

GRACE NOTES

FEBRUARY 2025 ISSUE 83-02

Dear Friends,



They had a red background with white lettering, these lapel buttons passed from one person to another when I was a teen. You'd find people putting them on backpacks or purses. Though the pins came in different languages, they all had the same message, "I am Loved."

I Googled the pins, to make sure they weren't a figment of my imagination. I discovered they had existed for much longer than I realized. Barnett Helzberg Junior, of Helzberg Diamonds, proposed to his fiancé in 1967. He wanted to provide everyone with a way to show their love for another, even if it wasn't with a diamond. Barnett then created the "I Am Loved" lapel buttons to pair with the slogan, "Buy her a diamond or give her a button, but in any case, tell her she's loved." That first year they manufactured 50,000 buttons. The buttons were sent across the world by those wanting to share their love. They were gifted to soldiers in Vietnam, patients in hospitals and shared among students. Throughout the many years of that campaign, they made 18 million buttons!

There's a reason those buttons were

so popular and it's not just because people wanted to gift something cheaper than a diamond on Valentine's Day. I wonder, after food and shelter, is the next thing we need for our essential survival love? Perhaps we can live without it, but can we thrive without it? That love can take on different shapes and forms. It can be felt by family, friends, communities, and even strangers.

It often feels difficult to capture the complexities of love. I think of romcoms or Hallmark movies. Love can be reduced down to a holiday or a marketing campaign. The meaning, the action of loving someone, becomes watered down. Even in scripture it can become repeated so often that a reader can feel like they are a skipping record. In just five verses within the fourth chapter of 1 John, the word "love" is said eleven times!

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. (1 John 4:7)

God is love. It is a love that is offensive, radical, and scandalous.

The love that comes from God is sacrificial, merciful, and full of grace. It is not limited to one person, community, tribe, or nation.

As God's people who know God's love, we are implored to share that love with others. We are invited to love with serious consideration given to what love looks like in action. When Paul wrote to the community in Corinth, he was writing to a community in turmoil. A community of people who were fighting over who had the better gifts, who was more important. With this context and not that of a joyful wedding, the love hymn of 1 Corinthians 13 is written. It breaks down what love is and what love is not, especially when things are not all well. "[Love] does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered... Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth."

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**ASH WEDNESDAY
WORSHIP**
March 5 | 7pm go 1

Luther Properties

Annual Meeting Delegates Requested



Grace is looking for interested members to serve as a delegates to the Luther Properties Annual Meeting. **The meeting is held on Monday, March 17, 2025 at 7pm at Luther Manor (3118 Devils Glen Rd, Bettendorf).** Delegates have no voting responsibilities. Your responsibilities are:

- Attend the meeting
- Listen to the property management reports
- Enjoy some light refreshments
- If willing, assist in creating awareness of Luther Properties in the congregation.

A maximum of six delegates will be selected on a first come basis. If interested, contact the office at office@gracewelcomesyou.org or 563-322-0769.

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Paul teaches that whatever our gifts, accolades or status, it means *nothing* if we do not love.

If we have those buttons on hand and we passed them out, will those who wear them know they are loved by our actions? Will the person who you disagree with, the unhoused, the undocumented immigrant, person of color, the child, the elderly, or the queer teen know they are loved? Will they know God's love because we are patient, kind, advocating for them and wanting the best for them?

There are those in our world who would say empathy is a sin. They believe winning for their own benefit regardless of the cost is all that matters. Those who will put restrictions on God's love and who is worthy of our love. If someone is lifting up hate in the place of love, that is sinful. It is not rooted in the Gospel. To engage in that thinking is to ignore the teachings of Jesus, to miss out on the opportunity of knowing God (1 John 4:8).

"Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us, and his love is perfected in us" (1 John 4:11-12).

Your voice, your actions, your love are needed in this world. Your witness to God's love must be as loud as the voices rooted in fear and hatred. As the old hymn goes, they will know we are Christians by our love. More importantly, they will know God because God's love is perfected in us.

God's Peace, Pastor Stephanie

The Grace Personnel Committee hosted a luncheon for Grace Staff on January 4, at Me & Billy's Thank you!



PUZZLE PARTY! TUES FEB 4 1:30pm @ Grace

Come and enjoy a short devotion and fellowship time assembling puzzles. We have many puzzles to choose from and you are welcome to bring your own. **Bring a snack to share!**



We often sit next to people on Sundays and some we know well, some we have barely spoken to. Have you ever wondered, what is their story? Connie Lannan is interviewing members of the congregation to learn a bit about who they are and how God is active in their lives. If you know someone who should be interviewed or you would like to tell your story, contact Connie or the Office.

Despite many challenges, Anderson has always walked with faith

Since she was a little girl, Muriel Anderson knew that God was with her — even during the darkest times.

The first significant challenge that could have rocked her faith was when her father, a police officer, was critically injured while responding to an emergency call. He was hospitalized on and off for the next year-and-a-half. He was disabled and couldn't work. Because of the medical bills, her parents couldn't keep up with their house payments. But a Catholic priest helped her father get better in so many ways.

"The priest found that the Carmelite Monastery needed a caretaker. The house on the property, which belonged to the nuns, was included. It was in bad repair, but we got it fixed up, moved in, and lived on the grounds. It was a wonderful experience — kind of an adventure for all of us. The nuns were so sweet and kind. Being around the nuns you could

feel that God was with you every day," Anderson says.

Another potential faith crisis came after her divorce. But artistic abilities — playing the piano and painting, which she had begun as a child — offered her much-needed solace. Her piano skills even helped sustain her financially after the divorce while she was still caring for the youngest of her four children at home. She found a job at Davenport Bank and then its successor, Quad-City Bank. During that time, she worked there during the day and offered piano lessons during the evening.

"I feel my music and art are gifts from God. I am so grateful," she says, adding that at 81 years young she still plays piano and paints as it helps her feel close to the divine.

Then came a series of health difficulties — a heart attack, open-heart surgery, spinal surgery, knee replacement surgery, to name just a few. Each could have taken her off her faith journey, but "with all my recoveries, I have seen God right beside me. He has just always been there," Anderson says.

Muriel Anderson

She joined Grace through the help of her friend, Shirley Jansen "It was about 15 years ago when I was recovering from my first massive heart attack. Shirley, who was raised in the Quaker faith, had bought a home by Grace. She asked if I would like to join her in going to Grace. She was a Quaker. I was a Catholic. We joined Grace and became Lutherans," Anderson says.

She is so grateful for that move. She became involved with the quilting ministry and even donated one of her paintings to a fundraiser for that ministry. "Everyone [at Grace] has been wonderful. It is

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like a family. I feel like I really belong," she says.

Yes, there have been plenty of struggles, but Anderson is quick to say, "It's been a wonderful life. I know that God has been with me every step of the way."



Examples of Muriel's beautiful and whimsical art.

Women of the ELCA

Naomi Circle meets the third Tuesday each month, September through May, at 9:00am at church for Bible study. Contact Marilyn Schreiber marilyn.schreiber@icloud.com or 563-340-0350

Service Day Quilters meet the second Tuesday & second Wednesday 9am-Noon each month. The quilts made are donated to the community and LWR. In recent years we have made LWR school bags. Contact Gloria Lange langejg1@msn.com or 563-271-1542 or Kathy Miller 563-676-0914 or kathyk1679@aol.com

Food Pantry Weekend

Food Pantry Collection is Sunday, February 2 Bring your non-perishable food donations in a bag, and leave at the altar before the service.
Ethnic Cooking Supplies: Go to imu.uiowa.edu/food/food-pantry/donate/multicultural-food-item-donations-requested for a detailed list of commonly requested multicultural food items.



Page Turners Saturday, February 15, 8:30am

Come join the Saturday Morning Page Turner's Club. We meet at 8:30am the third Saturday each month at different locations for breakfast, book discussion, and great fellowship. **The Paris Apartment** by Lucy Foley From the New York Times bestselling author of The Guest List comes a new locked room mystery, set in a Paris apartment building in which every resident has something to hide...

Host: Ruth Naber 563-386-6310 **Location:** Village Inn on Elmore

Grief Support

Next Meetings: February 5 & 19

The Grief Support Group meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month 5:30pm in Pat Bell Hall. Please join us! Anyone is welcome at anytime, and please be assured our conversations are kept in confidence. Questions? Cindy Lee 563-370-5386.

Centering Prayer

Mondays 4:30pm via Zoom (excluding holidays)

In the Christian tradition, Contemplative Prayer is considered to be the pure gift of God. It is the opening of mind and heart--our whole being to God, the Ultimate Mystery, beyond thoughts, words, and emotions. With grace we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us, closer than breathing, closer than thinking, closer than choosing; closer than consciousness itself.

Centering Prayer is a method designed to facilitate the development of Contemplative Prayer by preparing our faculties to receive this gift.

Cheryl Kritsch is the facilitator. Periodically the group will meet in person in the Grace Church Choir Room providing the ZOOM option, as well. Please contact Cheryl 563-343-0135 with any questions and to verify the location (zoom or in person).

Click [HERE](#) to enter Zoom for Centering Prayer.

Meeting ID: 392 407 7028

Passcode: 2020

Bible Study: THE STORY



Mornings (weekly) - Wednesdays, 11am

Evenings (monthly) - Resumes Thursday, February 6, 7pm

THE STORY Bible Study continues, and anyone who is interested is welcome to join us at anytime during the series. **THE STORY** helps people understand God's Word and powerfully engages with Bible reading like never before. Pr. Stephanie can answer any questions.

Men's Lunch & Conversation

Men's "Lunch & Conversation" meets every Wednesday at Noon, and now that the weather has turned colder, we meet in the narthex at church. You can bring a lunch from home or pick something up from a local restaurant. Contact Dennis Boehme at boehmed@aol.com or 563-320-2661 to be added to the email list.

Council Corner



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- **We deeply value one another.** We recognize that every person is limited, imperfect and sinful while also fearfully and wonderfully made in the image of God. We make room for others within our congregation, seeking to exhibit the open hospitality of God.
- **We believe in God's healing power.** God's deep desire for the world, and its people, is for shalom, for wholeness and health. We aspire to bring God's hope and peace to those in mental, physical or spiritual distress and to support their family members, friends and caregivers.
- **We are thankful God is never done with us.** We value ongoing education, spiritual training and the use of ancient faith practices as means to reshape our lives to the glory of God. We recognize that ours is a lived faith, as we each find new and meaningful ways to carry God's grace into the world.
- **We accompany one another.** We know our God to be Emmanuel, "God with us", and we endeavor to emulate this way of God. We come alongside others with the gift of presence, sharing life in both rejoicing and weeping. We also join in partnership with other communities and groups, seeking to do more than we can do alone to address needs and concerns in our community and the world.

Embracing our past, we begin a new... God's blessings to you all.

Deb Kirby Outgoing Council President

Join us for Junior Bible Studies!

Both the 8:30am and 10:30am worship services

We meet after the children's message at both Sunday services.

This year in JBS, we are reading through **THE STORY for Kids** and **The STORY for Little Ones**. Each week we will

hear familiar Bible stories and enjoy the beautiful illustrations. UPCOMING CLASS THEMES:

February 2 A Kingdom Torn in Two

February 9 God's Messengers

February 16 The Beginning of the End

February 23 The Kingdom's Fall



SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

Please take note of the items that our neighboring schools have shared. If you would like to contribute, you may leave the items in our school collection bin in the narthex. Pastor Kirsten will be sure to deliver the items to schools. Thank you for your contributions to the schools that care for our children. Every small gift is a sign of God's love in action.

- **Hygiene Items** (shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, body wash, brushes, hair ties)
- **Water Bottles**
- **Gently Used Clothes** (variety of children and teen sizes)
- **Gas Cards** for family emergencies in small increments of \$10

Children's Winter Party

On January 12, we enjoyed a small party for children while their grownups enjoyed a few hours to themselves. We learned about the Wiseman and enjoyed a scavenger hunt through the church as we looked for the lost treasures of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Thank you to Casey, Laura, Chrissy, and Janice for their hard work and energy!



PRAY & PLAY

Join us for fun when school is out!

at Grace Lutheran Church | 1140 E High St, Davenport

For kids ages 5-10 | Cost* \$10 per session
Lunch and snacks provided. Close supervision provided by screened and qualified staff. Space is limited.

Activities Include: Games, Playground Time, Arts & Crafts, Music, Dancing, Bible Stories, Educational Programming, and More!

SPRING 2025 February 3
DATES & TIMES March 3
April 14

Registration Required 8:30am-4:00pm

Register Online at: bit.ly/PPRegSP25

OR Scan the QR Code OR request a paper copy from your school counselor OR email office@gracewelcomesyou.org



*Scholarships are available upon request: no child will be turned away for financial circumstances.

Questions? Please feel free to contact Pastor Kirsten Lee at 563-322-0769 or pastorkirsten@gracewelcomesyou.org

Winter Party Photos!



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<div style="background-color: #800040; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Office Hours 8:30am-3:00pm Monday-Thursday 8:30am-Noon Friday </div>						1
2 Food Pantry Sunday 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp. Worship 11:30am IFF Brunch	3 Pray & Play 8:30am-4pm 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer	4 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Personnel Meeting 1:30pm Puzzle Party! 5pm Property Meeting	5 11am THE STORY Bible Stu 12pm Men's Lunch Group 5:30pm Grief Support Grp 7pm Choir Rehearsal	6 12pm Prayer Group 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice 7pm THE STORY Bible Study	7	8
9 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp. Worship	10 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer	11 9am Quilters 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Social Ministry 1:30pm Outreach & Welcome 7pm Worship & Music	12 9am Quilters 11am THE STORY Bible Stu 12pm Men's Lunch Group 7pm Choir Rehearsal	13 10am CYF Meeting 6:30pm Praise Band Practice	14	15 8:30am Page Turners
16 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp. Worship	17 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 5:00pm Sweet Arts Club	18 9am Naomi Circle 10am Pastor's Text Study	19 11am THE STORY Bible Stu 12pm Men's Lunch Group 5:30pm Grief Support Grp 7pm Choir Rehearsal	20	21 11am Council Reports Due	22
23 8:30am Healing Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Healing Worship	24 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 7:00pm Council Meeting	25 10am Pastor's Text Study	26 11am THE STORY Bible Study 12pm Men's Lunch Group 7pm Choir Rehearsal	27 6:30pm Praise Band Practice	28	

In Loving Memory

Longtime member of Grace, **Charlene Frye**, passed away on December 2, 2024. Online remembrances for Charlene may be posted [HERE](#).

Mike Liebbe, husband of Vicki Liebbe, passed away Friday, January 24, at Genesis East. Please keep Vicki and the rest of Mike's family in your prayers as they grieve his passing. We will share memorial plans once they are available, and online remembrances for Mike's family may be posted [HERE](#).

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. Amen.



- 2** Tim Johansen
Ainsley Miller
- 4** Kyle Jewel
- 6** Denise Eads
- 8** Mike Savely
- 9** Laura Cornish
- 15** Christine Giorgio-Cahalan
Sadie Hamerlinck
Gail Walton
- 16** Roe Edinger
Anne Pacha
- 23** Ann Lange
Tim Wahling
- 24** Becky McVay
- 25** Carol Bayles
- 27** Hannah Savely

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

STAFF

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Council Corner

Greetings Grace Members...

We have wrapped up another Council year and another Annual meeting on January 26...change is once again in the air. It has been a privilege to serve as your Council President the last two years.

I know you will continue to support Paul Lewellan as he moves into his duties and role of our Council President, and we are blessed with a wonderful staff and congregation, all that know God is with us.

As when I began in my role as President, I once again wish to share our intention and faith as we look forward to embracing our past and beginning a new, listening to God's voice and direction. We hold close and emulate what God has directed and inspired us to follow, I once again share Grace's mission, vision and values:

Mission

Following Jesus' teachings, Grace seeks to educate, lead, and partner with all people through discipleship to worship, service and faith celebration.

Vision Statement

Grace Lutheran Church is a worshipping, caring, and giving community of believers who are always looking for new and exciting ways to be witnesses to the Grace of God. We are committed to following Jesus' example by serving each other and those in need, being a good neighbor in the community, seeking out and welcoming those who have no church home, being involved and supportive as partners of efforts throughout the community and the world, renewing the spiritual growth of our members of all ages, and developing future leaders of the church. We continue to listen to the Spirit, following wherever it leads.

Values

- **We focus on what God is doing.** We rejoice in the grace of God, ever active in our lives and in the world. We are always on the lookout for where and how God is at work, seeking to bear witness to this action and to join in partnership with God in this work.
- **We know worship is the heart of our community.** We gather together before God, bringing our whole selves, expressing our concerns, hopes and joys. God speaks the word we need to hear, a living address in our current circumstances. Worship is vital - it changes us, nourishes us for the living of our faith in our everyday lives.

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MUSICIANS

Sally Meier - Adult Choir Director
Kathi Parrish - Accompanist
Susan Senn - Organist
Vey Rodriguez - Praise Band Leader

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Paul Lewellan President
Deb Gustafson Vice-President
Janice Gibbs Secretary
Claudia Wood Treasurer
Jackie Cain
Lori Haugen
Laura Toland
Gail Walton

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