

# The Friendly Visitor December 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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## Submission deadline for the

**Christmas newsletter:** December 15  
There will be no January newsletter.

## Office & Open Building Hours

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

## Sunday Schedule

9:00 a.m. Worship: In-person & 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)

## What do you fear?

This question guides the theme for our Advent journey this year. When I think about the question, the immediate answer is simple. I have two fears: snakes and heights. I am open and honest about these fears. I get lightheaded when around snakes or near a window or ledge when up high in the air. After these fears, I start to think about things that make me uncomfortable, like stickers, raisins, and open water. Is that related to fear too? I am not sure. Maybe.

The more I spend in this theme, the more I realize it goes much deeper than these phobias and discomforts. It speaks of the fears that seem too scary to say, as if to speak the name will give it power and make it more real. The opposite is actually true. If you can name a fear, even if only to yourself, it has less power over you. This is scary work. In today's world, filled with algorithms and fear tactics, it is incredibly important to start to acknowledge such fears, so they lose their power.

I will go first. When I really dive into this theme, I find my biggest fear is failing. It is centered in self-doubt and a lack of self-confidence. My fear causes me to relive the experiences that led to the closure of the first congregation that I served. I look to the "numbers" surrounding attendance and giving and start to feel like the fear is valid. I look at experiences growing up and look to blame others for the fears that I have. That doesn't help. That does not change the fear. It simply casts blame or provides a distraction so that I can avoid the fear that roams through my head.

To have a fear does not make a person "less than." It makes you human. We all have fears, some large, some small, some deep, and some, well, something like a discomfort of stickers. It does not have to make sense or be rational. This theme starts with a naming or

*Fear, continued on page 2*

### *Fear, continued from page 1*

acknowledging of the fear and then moves into ways of the truth that God meets us in our brokenness and fears and walks with us. We all have fears. We also have hope.

In Christ,  
Pastor Mike



We hold the family of Elijah Torres in our hearts and prayers.  
Elijah is the grandson of Karen (Maycock) Crooks.

### **The Lutheran Ladies Group meet Thursday, December 4**

Grace Lutheran Ladies Group will be meeting for the last time on Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 am at Grace Hall. Bring a dozen of your very favorite Christmas cookie to share. We will be putting together cocoa/cookie and soup/cracker kits for the Little Free Food Pantry. Please come join our Holiday festivity.



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515-276-6873



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**Custodian Todd Haugen**  
1-515-520-4450



- 1 Deanna Weber
- 2 Beverly Anderson  
Christopher Barks
- 3 Martha Page  
Ami Bradwell  
James Jordahl
- 4 Carter Woodruff
- 5 Darlis Honnold  
Aaron Brandsfield
- 11 Jamie Chamberlain  
Burke Shiffler  
Kari Dostalick
- 12 Evan Justice
- 13 Bradley Ashton
- 14 Anthony Garcia  
Stacie Holst
- 15 Norman Iverson
- 18 Payton Lawson  
Ember Brown
- 20 Shirley Shiffler
- 21 Chris Janson
- 22 Elizabeth Lewis
- 23 Nancy Crowfoot  
Wayne Curry  
Piper Hutton
- 24 Jon Rutter  
Stuart Mitchell  
Nicole Nelson
- 27 Barbara Berven  
Christina Anderson
- 28 Samantha Schmidt  
Courtney Vander Plaats  
Sarah Chenoweth
- 29 Linda Rundle  
Kevin Krause
- 30 Marion Nehmer



- 1 Cindy and Ross Peeler
- 3 Katharine and Matt Radermacher
- 8 Becky and Tom Selander
- 14 Gregory and Darlis Honnold
- 26 Megan and Charles Reynolds



## Grace Lutheran Church Monthly News – November 2025

*"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."*

The past few months have been marked by growth, learning, and blessings as God continues to guide my internship journey at Grace Lutheran Church.

In October, I attended my second internship meeting, the Candidacy Retreat at Trinity Lutheran Church in Marshalltown, as well as the ELCA Cluster Retreat for Interns and Supervisors, with Pastor Mike. Each experience provided valuable opportunities for reflection, connection, and learning.

November has been equally meaningful, with Bible studies, confirmation classes, and a Boundary Education Workshop at Luther Memorial Church. I was also blessed to attend the ordination of Jesse Hershberger, complete my three-month internship evaluation, and hold my third internship meeting—another milestone in this journey of ministry and growth.

This month, I shared a message from Luke 20, where Jesus speaks about the resurrection and eternal life, reminding us that to God, all are alive.

As we enter the Advent season, I am filled with hope and gratitude—thankful for God's grace, His continued guidance, and the opportunity to serve alongside this wonderful community as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

*"Show me your ways, Lord, teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long."* — **Psalm 25:4–5 (NIV)**

### Stay Connected

Please stop by the office to say hello—I'd love to connect!

You can also reach me anytime by email. [lotegeluaki@gracedm.org](mailto:lotegeluaki@gracedm.org)

### December LFP Request

We are collecting personal hygiene items for the Little Free Pantry in December. As the weather gets colder, we need items that won't freeze overnight. The [Grace LFP Amazon Wish List](#) is also available to have items shipped to the church. Donations can also be made online through the [GIVE](#) page or send a check payable to Grace Lutheran Church with "Little Free Pantry" in the memo.

Your donations are greatly appreciated.

#### Donate Hygiene Items



### Little Free Pantry Appreciation

Thank you to everyone who has donated food and money generously for our Little Free Pantry throughout the year. We are so blessed to have such a giving community both within our congregation and the neighborhood.

The outpouring of support from our community has truly shined, reflecting the compassion and harmony among us. The increased donations not only filled the Pantry's shelves but also uplifted the spirits of those facing hardship, reinforcing the importance of coming together in times of need. Your generosity extends beyond providing food—it nurtures hope and strengthens the bonds within our neighborhood, ensuring that every contribution has a meaningful impact on the lives of others.



## TeamGRACE

One step in the process of being recognized as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Partner is crafting a welcome statement that affirms our support of people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression and our commitment to racial equity.

Team GRACE is presenting this statement for consideration in advance of the annual congregational meeting in January 2026.

This statement is not intended to replace our current prayer or mission statement. It is a statement of our values as a community of faith.

Please remember this is a process: we discussed what we believe, considered Jesus' message of hospitality, and how to be welcoming; we held educational meetings; we contributed to the well-being of some of our sacred siblings who are in need. We challenge ourselves to understand the myriad ways we are created and how we can live in community.

“Grace Lutheran Church commits to welcoming and celebrating all people; those in the LGBTQIA+ community, Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and their allies.

We commit to the work of anti-racism, liberation, social and environmental justice for all of God’s creation. We affirm the sacredness of all people, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

We affirm the sacredness of all those who have experienced exclusion because of race, ability, age, or culture. We affirm the sacredness of those who wrestle with addiction, physical or mental health, imprisonment, socio-economic circumstances, or anything that too often divides us.

No matter the labels others may place upon you, or the labels you may place upon yourself, here at Grace you will find a home among friends in need of a Savior. You are welcome here.”

These anonymous Ballots will be available on December 14, however, if you wish to mail yours in, or drop them off in the office, you may do so. To remain anonymous when mailing, simply use the church’s address as the return address.

### Proposed Welcome Statement



If a vote were held today on the proposed welcoming statement, how would you respond?

- ☐ YES wholeheartedly.
- ☐ YES, but I would appreciate more education
- ☐ YES, but I would appreciate more scriptural engagement
- ☐ No, because I need more \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments:



## Building a Legacy



### Our Commitment to the Merle Hay and Beaverdale Neighborhoods

Grace Lutheran Church was started as an outreach ministry in the Northwest Corner of Des Moines nearly 100 years ago. As the city of Des Moines has expanded into what is now known as the Beaverdale and Merle Hay neighborhoods, Grace Lutheran Church has remained committed to being a neighborhood presence. The original Parish House was designed with community in mind, placing a gymnasium on the upper floor. The expansion in 2001 had the neighborhood in mind, creating space for daycare and enough space to host neighborhood events.

### 2020

As the year 2020 approached, Grace Lutheran Church was preparing for a Capital Campaign for necessary infrastructure improvements. The addition in 2001 (Grace Hall, etc.) was starting to show age. There were heating and cooling problems, and we have had several minor roof leaks. This Capital Campaign was going to address these issues. Then, the Covid pandemic halted the campaign.

### Current Campaign

“Building a Legacy” has built on the work of the 2020 campaign committee. This work started in 2018. Some of the needs listed in 2020 have already been accomplished. Other needs have become known in the years since. The Congregational Council and Capital Campaign Committee, along with the tireless work of Brian Gerling and Nichole Aubert, have spent the last two and a half years preparing this plan of “Building a Legacy for the next 100 years”. We have identified \$825,000 in anticipated repairs and renovations. Adding \$75,000 for contingencies and unanticipated expenses and the remaining \$100,000 in debt to the Grace Lutheran Church Endowment Fund.

Prayerfully consider joining us in “Building a Legacy.” We invite you to give a one-time gift or a pledge to help us meet our goal.

Campaign materials will be mailed during the first half of December. In the meantime, copies of the [12-page brochure](#) outlining the overall plans and priorities, general information, dates, and more can be found in the office and on our website.

On the website, you will also find [a trifold brochure](#) that can be shared with others, and a [pledge card](#). Both can be downloaded and printed. If you would like additional information, we have a very detailed 44-page project catalogue available in the office.



## Christmas Star Tree

Christmas will be here before long!!! Consider making someone's Christmas special—an adult from one of Mosaic's local group homes or a child from LSI's Early Development Program.

If you choose a star for an LSI child, you can either buy a \$25 Walmart gift card or you can send the money to church for us to buy it for you. If you buy a card, you can put it under the tree on Sunday mornings, drop it in the secure drop box by the office, deliver it to the church during business hours, or deliver it to Joie Gronert (515-210-2057 call or text). If you put it in the outside mailbox, a stamp must be included. If you start early, gift cards can be ordered online and mailed to you.

If you choose a star for a Mosaic person, aim for \$25 as a target amount to spend. When several items are suggested, choose the item(s) you want to give. If you choose a star and find you are unable to shop, let us know so we can shop for you. If you purchase a gift and you are unable to deliver it by Sunday, December 14, let us know so we can help. Unwrapped, please.

If you want to participate but are unable to select a star, you may pay \$25 using Grace's online giving site (<https://gracedm.org/give-to-grace/>), mail a check to church, or make arrangements to drop off a check/cash when the church is open.

Questions??? Call Joie (515-210-2057) or Michelle at church (515-276-6873).

Happy shopping!!!

PLEASE BRING YOUR GIFT(S) BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14th



## Holiday Dessert Potluck

### Sunday, December 14, after Worship

It is time again for our now-annual Holiday Dessert Potluck! Will you bring one of your favorite holiday desserts to share? In early December you will find signup sheets on the bulletin board – add your name, the name of your treat, and how many servings you will have. We are also looking for people to help set up and clean up. Bring your appetite, we'll bring the coffee!



## Festival of Trees

On December 11 the Willing Workers will be putting up the trees in the Gathering Hall, and you are invited to choose one to decorate! Some will have lights, some won't. You are welcome to decorate a small tree in a theme of your choosing. You can call the office to reserve a tree, but it is not necessary.



**Advent Devotionals from A Sanctified Art** will be available in the back of the Sanctuary beginning on Sunday, November 30. They follow the theme for this Advent: *What do you fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent.*



## Education and Service Projects for All Ages

### Elementary Sunday School at 10:15 a.m.

K-5 students will meet in the Sunday School room for the last time this fall on December 7. The first time they meet in 2026 will be on Sunday, January 11. We meet across from the elevator just up the stairs from the Gathering Hall. Thank you to volunteers Rich Snyder, Val Culp, Courtney Brandsfield, Deanna Weber, and Jenie Schmidt.

**Monthly Service Projects:** On the last Sunday of most months, instead of meeting in the classroom, students and their families meet in Grace Hall as we all come together to work on a service project for the community.

- **On Sunday, November 30,** we will be making Christmas cards and assembling gift bags for our homebound friends. If you are able to help deliver a bag or two, please contact Cathy Watson or Jill Boesch.

### Adult Education: Middle and high school are welcome and encouraged to participate too!

We meet in Grace Hall at 10:15, after worship and coffeetime. Upcoming topics are:

- **November 30:** Service Project
- **December 7:** Are we raising God's standards?
- **December 14:** Christmas Dessert Potluck! See page 6 for more details!
- **December 21:** No Education Hour
- **December 28:** No Education Hour
- **January 4:** Service Project
- **January 11:** Conversation with the Council
- **January 18:** Budget Forum
- **January 25: Annual Congregational Meeting**

### Confirmation Classes

Meet with other middle schoolers on Wednesday evenings, with occasional service projects through the year. Wednesdays, 6:45 p.m. in room 102.

- We will not meet on December 3, 24, or 31.

### Weekday Bible Study With a Focus on Exodus

Led by Pastor Mike and Vicar Lotegeluaki. Anyone and everyone is welcome — friends, neighbors, members, drop-ins. You do not have to be there at the beginning or at every meeting to be welcome and find meaning. We offer two options:

- Tuesday mornings at 9 a.m. Meet in Grace Hall.
- Thursday evenings in Room 102 on the lower level.

### Exploring Grace With Pastor Mike

A warm invitation to learn about our community, faith, and life together.

Welcome! **Exploring Grace** is an opportunity for you to get answers about us and find out about what being a part of Grace might look like for you.

#### January 4, after worship

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. **Questions? Contact 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, there will be another opportunity in February. Or, just call the office to make an appointment at a time that works for you!

**HEY!**  
*We're so glad*  
**YOU'RE**  
**HERE!**



### Dates to be aware of!

**December 14:** Ballot on Welcoming Statement (see p. 4) and Dessert Buffet after worship

**Christmas Mini-Newsletter Deadline:** December 15. There will be no January newsletter as we prepare for the Annual Meeting.

**Christmas Eve Worship:** 5:00 p.m. and livestreamed

**Christmas Day Worship:** 10:00 a.m. in-person only

**December 30:** Final Deposits due to count towards your 2025 Pledge/Contribution.

**January 4:** Service Project and Exploring Grace with Pastor Mike

**January 11:** Conversation with Council

**January 18:** Budget Forum and end of Capital Campaign

**January 25:** Annual Congregational Meeting

**January 31:** Endowment Grants applications due

### Grace Endowment Fund Applications are Open

Endowment grants are awarded each year to groups both inside and outside of Grace. A certain percentage of the funds given each year must be awarded to community groups outside of the Grace community, so please share and promote this opportunity widely.



Requests for specific, finite projects are preferred. The Endowment does not fund operational expenses.

Applications are due January 31, 2026. Additional details and examples of projects can be found on our website <https://gracedm.org/support-of-others/grace-endowment-fund/>

### Worship Volunteer Needs

*Please note that we have returned to two lines of communion, which means we now need 3 Communion Assistants for each service. We are also looking for poetry readers for Advent worship services.*



Each Sunday we are in need of several volunteers: Greeters, Lectors, Communion Assistants and Coffee/Donut Servers. Anyone can help — if you have questions about what is involved, just ask, and we'll be happy to show you what is needed for each position. Directions for making coffee (no measuring involved!), finding supplies, and setting out the donut holes are posted by the coffeemaker.

Sign up using the clipboard found on a Gathering Hall table, or go to [gracedm.org](https://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.](#)



## Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation: Biases at Work Within All of Us

*Brian McLaren has identified sixteen biases that prevent us from seeing things in their complexity and with greater clarity:*



People can't see what they can't see. Their biases get in the way, surrounding them like a high wall, trapping them in ignorance, deception, and illusion. No amount of reasoning and argument will get through to them, unless we first learn how to break down the walls of bias. So what are the specific kinds of bias we need to address, in others, yes, but also in ourselves?...

**Confirmation Bias:** We judge new ideas based on the ease with which they fit in with and confirm the only standard we have: old ideas, old information, and trusted authorities. As a result, our framing story, belief system, or paradigm excludes whatever doesn't fit.

**Complexity Bias:** Our brains prefer a simple falsehood to a complex truth.

**Community Bias:** It's almost impossible to see what our community doesn't, can't, or won't see.

**Complementarity Bias:** If you are hostile to my ideas, I'll be hostile to yours. If you are curious and respectful toward my ideas, I am more likely to respond in kind.

**Competency Bias:** We don't know how much (or little) we know because we don't know how much (or little) others know. In other words, incompetent people assume that most other people are about as incompetent as they are. As a result, they underestimate their own incompetence and consider themselves at least of average competence.

**Consciousness Bias:** Some things simply can't be seen from where I am right now. But if I keep growing, maturing, and developing, someday I will be able to see what is now inaccessible to me.

**Comfort or Complacency Bias:** I prefer not to have my comfort disturbed.

**Conservative/Liberal Bias:** I lean toward nurturing fairness and kindness, or towards strictly enforcing purity, loyalty, liberty, and authority, as an expression of my political identity.

**Confidence Bias:** I am attracted to confidence, even if it is false. I often prefer the bold lie to the hesitant truth.

**Catastrophe Bias:** I remember dramatic catastrophes but don't notice gradual decline (or improvement).

**Contact Bias:** When I don't have intense and sustained personal contact with "the other," my prejudices and false assumptions go unchallenged.

**Cash Bias:** It's hard for me to see something when my way of making a living requires me not to see it.

**Conspiracy Bias:** Under stress or shame, our brains are attracted to stories that relieve us, exonerate us, or portray us as innocent victims of malicious conspirators.

**Constancy/Baseline Bias:** Early in life, our brains set a baseline of normalcy based on what we constantly experience day to day. What our brains determine as normal or constant becomes acceptable to us. Later in our life, our baselines may be reset when a new normal becomes our constant experience. [This is the flipside of Catastrophe Bias.]

**Certainty/Closure Bias:** Our brains find it difficult to rest when we feel uncertainty, so we would often rather reach for premature closure on an unwarranted certainty than live with appropriate uncertainty. We may even prefer a pessimistic certainty to a potentially optimistic uncertainty.

**Cleverness Bias:** Our brains are vigilant to protect us against deceptions, and this vigilance against deception can make us so habitually skeptical that we become cynical, rejecting all good or encouraging information as naïve. In protecting ourselves from danger, we can unintentionally insulate ourselves from positive possibilities.

If you enjoyed this meditation, you can subscribe to the Daily Meditations at this link [SUBSCRIBE Email Sign-Up — Center for Action and Contemplation](#)

### **A Thanksgiving Blessing**

from the recent Being New newsletter.

To subscribe, email [beingnew@gracedm.org](mailto:beingnew@gracedm.org)

May gratitude rise in you like a quiet dawn—  
a soft light revealing what is whole and good.  
May the wellspring within you flow freely,  
renewing courage, tenderness, and joy.  
May the companionship of this community  
remind you that you are held, supported, and never alone.  
And may the Holy One,  
present in every breath and every beginning,  
guide us into the newness we are becoming together.  
**Amen.**

### **Preparation for Worship – a practice**

Whether in the Upper Room, Sanctuary, or at home, taking a few minutes to center ourselves before worship — to listen for God’s word within, to open our hearts to the Risen Christ among us, and to prepare to be drawn into the depths of Christ’s transforming love — has been meaningful to many of our members.

You can do this practice very easily on your own. If at home, find the bulletin online at [www.gracedm.org](http://www.gracedm.org). If at church, pick up a copy from the back of the Sanctuary prior to worship on Sunday morning. Find a quiet space, and begin with a few minutes of silent prayer followed by a reflective reading of one of the hymns for the day. Read the hymn aloud three times: first, listening for a word or phrase that stands out; second, think about what touched you in that reading; and third, naming what the words of the hymn call us to do. Through this rhythm, you may discover a deeper connection—with God, with one another, and with the worshipping community.

Let the Spirit guide how you prepare your heart, that together we may go forth, fed and formed in love, shining in the Spirit.

### **Spiritual Direction Offer**

The Holidays can be difficult for many reasons. Spiritual Direction is one way to help you begin to find a path through those difficult moments. Members of Grace can meet with Deb Richards free of charge, as the Being New Spirituality Center has received a generous donation for the cost of your initial sessions. Contact Deb at (515) 422-4510 or [debcarrierrichards@proton.me](mailto:debcarrierrichards@proton.me)

Spiritual Direction (or spiritual friendship, guidance, or companionship) is an opportunity to engage more deeply with your faith. Despite all the fancy terms, spiritual direction is really just a conversation.

It’s a conversation much like the others that take place in our everyday lives, but with more intention. And greater **attention**. It’s a chance to explore what you truly think and feel, in a safe, non-judgmental space.

Meeting in the company of a trained spiritual director supports our sense of well-being, and is a place to ask real questions, and make meaning of our experiences.

**On November 8, 2025, we were honored to host the Ordination of Jesse Hershberger.  
Congratulations Pastor Jesse!**





## **Grace Congregational Council – October 28th Meeting Minutes**

Meeting came to order 10/28/25 at 6:10 p.m.

**Members in attendance** – Brian Gerling, Pastor Mike Schmidt, Greg Boeschen, Mike Hilsabeck, Tom McCleary, Vicar Lotegeluaki Lengai, Linda Moravec, Pam Palmer

**Meal** – Greg

**Call to order**

**Adoption of agenda** – Pam moved, Tom seconded, motion approved

**Devotions** – Pam

**Approval of previous meeting's minutes** – Brian moved, Mike H seconded, minutes approved

"Ideas that will get you fired"

**Staff Reports** – discussed setting date for the Annual Congregational Meeting.

- Greg moved that we plan on January 18 for the Budget Forum and January 25 for the Annual meeting, Motion moved by Greg and seconded by Pam. Council approved.

**Review/Approval of Finance report** – Brian moved to approve, Val seconded, council approved Tentative 2026 budget

### **Council Action Prior to Meeting**

- Every year during Portico's annual benefits enrollment period (Oct 1st-14th), we pick a health plan that the council offers to the Pastor for next year. This year council voted and agreed that for 2026 we will offer Pastor Mike the Value Copay 4000 plan, with a monthly cost to the church of \$2,238.07 in premium. This is the plan that is recommended by the SEIA Synod in their 2026 Compensation Guidelines. The Council voted via email - Mike H moved, Brian seconded, motion Approved 9/26.
- As with prior years, the Pastor waived the offer as he will be on Jenie's 2026 insurance.

### **Unfinished Business**

- Boiler Replacement Update – Brian provided an update. New boilers are installed and working. Our 5 old boilers were replaced with 3 high-efficiency units. Next will be training on the new system.
- Memorials & Bequests Committee Update – Memorials committee met and determined that our goal will be to reach and maintain a near-zero balance on the Memorial reserve account. We will work with families to earmark memorials to a defined list of spend categories.
- Capital Campaign Update – recent planning team meeting – Pastor & Brian – the team is producing a booklet for the congregation explaining planned capital improvements. The council discussed how we might prioritize improvements as funds become available.
- Prayer Labyrinth Update – much of the concrete work is done. We have funding to purchase benches, landscaping, etc. We have received an Immanuel Vision grant. We are waiting on approval for an ELCA grant for an ADA compliant concrete path through the prayer garden.

### **New Business**

- Briefly discussed internship for 2026-2027.
- How we might reach out and engage younger adults – a small group will be meeting to discuss how we might continue to welcome visitors as well as get newer members involved.
- The council discussed and provided feedback on the proposed Reconciling in Christ update to our Welcome statement.
- Worship times for Christmas and Easter. Christmas Eve service will be 5:00pm only. Christmas day service will be 10:00a.m. Easter morning services will be 6:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m.. Breakfast will be served from 7:00 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
- Facebook / online presence – Pastor expressed concern about increasing hostility from agenda-focused groups toward faith communities. What degree of presence should we have, especially for videos (morning prayers and services). We will look into using a link directed YouTube channel for hosting our videos.

*Minutes, continued on page 13*

***Minutes, continued from page 12***

**New Business, cont.**

- Interfaith Alliance honorarium on behalf of executive director – Pastor.
  - Greg moved that we send \$250 to Interfaith Alliance as an honorarium on behalf of Connie Ryan CEO. Tom seconded. The motion carried.

**Reminder** – we have moved November and December meetings to the 3rd Tuesday (11/18, 12/16).

**Adjournment** – Greg moved, Brian seconded, approved. The council adjourned at 8:00pm.

**Our next meeting** is 11/18/25 - Val will provide the meal. Linda will do the Devotion.

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

Valerie Culp, Linda Moravec, Pam Hellman-Palmer

**Exec. Team**

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

**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 six months' worth of worship material and video links on our pages.

**Other helpful links:**

**Altar Flower Signup** — The current year sponsors are filled. We will publish the link for 2026 sponsorships on the Worship Volunteer page of the website when it is time. Watch the enews and Sunday announcements as well.

**[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.



## Finance Report – Oct Results



Financial results for October YTD are as follows:

- Income – Actual \$340,068, Budget \$360,692, Prior Year \$371,982
- Expenses – Actual \$357,624, Budget \$368,342, Prior Year \$372,639
- Net activity – Actual (\$17,556), Budget (\$7,650), Prior Year (\$657)

The variance is primarily due to lower pledged offering than budgeted. Lack of Vicar and Property Manager positions during the summer caused these expenses to be below budget.

As we get close to year-end, we encourage members to be sure they are current with their pledge commitment. If you are unsure of your status, please contact the church office.

During the year significant expense has occurred for repairs of the boiler and the elevator. Additionally, Capital Campaign monies were used to fund \$11,200 for gutter replacement, \$42,400 for tuck-pointing of brickwork and \$123,050 for boiler replacement. Certain monies from memorials were transferred to the Capital campaign to help fund these costs, however the Campaign reserve has a negative balance of \$25,246 due to the large amount of activity. Monies from the upcoming Capital Campaign will fund this deficit.

## Sponsor a Poinsettia

We invite you to purchase a poinsettia in honor or memory of loved ones to decorate the sanctuary for the 2025 Christmas Season. The cost is **\$16.00**, and you will be able to pick up your poinsettia after Christmas.

Please return this form to the church office (mail slot by the office door), mail it to church or drop it in the offering plate. You may pay using Grace's online giving site or include payment with the form.



### Order deadline: Friday, December 5

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill this out exactly the way you'd like it printed in the bulletin insert:**

Given by:

\_\_\_\_\_

In Memory of: (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**OR**

In honor of (Optional):

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Order deadline: Friday, December 5. Thank you!**