

The Friendly Visitor October 2026

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 November newsletter: Thursday, October 15

Submission deadline for the December newsletter: Monday, November 16

Office & Open Building Hours

9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Monday – Thursday

Or by appointment

The office will be closed

Monday & Tuesday October 26 & 27

Sunday Worship Schedule - Summer

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

10:00 a.m. Fellowship & Coffee

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

gracedm.org

The women who influenced Jesus

When we think about the ministry of Jesus, we look at what Jesus taught us and the way that he lived. As one person of the Triune God, why would Jesus need any input from humans? Yet, what we find throughout the Gospels is that Jesus was influenced by those around him. This influence extended beyond the 12 disciples whom Jesus called. During worship and education hour we are going to be spending time looking at others who influenced Jesus.

The 12 disciples had a huge impact on Jesus. Yet, when you look at life of Jesus, we find that many of his “growth moments” were prompted by the women around him. We are going to be spending September 27-November 22 talking about these “Women of Faith.” Each one of these women, or group of women, played a key role in the life of Jesus. The journey will start with Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist and conclude with the women who gathered at the tomb the day of the resurrection.

As the ministry of Jesus moved through twists and turns, it was often through the prompting, or nudging, of various women. Without these women, Jesus' ministry would not be the same. Some of these women are not even named in the telling of the story. Some have been intentionally diminished over time. One thing remains constant; they made an impact of Jesus.

This time of reflection on these “Women of Faith” is also a good time for each of us to reflect on those who have made an impact in our lives. Who are the people that have helped shape your faith, or gave you a nudge when you needed it? This is a great time, between now and Thanksgiving, to reach out and thank those who have been influential in your life.

In Christ,

Pastor Mike



We hold the following in our hearts and prayers:
The family of Alfred Ayub, Grandfather of Vicar Apou.



- 5 Donald and Margaret York
- 6 John and Tracy Justice
- 7 Chris and Jeryl Janson
- 12 Burke and Shirley Shiffler
- Louie and Sue Anderson
- 21 Delmar and Linda Vernia
- 22 Joel and Stacie Holst
- 23 Karri and Aaron Brandsfield
- 27 Hal and Michele Turner
- 28 Michael and Marilyn Nizzi

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Music Ensemble Coordinator
Kathy Bowermaster
kathybowermaster17@gmail.com



- 1 Zeppelin Brown
- Katharine Radermacher
- 2 Margaret York
- Andy Roat
- Eric Barks
- Ivy Lawson
- 5 Paul Nelson
- 6 Amanda Jensen
- 7 Adam Bergman
- 8 Nelda Sampel
- Harlan Mortenson
- 9 Riley Mortenson
- 11 Christopher Kallenbach
- Fred Hofferber
- 12 Greg Boeschen
- Benjamin Wonderlin
- Lucas Radermacher
- 13 Theresa Gerling
- Deanna Hummel
- Lt. Col. David Peterson
- Victoria Janson
- Sheryl Sauerman
- 14 Jane Ridnour
- James Fenimore
- 15 Chris Lawson
- Eryn Lenhart
- Kyra Lenhart
- Maya Lenhart
- Vincent Meillier
- 16 Kara Jordahl
- 17 Roberto Ruiz
- 19 Isaac Justice
- 20 Patricia Schouten
- Stuart Turner
- James Briggs
- 21 Sage Speck
- Owen Chenoweth
- 23 Ronald Vernia
- 24 Slade Irwin
- Melissa Kallenbach
- 25 Joyce Lewis
- Tina Meadows
- 27 Ilah Ocken
- Wilder Voelker
- 28 Marla Gowdy
- 29 Jessica Russell – Alsted
- 31 Graham Jordahl
- Monte Wilner
- Tanner Peeler



Vicar's Voice

Grace and peace, Grace family! I continue to be grateful for the many ways God is at work among us. Recently, we celebrated God's Work. Our Hands. Sunday through kit-making and quilting for Lutheran World Relief and Mosaic of Central Iowa, followed by a wonderful time of fellowship during our community lunch. These moments remind me that our hands become a reflection of God's love when we serve together.

I am excited about the ways we are growing in faith formation through the beginning of our Bible Study and Ethics Study. I also look forward to our upcoming sermon series, "Women Who Influenced Jesus," where we will explore the stories of faithful women in the New Testament and the ways God worked through their lives. We also

look ahead to Confirmation classes and the Fall Gathering 2026 in Davenport under the theme, "*I Love to Tell the Story*," As we worship, learn, and connect with others across synods.

I continue to be blessed and surprised by the Grace family, their willingness to lead, serve, and respond to the needs of others with compassion and generosity within and beyond our congregation.

I also ask for your continued prayers for my family. My stepbrother's body, who was found in Colorado on August 22 under unknown circumstances, has arrived in Des Moines. As we grieve and prepare for his burial, we are also working through the financial needs surrounding these arrangements. Please keep my family in your prayers for comfort, strength, and peace. Thank you, Grace family, for your kindness, support, and the many ways you continue to show God's love.



Exploring Grace With Pastor Mike Sundays October 25, November 29

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. Pastor Mike offers this opportunity through the year, and we will resume in September – watch this newsletter, and our website calendar for updates.

If you are interested in learning more about Grace and how you fit in, please contact the office at 515-276-6873, or email Pastor Mike Mike@gracedm.org. We welcome you!

Little Free Pantry Request: Canned Soup, dry mixes, instant soup, ready to eat soup...

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.



Fall 2026 Schedule

Bible Study – “Why do they think that way?” continues

If you have ever thought that about someone else, the upcoming discussion series on “Beyond Bumper Sticker Ethics” is for you. These discussions will begin in Mid-September. We are going to be using that book as an entry point into discussions on ethics. Often, our arguments are about varying moral decisions. These morals are based in each person’s view of the world, or system of ethics. Through that view, their answer is “right”. This series will dive into the various ways people view the world and talk about how to find common ground with family, friends, and neighbors. We expect this study to take about 7 weeks. *We are offering multiple days and times:*

1. The Tuesday Morning Bible Study will begin on Tuesday, September 15 at 9 a.m.
2. Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m. in Room 102
3. Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. in Room 102

Chancel Choir Rehearsals

We meet in the music room below Grace Hall at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays. All singers are welcome to join us!

Elementary Sunday School

Sundays at 10:15 a.m. K-5 students will meet in the Sunday School room, across from the elevator just up the stairs from the Gathering Hall.

Sunday Morning Adult Education – Women of the New Testament

Middle and high schoolers are considered as adults for Sunday education!

Sundays at 10:15 a.m. in Grace Hall, after worship and coffeetime.

Confirmation Classes

Classes begin Wednesday, October 7, at 6:30 p.m. in room 102 downstairs.

100th Anniversary Celebration

Saturday, May 22, 2027: Building Tours during the day. Banquet in the evening.

Sunday, May 23, 2027: Worship in the Sanctuary at Grace!

Join us on October 11th after worship for our All Ages Service Project and help us collect kit supplies.

We will be making fleece hats to share through the Little Free Pantry as the weather gets colder. We will also show love to our elder refugee neighbors by creating personal hygiene kits. Lutheran Services in Iowa offers health and personal care classes to this group, and will give these kits to participants at the completion of their class. These elders have become particularly vulnerable with the loss of healthcare coverage and SNAP benefits. Current members of these classes include people from Congo, Sudan, Tanzania, Myanmar, and Bhutan.

Please bring these supplies to the church office, ideally by Oct 4:

- Toothpaste, regular size
- Deodorant, regular size, gender neutral
- Lip balm





ALTAR GUILD BY THE NUMBERS

Active volunteers: **9**

Sue, Kathy, Karri, Val, Mary Jo, Jenny, Jane, Rita, Carol

Hours per week needed to serve: **2**

Plus a monthly off-site meeting with food and fellowship

Communicants served each month: **275** on average

Communion wafers ordered in 2026: **4,000**

Seasonal parament changes: **6**

Advent, Christmas, Time After Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost/Time After Pentecost

Parament/banner/altar changes during Holy Week: **8**

Palm Sunday: banner changed and palms added; Maundy Thursday: banner changed, altar stripped during worship; Good Friday: crosses draped in black; Easter Sunday: paraments and banner changed and Easter lilies added!

Interested in learning more or getting an up-close look? You're invited to "shadow" our members after worship. Just check in with the following volunteers:

October: Kathy, Mary Jo

November: Sue, Jane

Watch for information on our **December activities** — we invite prospective members to join us for decorating the sanctuary and Christmas tree, setting out poinsettias and more!



Yes! We DO have a box for you to donate old eyeglasses!

A number of people at the Ministry Fair were asking Iowa Kid Sight if we could get a donation box here at Grace, so we've moved this box to the corner table in the entryway where it will hopefully be more visible and accessible.

Bring your old glasses/frames, drop them in the box, and Lions Club volunteers periodically pick them up!

TeamGrace

Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we all have stories that give meaning to our lives and decisions. If you have a story you would like to share, please let us know. We, in the Team, have shared how our experiences led us to our understandings and beliefs.



We are sharing information from Biblical scholars throughout 2026 as several members of Grace requested Bible verses to support acceptance of LGBTQ+.

Old Testament: Isaiah 66:18

For I know their works and their thoughts, and I am coming to gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory, and I will set a sign among them.

New Testament: Mark 7:18-23

“Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters, not the heart, but the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? (Thus, he (Jesus) declared all foods clean.) And he said, “It is what comes out of a person that defiles. For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within and they defile a person.”

Takeaway:

All are welcome to be part of God’s creation and glory, with faith and effort to do the right things. Outside information and “evil intentions” from poor heart-led decisions are what defile a person and must be fought through faith and efforts to be right in God’s sight. All are welcome in Grace.

Follow-up: GWOH Sunday was wonderful and productive!

Several members of the MOSAIC community joined us for worship and our service project. Together we made 160 personal care kits, 168 school kits and tied 8 quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We then shared a meal together to end the morning. Thank you to all who helped make this day a success! We've included a few photos below - submitted by Cathy Watson.



Sacred Chant

When I am most in need of grounding myself, often to get past worry or anxiety from any source, I find that a chant lifts up my spirit. A chant is a simple repetition of holy words that calm and resonate and bring us to the present moment. Something short and easy to remember is most helpful.



What used to come to mind with the word 'Chant' was one of two things: the holy chanting of Catholic monks, or the legendary chanting of Native Americans as part of a sacred gathering. Building on both of these sacred practices, the Wisdom Way in Christianity teaches us about using Sacred Chant as a spiritual practice for bringing **all 3 of our centers** online for full aliveness and presence. This is brought about through: concentration on the few and simple words of the Chant (**head**), the vibration of the sound in our physical being (**body**), and the opening and rising to God felt in our spirit that the chant encourages in us (**heart**).

Some favorites which I have learned in recent years, and which some will remember chanting in Preparation for Worship in the Upper Room at Grace are:

"Keep within. For the light of God is within. And the pearl is within you, though hidden."
Paulette Meier, Bandcamp

"Seek my face in all things. Your face oh Lord I will seek."
Darlene Franz, Bandcamp

"The earth is full, full of your goodness. The earth is full, full of you. Your goodness fills the whole earth."
Darlene Franz, Bandcamp

"Just be held in the heart of God. Just be held in the heart of God."
Heather Ruce, Wisdom Waypoints

Some say that sacred chanting regulates the breath and cleanses the heart. When you find a chant that resonates with you, it truly serves as spontaneous prayer of your spirit!

Belonging to the Earth: Climate Action in the 4 Spaces of Our Lives

An Interactive Workshop for Anyone with a Heart for Nature

Saturday, October 10, 2026 | 10:00-11:30 AM

Registration opens at 9:30 AM, Labyrinth Walk, Tour, Connection Time: 11:30 AM–12 PM (opt.)

Location: Being New Spirituality Center, Grace Lutheran Church, 5201 Urbandale Ave, Des Moines

Cost: Free. Donations welcome at the event or when you register.

Leader: Tim Gossett, Associate Director, Iowa Faith & Climate Network



Too often, we live as though the Earth belongs to us. But what does it look like to belong to the Earth, and how does that belonging connect to the climate crisis, your faith, and the particular life you are actually living? Those are the questions at the heart of this 90-minute workshop, offered by Iowa Faith & Climate Network in partnership with Being New Spirituality Center. Sign up here: <https://iowafaithandclimate.org/being-new-workshop/>

Upcoming Offerings from the Being New Spirituality Center

Prayer for Peace

Monday, October 19, 10:00-11:00 a.m. [Zoom](#) only

Contemplation is not withdrawal from action, but the source of it. —Thomas Merton

Following a 20-minute sit in Centering Prayer or other silent meditation we will watch and discuss a video strengthening our compassionate presence in action. All are welcome. Bring your prayers, your grief, your hope, your wisdom. This is a collaboration of Being New and COCI.

Sound Healing—

Second and Fourth Mondays at 4:00|Room 105 (lower level). Yoga mats are provided for those who wish to lie down. Bring blankets, eye pillows, etc. There are also comfortable chairs for those who prefer to sit.

Space is limited. Contact [Julie Good](#) JulieGod03@yahoo.com or 515-306-4864 if you plan to attend. Julie is generously offering her time and suggests that instead of a fee, participants may wish to make a donation to the Center. Julie also offers massage therapy and Reiki in her home office.

SoulCollage®

1st & 3rd Mondays in the Center | 6:30-8:30 p.m. | \$15

Join facilitator Cindy Schloss Calhoun and learn to create your own SoulCollage deck with images: a story deck that is yours. It is a powerful way to discover your inner wisdom and find answers to life's questions from within. Email Cindy_sinschloss@aol.com or text 515-238-8828 to find out what it is all about.

First Fridays contemplative gathering. Join us November 6!

9-11 a.m. in Grace Hall

Co-sponsored by Contemplative Outreach of Central Iowa (centeriowa.org) and Being New. All curious seekers are welcome! Questions? Call or text Kathy Reardon at 515-776-0439.

The Way of the Rose: Our Lady of Guadalupe Rosary –

2nd and 4th Wednesdays, 6:30 pm, Room 108 (lower level).

We are an open-hearted, inclusive community dedicated to the forgotten Earth wisdom of the rosary, not affiliated with any religious institution. Traditional and non-traditional prayer, chant, and song forms welcome and no prior knowledge of the rosary is needed. Join us in the calming support available to all in the garden of prayer. Contact: [Hannah Whetston](mailto:hannahwhetston@gmail.com) hannahwhetston@gmail.com for more information

Also available at the Center

- **Enneagram Coaching**, Contact [Julie Honsey](#), honsey.julie@gmail.com Certified in the Narrative Enneagram.
- **Spiritual Direction**, Contact [Deb Richards](#) debcarrierrichards@proton.me? or [Julie Good](#)
- **Massage and Reiki** with [Julie Good](#), 6077 Bradford Lane, Johnston. Contact her for an appointment, 515-306-4864.
- **Massage Therapy, Reflexology & Reiki** by appointment for those seeking relaxation and balancing. Aromatherapy and guided meditation are included in all session work. Contact [Hannah Whetston](#) 515-505-1878.

Additional details at www.beingnew.org

MINUTES – Grace Congregational Council – August 25th, 2026

Meeting came to order at 6:06pm.

Members present – Chuck Denton, Carol WoodruA, Pam Palmer, Pastor Mike Schmidt, Mike Hilsabeck, Vicar Apou Aderbuk, Jessye Flannery, Brian Gerling, Linda Moravec

Meal – Mike H

Call to Order

Adoption of Agenda – Jessye moved, Chuck seconded, agenda adopted

Devotions – Brian

Approval of previous meeting's minutes – Pam moved, Chuck seconded, minutes approved

"Ideas that will get you fired" – none

Review/Approval of StaA Reports – Jessye moved for approval, Linda seconded, reports approved

Review/Acceptance of Finance report – after review and discussion, Linda moved to accept the report, Mike H seconded, the report accepted

Capital Campaign Update – Current pledges are \$636,067. Current available funds are \$77,304 (as of 8/1). This includes the payment of \$134,939 to ForSure Roofing for roof replacement work.

Council Action Prior to Meeting

A motion was put to the council, via email, by Brian to approve a proposal from John's Tree Service for \$3,959 to remove the dying tree located behind the church house property. This would be paid out of the property maintenance general ledger account.

- The motion was approved by the council via email vote on 8/18.

Unfinished Business

Church 100th Anniversary Update – May 22-23, 2027. On Saturday afternoon, we will have a meeting with prior church leaders, along with tours of the church (open to the public). Saturday night will be a catered dinner at Stoney Creek Inn.

Church Finance Audit Update – as part of the final tasks of the audit, Larry Nordeen has been provided information on 2025 Endowment Fund activity. [After the council meeting Larry submitted a handful of specific questions which Mike H will research. The two will meet to discuss so that Larry can complete the audit.]

Recovery Café Facility-Use Update – we continue to look at bids for the architecture and construction work. However, Recovery Café is now also exploring the possibility of an alternative location downtown. We will be scheduling a meeting with Patrick soon to determine next steps.

Staff Support Committee – we have identified volunteers. They will meet with the Exec committee next month to discuss next steps.

Revision/Rewrite of the Church Facility Use Policy – Mike H and Brian are working on a draft for this.

Prayer Garden Update – The prayer garden group will meet 8/26 to discuss plans for the concrete and brick work for sidewalks columbarium and trash bins surround.

Being New Spirituality Center – BNSC was able to use all the bookshelves from the main level library to create a reading area/library close to the center. Joyce Rupp donated her entire collection of books. Comfortable furniture has been provided by the center.

Replacement of 3 Skylights in the Gathering Hall – ForSure Roofing has installed the skylights. They let in much more light.

Tree removal at 52nd st house – John's Tree Service will start work mid-September and will take approximately 3 weeks.

New Business

Service Contract with Excel – Brian shared the proposed contract for HVAC system ongoing maintenance. This would be \$9,250 annually.

- A motion was made by Carol to move forward with the maintenance agreement. Payment to be made from the property maintenance general ledger account. Jessye seconded. Motion approved.

Council Minutes. continued on page 10

Council Minutes, continued from page 9

Pastor & Council Evaluation – the council reviewed the evaluation document provided by Carol and shared initial feedback on the various areas of ministry – what is done well and what might be opportunities for improvement. This will be a regular ongoing topic at future council meetings.

Action Items

- Mike H 7/21 – Update payroll system for \$37.50 per pay period for Pastor Mike
- Brian & Mike H 7/21 – draft a new Facility Use Policy
- Mike H 7/21 – Pay Tim Barrick \$1,500 for photography service

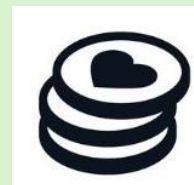
Adjournment – Chuck moved, Linda seconded, motion carried - the council adjourned at 7:47pm.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday, September 22nd. Meal – Pam, Devotions – Pam.

Finance Report – AUGUST Results

Financial results for August YTD are as follows:

- Income – Actual \$267,959, Budget \$274,867, Prior Year \$269,805
- Expenses – Actual \$289,241, Budget \$288,100, Prior Year \$283,655
- Net activity – Actual (\$21,282), Budget (\$13,233), Prior Year (\$13,850)



Activity was below budget and below the prior year. The full year budget is a \$12,500 deficit and the goal is to break even for the year.

Additionally, the Capital Campaign had receipts during the year of \$221,125. Monies were used to fund \$201,472 for roof replacement and \$48,778 for a new HVAC split system.

Bulletins, announcements, and sermons are all online!

For those of you who look for Grace worship materials online, you can find everything on the Bulletins Resource Page. Here's how:

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

Other helpful links:

[Altar Flower Signup](#) — <https://volunteersignup.org/7RXMJ> We invite you to sponsor a bouquet of flowers for the altar. You can include a special message in the bulletin, and the flowers are yours to take home after the worship service on Sunday.

[Online Giving](#) — Use our secure site at <https://gracedm.org/give-to-grace> 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.