The Grace Visitor

Men Make Dinner was held on Nov. 2. The meal and service was excellent! Michael Merical, Magician, tried to tie up Scotty—but no rope trick could hold Scotty as he easily broke free! (It was intentional!) The Men's Choir (The Dingalings) played Bells and sang for the crowd, Dave Lemke was Master of Ceremonies entertaining everyone with his jokes—but he promised no Ole and Lena jokes this night!

DECEMBER 2023 Edition















Surgery, sick, chronic conditions: Dick Michael, Dick Anderson; Ada Kelley, great niece of Pat & Judy Reed; Marlin Snyder, father of Cindy Snyder; Teresa Walters, mother of Laura Walters; Kris Stein, daughter of Dee Fenchak; Bonnie Cramer; Byron Itzen, son of Linda Itzen; Claudia Lyons, Stepmother of Martha Kersbergen, Delores Black; Steve Sterba, son of Lola Dillon; Rene' (Funk) Newman, former member & friend of Leslie Reetz.; Arlene Wold, sister of Lola Dillon; Brianna

Clarahan; Donna Lachelt, mother of Laurie Miller, Marilyn Kiliper; Bill Albers, cousin of Sue and cousin of Rose Clark; Steve, Son of Randy and Linda Birchall, Darlene Rhodes, Cole Theander, nephew of Mark Gustafson; Don Sells, Nolan Bennett, grandson of Marty Bennett; Rich Weiss, brother to Crystal Michael; Jason Stanek, family friend of Linda Itzen, Corinna & Kevin; Andrew Foster, nephew of Mark & Connie Gustafson.

Bereaved: The family of Austin Waller, Jim McColley and Nancy Schmidt's Nephew.

Those in military service: Brandon LaForce, son-in-law of Rick & Laurie Wagner, based in Fort Leavenworth, KS. **Zachary Napier**, Army Special Forces, son of Paul & Deb Napier of Salt Lake City, Utah and grandson of Betty Evans. Zachary is now serving in Germany.



BRADLEY STRONG 1 JACUELYN JACOBS 3 3 **NATE HUSE** 4 LARRY MAXWELL MALACHAI CROTTS 6 DICK MICHAEL 8 8 STAN PAMPERIN 13 ISABELLA BAKER 13 KAREN DAVIS 13 **KYLER EISEN** LOGAN SCHWIEGER 13 LINDA POPPINGA 14 15 **BRITTANY BAKER** TRISTAN ISAACSON 15 **BONNIE CRAMER** 16 **SETH HANSON** 16 **CLAIRE FLEMING** 18 18 **COOPER FLEMING** 18 MIKE KROONA **CARSON WEBER** 19 20 CHUCK REETZ KLIEGH SELTZ 21 21 SHEILA SCHRADER 22 JAMIE HUSE **DICK ANDERSON** 23 23 **NELSON COOK** 26 SPENCER LARA 27 **ILENE OLSON** KRISTINE OHRTMAN 27 29 MADDUX GROVE 30 **BUZZ POWERS** KEA DENCKLAU 30 **BRYNN CRAWFORD** 31

MARLYS TAYLOR

31



Please let the church office know your winter address. Thank you.

ATTENTION All Teams, Boards, Committees, Groups, and Staff ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

All Annual Reports are due in the office by

Thursday, December 14, 2023.

Please email your reports, if possible, to gracefd@frontiernet.net





DON and BEV MALLINGER 14
MARK and CONNIE GUSTAFSON 31

Statistical Reports Current Offering & Attendance

Current Offering &	711	Ciluano
October 1 Attendance Offering Receipts	\$	70 6,464
October 8 Attendance Offering Receipts	\$	60 4,548
October 15 Attendance Offering Receipts	\$	69 2,676
October 22 Attendance Offering Receipts	\$	69 4,028
October 29 Attendance Offering Receipts	\$	69 2,795

OCT. FINANCIAL NOTE

Offerings: \$ 21,029 Expenses: \$ 16,349 Difference: \$ 4,679

Year to Date October 31, 2023

Offerings: \$ 181,434 Expenses: \$ 202,640 Difference: \$ (20,036)

Average income needed per month to cover expenses—\$ 23,234

Average income needed per week to cover expenses—\$5,375

We appreciate those who so faithfully give to support the mission of the church.

Please notify the church at 515-576-4106 if you or a family member are in the hospital. After regular office hours or on the weekend, please call Pastor Dan's cell phone 515-227-1929.

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me." Philippians 4:13

"I can do all things through a verse taken out of context". Meme on Face-book

"We sometimes claim that all Scripture is equally important, equally inspired, or equally clear, but in practice most of us invoke a "canon within the canon" — we consciously or unconsciously privilege some parts of the Bible over others. And that's the way it should be. John 3:16 is more important than Judges 4. Texts of terror remind us that we don't, we can't, and we shouldn't read all Scripture in the same way. "Debie Thomas

So, what is your "canon within a canon?" What are the primary verses or principles that help interpret all the others? To be sure, there are some who gravitate towards the violent verses in the Bible to justify their own violence against a certain group of people. That's what Hitler and the nazis did against Jewish people and others who didn't fit into their "master race" mentality. Philippians 4:13 has been used to justify all sorts of things that were never intended by Paul. Certain verses in the Bible were used by those who wanted to keep their lucrative institutions of slavery and racism going. People end up justifying all sorts of things using biblical passages. Whether it's an issue they are clinging to or a desire to keep everything the status quo, everything is seen through that particular lens. It's like the old saying that when you're a hammer, everything looks like a nail. "A religion is more than its texts," Thomas goes on to say. This is true.

Advent is a season of expectant waiting. It is often full of tradition, yet ironically, is also anticipating/expecting something new to enter into our world. Some familiar texts are read, some familiar songs are sung during this season. The familiarity can lull us into a "been-there-done-that" state of mind that is closed to new possibilities. But this Advent I challenge you to read and experience these Scriptures with fresh eyes. What are some questions you have for these texts? Where are these texts challenging your life and where is your life challenging these texts? Is there a new lens, a new perspective you can use to approach the familiar words? It is important to overcome nostalgia.

"Nostalgia" was a diagnosis of "morbid longing to return to one's home or native country, severe homesickness [and was] considered a disease." It is debilitating and prevents us from focusing on the tasks at hand. Nostalgia prevents us from focusing on our mission, on the ministries right in front of us. Pining for the "good old days" can distract us from new ways God might be speaking to us through the Bible and through each other. Figuring out what our tendencies and lenses are helps open our eyes to new possibilities we may not have noticed before.

We might notice glimmers of light in our darkening days that we hadn't seen before. We may see the familiar (which has the same root as "family") in fresh and helpful ways. We may observe how we have been taking certain verses out of their context and making them fit into our world view while ignoring our own biases. The newborn King coming to Bethlehem takes on a whole new meaning with the violence going on in that region of the world and the political callousness in our own country. The great theologian Karl Barth used to say we should have the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other hand. I pray that we all can take his advise to heart.

God loves you and so do I, Pastor Dan



GUIDELINES FOR GRACE ACTIVITIES IN INCLEMENT WEATHER

In case of threatening weather, especially if National Weather Service has issued a warning:

- 1. The Congregation Council President will consult with Pastor Dan and available Executive Team to determine with them whether to hold a scheduled worship service;
- 2. Watch TV (channels WHO 13 & KCCI 8) and listen to local radio stations (KWMT & WOI radio) for information about cancellations.
- 3. Attend worship or other activity only if you can do so safely.
- 4. If school is cancelled due to bad weather, Confirmation and Youth Group are also cancelled that evening.

Grace Foundation 2023-24 College Scholarship Applications for 2023 graduating High School Seniors

The time is approaching for high school seniors to start planning for the Grace Lutheran Foundation Scholarship application process. An application form & completion guidelines will be mailed to high school senior members of our congregation the second week in January 2023. This will allow students time to complete the application, get the needed reference letters, & return all required documents to the church office before the deadline on February 15, 2023. Application forms & information will also be available in the church office in December 2023.

Grace Lutheran Church Foundation Board: Pam Halvorson, Ann Powers, Nic Huse, & Crystal Michael

Tricks for an Even Better Candle Season



Use
Spaghetti
to
Light a hard-to-reach Pillar

Pasta can do so many things, even light a wick that's sitting deep inside a tall hurricane vase or lantern. Instead of awkwardly trying to wriggle a lighter or match in there (and risking burning yourself!), take an uncooked piece of spaghetti and kindle one end with a lighter. Then use your noodle to get the candle going.



Use
Tin Foil
To
Fix a Tunneled Candle

If your wax melts only in the center, tunneling through the middle, you're losing valuable burn time! A bit of tin foil can fix this. Before you light your candle, wrap a piece of foil around the jar. Pinch it into a dome shape that covers the ring of unmelted wax but leaves space around the wick. (You don't want the flame to touch the foil.) Next—you guessed it—light the candle. The foil will trap the heat and melt that wall of wax to even out the surface of your candle.



Use Salt to Extend Burn Time

You know that pricey, amazing-smelling candle you save for special occasions? There is a way to make it last longer. Next time, after you blow out the flame, sprinkle a pinch of table salt into the pool of wax (avoid the wick). Mix the salt into the liquid with a toothpick, then let the wax harden as normal. This can slow down the rate at which your wax melts, resulting in a slightly longer burn time.



In memory of

Each year Grace's Sanctuary is decorated with beautiful poinsettias for the Christmas season.

Plants may be ordered through the church office at a cost of \$14.

(Please make checks payable to Grace.)

Please return this form and payment no later than Sunday, December 10.

Your Name		

In honor of

OR



7th and 8th grade students meet each Wednesday for Confirmation Class at 6 pm. We meet in the upper level library. Regular class is from 6-6:50 pm. Your regular attendance is important. If you are unable to make it to class, please contact Pastor Dan Kahl in the office or by phone. 515-227-1929.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Please join us Sunday mornings beginning at 10:30 am each week for Sunday School for children three years old through sixth grade. We gather in the lower level Fellowship Hall for opening, bell choir practice & class. Look forward to seeing you.

Education Ministry Team

WEDNESDAY MORNING MEN'S BIBLE STUDY led by Pastor Dan kahl, meets each Wednesday at 9 am in the Fireside Room. All men are welcome to join us for coffee, fellowship, and God's Word.





If you haven't filled out and turned in you *Giving Card* yet, you can either pick one up at church and turn it in to the office or you can use the one below. Thank you!

COMMITMENT FORM 2024

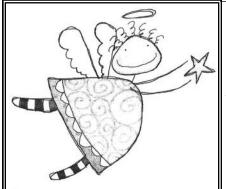
Grace Lutheran Church, 211 S 9th St, Fort Dodge, IA 50501

In response to God's generous love I/we commit to share

\$_____per (circle one) weekly monthly annually

To support Grace Lutheran's ministry from January 1 to December 31, 2024.

Name _____



Angel Tree for UDMO—All Names have been taken! Thank you for your generosity! If you have two family cards No. 35, please call the office.

An Angel Tree was placed in the Fireside Room to support Upper Des Moines Organization Christmas giving for families/ children in the community. Please return all un-wrapped gifts to the church office before December 3.

Make sure your boxes, plastic tubs or bags are all marked clearly with Family Number and age of the children the gift is

going to. Please do not wrap the presents. If you would like you can provide the family with wrapping paper and tape to wrap their own gifts for the children. If you have any questions, please call Marlys Taylor 712-210-3452

The Lord's Cupboard is looking for donations for the coming holidays. Christmas—cake or cookie mixes, canned frosting, and anything else would be appreciated. They don't mind plastic bags as they reuse many. Questions? Ask Wayne Pfannkuch



Women ELCA

Women of the ELCA Purpose Statement

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and DSAOC, and The Lord's Cupboard. wholeness in the church, the society and the world.

are available Please help yourself to one found tops, and tying quilts. Some of these tasks can in the tray on the shelf above the coat rack.

The "Friendship Senior Dinner" will be Friday, December 8, at noon in the Fireside Room. This is a potluck. There will be Swedish meatballs and potatoes furnished. Sign up to attend and enjoy great food and fellowship.

We are looking forward to St. Lucia Fest. We will celebrate on December 10, following the church service. Please sign up to bring Scandinavian and other goodies to share.

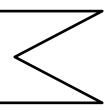
Circles will not meet in December. We will resume meeting in January.

WELCA donations this year are \$200 each to Beacon of Hope, Community Health Center,

Willing Workers meet Mondays at 8:30AM to put quilts together. There are many tasks, in-2023 Grace Women of the WELCA Yearbooks cluding cutting squares, layout/design quilt be done at home. Come join us. Many hands make many quilts.



Daisy, Mark & Connie are available for care facility or in home visits. If you are in need of a visit from them, please let Connie or the office know.



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH 2024 ANNUAL MEETING

Annual Meeting—Sunday, January 21, 2024—11 am
We will have a finger-food brunch potluck in the Fellowship Hall following the service with the Annual Meeting starting at 11 am.

Annual Reports need to be turned into the office by Dec. 14 so the booklets can be printed and distributed before the meeting. Thank you.

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM—SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

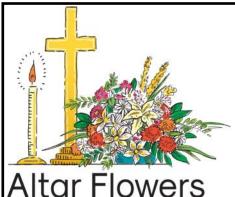
The Sunday School kids will be performing "A Super Christmas" on Sunday, December 17. You won't want to miss this charming group of Super Heroes who are trying to find out about this new kid who might be taking over their jobs! Everyone from Confirmation kids on down to our 5 year-olds are involved so come and support the kids. Coffee hour will be in the fellowship hall with Christmas goodies being served! We look forward to seeing you! God is GOOD!

Joan Meyer





Please remember Grace Lutheran in your end-of-year giving. For proper credit on your 2023 giving statement, all monetary gifts need to be received in the church office by the end of the year, December 31. Thank you.



Flower Chart is posted on the bulletin board

If you would like to provide altar flowers for worship, please take this opportunity to sign up for flowers in honor of, or in memory of, someone. Altar flower orders are normally placed by the church office. Currently flowers are ordered through Becker Florist with a cost of \$26.75 to the individual. When ordering, the office gives Becker Florist your address and they bill you directly. If you choose to order flowers on your own, please notify the office ahead of time so that we do not have a duplication of altar flowers for any given Sunday.

Reminder from Grace Foundation Board

We want to remind the members of Grace Lutheran Church that the Grace Foundation has money available for grants to fund projects that help to forward our congregation's ministry. Ministry Teams and other groups that are active at Grace (Sunday school, ARiSE, Handbells, Choir, Grace Groups, etc.) are encouraged to consider applying to the Foundation for funding or matching funds for their projects that are not covered by the current budget. Application forms can be found in the church office and may be submitted for consideration at any of our quarterly meetings. Meetings are held on the third Tuesday in November, February, May, and August. If you have questions, please contact one of the Foundation members listed below. We look forward to considering your funding request at one of our upcoming meetings.

Pam Halvorson, President; Ann Powers, Vice President; Crystal Michael, Secretary, Nic Huse, Treasurer, Judy Stilwell, Angie Jessen, & Martha Kersbergen

Knit & Purl are busy making dish clothes and hot pads to give to UDMO for their senior citizens Christmas gifts along with continual creating prayer shawls and baby blankets. We meet the 1st Tuesday, on December 5 at 2 pm in the Fireside Room. We will not be meeting on the 4th Tuesday as it is the day after Christmas.

Anyone that would like to learn or brush-up on this wonderful pass time which in turn not only gives a person something fun to work on but will give comfort and joy to those in need. Connie Gustafson





The Sunday School Kids (and a few big kids) played bells on All Saint's Sunday, November 5. Great job everyone!

Congregation Council Meeting Minutes November 21, 2023

- **1. Call to** Order Council Vice President, Marlys Taylor, called the meeting to order at 6:30pm. Present: Marty Bennett, Jim Blocker, Janet Carlon, Roger Harris, Linda Itzen; office administrator/financial secretary, Pastor Dan Kahl, Dave Lemke, Wayne Pfannkuch, Marlys Taylor, Katie Waynar. **Absent**: Rod Poppinga, Judy Stilwell.
- 2. **Open Forum** No other members were present.
- 3. **Opening devotions** Led by Marlys Taylor, we opened with a thankful prayer.
- 4. Review Agenda Dave Lemke moved to accept the agenda as written, Wayne Pfannkuch 2nd, accepted.
- 5. **Review minutes** of October 17, 2023 Council Meeting Katie Waynar moved to accept the minutes as written, Roger Harris 2nd, accepted.

6. Celebrations:

- a. Men Make Dinner, Nov. 2, was a fun event with \$700 raised for The Lord's Cupboard.
- b. All Saints Sunday, November 5 was a meaningful service.
- c. Manna Meal, November 11 served over 30 people.
- d. Bells and Choir are back to their normal schedule.
- e. Praise God for offerings.
- f. We honored Brian Schmidt for his service as our church custodian.
- g. Lord's Cupboard collection for Thanksgiving.
- h. Stewardship/Time & Talent sheets are coming in.

7. Monthly Reports Review:

- a. Pastor's Report Wayne Pfannkuch moved to accept Pastor's report, Dave Lemke 2nd, accepted.
- b. Financial Reports Marty Bennett moved to accept the financial reports, Katie Waynar 2nd, accepted.
- c. Ministry Team Reports Janet Carlon moved to accept the team reports, Wayne Pfannkuch 2nd, accepted.

8. Old/Ongoing Business:

- a. Sharing High School Youth events with St. Olaf. Pastor will meet with Heather from St. Olaf in early December.
- b. Pianists for October/November, 2023
- c. Facebook Chloe Jessen has changed privacy settings for Grace's Facebook page so prior approval is needed to post things on the page.
- d. Website is being updated as needed but more photos are needed so Linda will send photos to our administrator.

9. New Business:

- a. Task force for scholarship Wayne Pfannkuch feels a task force may not be needed as there is an existing music scholarship at Luther with priority to organ students that we could contribute to in Bruce Perry's name.
- b. Organ repair The repairs are being completed now.
- c. Review policies about cleaning up after a group meets at church. After some of the groups that meet at the church the waste baskets are full. We need to remind the groups that meet here to empty the trash. We can hand out a sheet to remind groups what they can do to help.

10. **FYI:**

- a. Thanksgiving Eve Service will be Wednesday, November 22 at 6:30pm.
- b. Annual Meeting will be Sunday, January 21, 2024. We will have a finger food brunch potluck in the Fellowship Hall following the church service with the meeting starting at 11am.
- c. Building request.
- d. Sunday, Dec. 24 service at 9:30am and Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 6:30pm.
- e. Senior Friendship Dinner at noon in Fireside Room on December 8.
- f. St. Lucia celebration will follow the worship service on December 10.
- g. December 17 will be the Sunday School Program.
- h. December 20 at 11am Longest Night Service at 11am in Fireside Room.
- 11. **Adjournment** At 7:20 Dave Lemke moved to adjourn, Marty Bennett, 2nd, accepted. Lord's Prayer was prayed in unison.

DECEMBER 2023

8:30 am Willing Workers 10 am Text Study Tie Day 2 pm Knit & Purl 9:15 am Money counters 6:30 pm Ministry 7:30 pm FDCS Teams
1.1 8:30 am Willing Workers Ship Quilts 9:15 am Money counters 5:30 pm Bells 7:30 pm FDCS
18 NO Willing Workers 9:15 am Money counters 6:30 pm Council 5:30 pm Bells meets at Pastor 7:30 pm FDCS Dan's home
25 CHRISTMAS DAY OFFICE CLOSED 9:15 am Money counters No Knit & Purl

DECEMBER SERVICE HELPERS

December 3-9:30 am

Ushers: Brian & Nancy Schmidt Lay Reader: Crystal Michael

Communion Assistant: Crystal Michael,

Judy Duffield & Kris Stender

Coffee hour treats: Dick & Crystal Michael Altar Care: Helen Patterson / Marty Bennett

Council on Duty: Jim Blocker

December 10-8:30 am

Ushers: Roger & Vicky Harris Lay Reader: Dolores Goraczkowski Communion Assistant: Connie Gustafson,

Linda Itzen / OPEN

Coffee hour treats: St. Lucia

Altar Care: Trudy Koppen / Martha Kersbergen

Council on Duty: Judy Stilwell

December 17-8:30 am

Ushers: ARiSE & Confirmation

Lay Reader: ARiSE

Communion Assistant: ARiSE and

Confirmation

Coffee hour treats: OPEN

Altar Care: Ann Powers / Judy Duffield Council on Duty: Wayne Pfannkuch

December 24-9:30 Am

Ushers: OPEN

Lay Reader: Leslie Reetz Communion Assistant: OPEN Altar Care: Crystal Michael Council on Duty: Marty Bennett

December 24—6:30 pm **Ushers: OPEN** Lay Reader: Braden Kammerer

They shall bring

and shall bring

GOOD NEWS,

FRANKINCENSE,

GOLD and

the praises

of the LORD.

ISAIAH 60:6, ESV

Communion Assistant: Marlys Taylor /

MaKenna Kammerer / OPEN Altar Care: Helen Patterson Council on Duty: Janet Carlon

December 31-9:30 am **Ushers:**

Lay Reader: OPEN

Communion Assistant: OPEN Coffee hour treats: OPEN

Altar Care: Marty Bennett / Judy Stilwell

Council on Duty: Katie Waynar

Food Packing Event—Saturday, December 2. **Community Christian School** 2406 9-1/2 Avenue South

We need at least twelve (12) volunteers, youth are especially invited to join. There are two 2-hour I shifts and you can pick one or both. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board. Call pastor Wayne Pfannkuch if you have questions.

Kevin's Ham Balls

2-1/2 lbs ham loaf (Fareway)

1 pkg graham crackers, crushed

2 eggs

3/4 cup 2% milk

1 TBSP minced onion (to taste)

Mix together and make ham balls size of your choosing, place in greased 9 X 13 pan

Sauce:

1—23.2 oz can Campbell's Tomate Soup

3 TBSP white vinegar

1-1/4 to 1-1/2 cup brown sugar, packed

1 tsp dry mustard

Mix all ingredients together, pour over ham balls

Bake @ 350 degrees for 1 hour, uncovered

Grace Lutheran Church 211 S 9th St Fort Dodge IA 50501 (515) 576-4106

Web Site: www.graceELCA.com

Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Permit #460 Fort Dodge IA 50501

Return Service Requested

THE VISITOR

Grace Staff

Pastor Dan Kahl dckahl@hotmail.com

Linda Itzen

Office Administrator gracefd@frontiernet.net

Roberta Bochtler Organist/Choir Director

Sunday Worship Schedule

9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion 10:30-11:15 am Children's Sunday School 10:40 am Adult Forum 10:30 am Coffee and Fellowship

Christmas Service Schedule

Sunday, December 24 - Service 9:30 am Sunday, December 24 - Candlelight Service 6:30 pm

No Christmas Day Service on December 25



Find us on Facebook

KNOW GOD'S GRACE-SHARE GOD'S LOVE