when we give ourselves to simple practices like this one, we offer grace a way in. Through that portal of welcome, transformation begins.

And isn't that, after all, what we are called to?

To cultivate the mind of Christ—one of compassion, clarity, and courage.

To become, inwardly and outwardly, a place of welcome.

Being New Spirituality Center

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

New! Silent Prayer & Meditation for Peace (Hybrid): In the Spirit of Abraham

In a time of deep sorrow and rising violence, we gather in silence to hold vigil for peace.

Rooted in the shared lineage of Abraham—honored by Jews, Christians, and Muslims—we come together across traditions to listen, to mourn, and to open our hearts to the healing presence that transcends all borders. Through stillness, we honor the suffering. Through silence, we offer our longing. Through presence, we affirm our common humanity. **Monday, July 14 at 10:00 a.m. Grace Hall 2 at Grace Lutheran Church**

Zoom link: Contact [Julie Honsey](#)

New! Way of the Rose Circle

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. in the Upper Room, starting July 2

The Way of the Rose is an open-hearted, inclusive community of beings dedicated to the forgotten Earth wisdom of the rosary—and to the Lady, by any name you like to call Her. We are not affiliated with any religious institution. There are no fees, no hierarchy, only friendship and prayer.

Contact: [Hannah Whetston](#) for more information

New! Ennea GroWith Group 12-Session Enneagram Series

When: Fourth Mondays, 10:00–11:30 a.m. | **Dates:** Sept 22, 2025 – Aug 24, 2026

Cost: \$50 for materials | **Location:** Zoom or in person at the Being New Center

Join us for a 12-session Enneagram series designed to bring compassionate awareness of the core patterns and triggers of each Enneagram type. The Enneagram is a tool of self-knowledge, revealed through honest reflection. Together, we will explore how 3-Centered Awareness — engaging the head, heart, and body — can open the way to living from our essential nature.

Each 90-minute session offers the opportunity to:

- Deepen your understanding of your Enneagram type and its core motivation
- Notice habitual reactions and explore ways to adjust them with wisdom and discernment
- Learn practical tools for integrating presence and self-awareness
- Share and listen within a small, supportive group setting

Participants from past series have described this experience as both lots of fun and profoundly helpful in understanding themselves and improving relationships with others.

Group size is limited to 8, so please reach out soon if you're interested. If there is a strong interest, another group will be formed. We'd love to have you join us on Zoom or in person at the Being New Center. To register and/or for help in discerning your type, contact Julie Honsey, honsey.julie@gmail.com



Lydia/Martha Circle

Lydia/Martha Circle will be putting together welcome back gift bags for teachers and staff at Perkins Elementary School at our next meeting on July 24th at 9:30 am in Grace Hall. Hope to see you there!

Wanted!

New Member Guides/Mentors

We are looking to build a group of volunteers with an aim to support new members. You would be a friendly face: offering introductions and insight into the kinds of activities available at Grace and helping to answer any questions they might have — or steering them toward the person who has the answers.

Staff would also love your input as we develop additional New Member packets.

Volunteer Office help in Late July/August

We are looking for volunteers to answer the phone during office hours and assemble and mail the weekly bulletins and announcements.

Office hours are 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday–Thursday, July 28–31, August 4–7, and August 11–14. You do not need to be available for all days and would be able to bring knitting or a book if you wish! Any help will be much appreciated, especially the week of July 28–31.

Thank you to Willing Workers and the Saturday Work Group!

Willing Workers meet every Thursday morning, beginning at 9 a.m., and the Work Group meets once a month, on the second Saturday at 8:30 a.m.*

These volunteers do a lot around the church, including replacing lights and light fixtures, painting the hallway, fixing AC leaks, yard work, fixing leaky plumbing, replacing ceiling tiles, and so much more.

Check out the hallway bulletin board dedicated to these volunteers, assembled by our Acting Property Manager Brian Gerling.

**Occasionally the meeting date for the Saturday Work Group will change due to other events happening at the church. Please call the office to confirm.*

Results are in!

The **Grace Garage Sale** – held June 7th to benefit the Little Free Pantry – was a huge success! Just over \$2,100 was raised, enough to fill the backstock room for three months! We couldn't have pulled this off without the wonderful support of you – our Grace family. We are so grateful for the donors and volunteers who helped pull off this event without a hitch. We cannot thank you enough for your support!

Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival 2025: July 19, Tower Park

Grace is a sponsor — Come support our neighborhood, and find and take a selfie in front of our banner!

The Beaverdale Bluegrass Festival is a free, family-friendly celebration of local music and community, sponsored by the Beaverdale Neighborhood Association and local businesses. New for 2025 is a Kid Zone with face painting, DIY crafts, and yard games for kids of all ages!



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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!