

GRACE NOTES

MARCH 2025 ISSUE 83-03



Dear Friends,

"For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." John 6:33

There is so much within our lives that can leave us feeling powerless, as though we are caught in a wave so big it can consume us, crush us. A diagnosis with no treatment, layoffs from work, family or friends' decisions, and laws made by people we've never met. That feeling of powerlessness can be immobilizing. It can cause us to shout out to God in desperation and defiance as our ancestors of faith did.

Yet, feeling powerless doesn't mean you are powerless. We may not be able to control the world around us, but we can lean into that which resides within us. When we sustain ourselves with the divine, the Bread of Life, we cultivate and protect that which God has given us. That which the world has no power to take away. A type of joy that is deeper and richer than we can create on our own. Our hunger for justice and desire to follow Jesus. Our hope which relies on something more powerful than all the forces of this world, including death. These things cannot be

taken from us, but they can be given away.

In this season of Lent, come and dwell with the divine. Nourish your soul. There is enough love, grace, and hope for all. Like all the grains of wheat gathered on the hill to become our bread, we are part of a larger community working to create the kingdom of God among us. Where we care for and encourage one another. Where together we work for the good of the most vulnerable. Where our voices can raise up in praise and protest.

Jesus came into this world to remind us of the one who seeks us out and of who we are called to be. To proclaim life and liberation in God. For nothing, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

When we feel powerless or despairing, we can remember that God is greater and more powerful than anything within this world. That our source of life, that which sustains us, is what also fills us with power. As the prayer and hymn written by Archbishop Desmond Tutu goes, "goodness is stronger

than evil, love is stronger than hate; light is stronger than darkness, life is stronger than death. Victory is ours through him who loves us."

God's Peace
Pastor Stephanie

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP March 5, 7:00pm

Ash Wednesday is a holy day of prayer and marks the beginning of Lent.

Lent asks believers to set aside a time each year to mark an intentional season of focus on Christ's life, ministry, sacrifice, and resurrection.

Join us to nourish your soul; there is enough love, grace, and hope for all.

Bread of Life:
Gather. Savor. Share

Grief Support

Next Meetings: March 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



LENTEN WORSHIP

Wednesdays in Lent | 7pm

Bread of Life: Gather. Savor. Share.

Nourish your soul. When the world feels heavy—divided and uncertain—hearts ache, minds seek peace, and souls hunger for hope. In these moments, while many search for a way forward, the bread of life reminds us of abundance. There is enough love, grace, and hope for all. **Lenten Devotionals are available in the narthex** - follow along as we nourish our souls with the Bread of Life.

SOCIAL MINISTRY LENTEN COLLECTIONS

This Lenten season, the Grace Social Ministry Mission will be collecting items needed for families working with Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI). Items needed include: diapers and cleaning supplies (sponges, PineSol, bath cleaner, dish detergent, SOS Pads, Clorox/Lyson wipes, etc.). Boxes will be placed in the narthex to place your donations now through Easter. Many thanks for your support and compassion for these families!

Coffee with the Disciples

Adult Education Sundays March 9 - April 13 | 9:45am

Paul Lewellan will lead Coffee with the Disciples. Through the use of scripture, biographical information, and creative questioning, the class will get to know these complicated men (people much like us)



March 9 The Call
(Why Pick These Losers?)

March 30 Matthew and Simon the Zealot (Unlikely Disciples)

March 16 Simon Peter and Andrew
(Brothers and Opposites)

April 6 Thomas and Judas Iscariot

March 23 James and John
(The Sons of Thunder)

April 13 Philip, Nathanael, James (Son of Alphaeus), and Judas (Son of James)

Bible Study: THE STORY

Mornings (weekly) - Wednesdays, 11am

Evenings (monthly) - First Thursdays, 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.





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.

For Ron Brunsvold, God has been 'working behind the scenes,' guiding him

Ron Brunsvold admits that he wandered in his faith and his life for years until he met his future wife, Marty.

Ron, who was baptized Lutheran in Billings, Mont., graduated from high school and joined the Navy at age 17. Getting out of the service before he was 21, he graduated from college in Billings, then moved to Las Vegas for about a year, working in a casino. After that, he worked in Seattle and Denver before getting a job with the Army Material Command in Warren, Mich., in 1972.

"Then a friend from Iowa, who was a Hawkeye fan, talked me into coming down to Iowa City to see the Hawks play. That was where I met Marty. It was in a tavern. He had a girlfriend and Marty came along with her. I just drifted all over the place until I met Marty. From those 10 to 15 minutes when she walked through the door, we were pretty much inseparable. I really feel like God brought Marty to me or brought me to her," he says.

After a long-distance courtship, they married in 1974. Ron was

transferred to California and then to Rock Island in 1979, the year they joined Grace.

They became active Grace members. "I was on the church council right at first and on the Sunday School committee for about six months. Wally Hageney and I would record all the services every Sunday on cassette tapes and Marty and Wally would take them around to the shut-ins," he says.

Ron admits Marty was the powerhouse in the family as far as involvement at Grace. A nurse by profession, she established the first Parish Nurse program at Grace — one of countless endeavors she spearheaded and was involved in. "We just started going to church and she was so active in everything and I just kind of followed along. I'm a follower, not a leader. And she was a leader," he says.

Ron thanks Marty for helping grow his faith. "Before Marty, it [faith] wasn't important even a little bit. My faith is very important now. I just saw how much better off people are if they have a faith to fall back on in times of stress and hard times. If they have a faith or a religious background, they can see how God is working behind the scenes, guiding them as God has guided

me," he says.

Losing Marty to cancer in 2020 was a devastating blow, made worse by not being able to visit her due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. Attending grief counseling, first through hospice and now through Grace's program offered by Cindy Lee, has been helpful. "I think it has made me less angry. It's just an excellent thing to tell what I'm thinking. It helps me organize my thoughts. Also, there's the fellowship of the group. That's really important," he says, adding that he also finds solace in the Wednesday Men's Group.

Ron knows that God worked "behind the scenes" in his life, first through Marty and then Grace — powerful ways to return him to his faith.



Activating Faith Communities for Climate Action!

National Faith + Climate Forum 2025
March 27, 2025



National Faith + Climate Forum 2025

March 27, 2025

@ St Paul Lutheran Church
(2136 N Brady St, Davenport)

A free event that brings together people of faith to explore how we can care for creation and take meaningful climate action

- **10:00am** Displays by local organizations
- **11:00am-4:30pm** Livestream broadcast: interfaith, ecumenical, seven topics (Collaboration time is built in to the schedule, and snacks are provided.)

Register online at

nationalfaithandclimateforum.org

List St. Paul Lutheran as your desired location or register to listen on your personal devices.



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

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.



Page Turners

Saturday, March 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. **March Book:** [The Women](#) by Kristin Hannah ... The Women is the story of one woman gone to war, but it shines a light on the story of all women who put themselves in harm's way to help others. Women whose sacrifice and commitment to their country has all too often been forgotten. **Host:** Carol Keller 563-340-9013
Location: Valley Country Cafe (24487 Valley Dr, Bettendorf)

Food Pantry Weekend

Food Pantry Collection is Sunday, March 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.

Donations Needed:

nonperishables - especially canned fruits and vegetables, canned & dry beans, pasta, pasta sauce, rice, breakfast items (cereal, oatmeal, etc.)

Always Appreciated:

peanut butter, jelly/jam, canned meats, canned chili, boxed potatoes, protein bars, whole grain bread, fresh fruits & vegetables (donated directly to the pantry), items for baking (flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, etc.)

Consider:

simple spices (salt, pepper, garlic powder, onion powder, etc.), neutral cooking oils, vinegars, powdered milk, powdered eggs, wooden spoon sets, hand-held can openers, aluminum foil pans (various sizes), cake mixes and frosting for special occasions

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:

March 2 Daniel in Exile

March 9 The Return Home

March 16 & 23 No JBS Spring Break

March 30 The Birth of a King



This past month, we welcomed 21 students for Pray and Play. The most we had for a program day! We had so much fun with Samuel from Steam on Wheels. The students enjoyed learning about robotics, 3D pens, and painting on canvas.



Open To

Children ages 4 through Grade 6

Join Us!

- Dates June 23-27
- Times 8am-4pm
- Where
Trinity Lutheran Church
18137 Criswell St.
Bettendorf 52722
- A school bus will provide transportation from Grace Lutheran Church.

Save the Date! VBS June 23-27

Grace Lutheran is partnering with Trinity Lutheran Church and Saint James Church to host a weeklong Day Camp



Learning, Crafts, Games, and More!

Counselors from Ewalu Bible Camp will lead children in our own local camp experience with all the fun of a park-like atmosphere surrounded by nature

Register Online:

at

bit.ly/GraceVBS2025 or scan the QR code

- \$40/ child: before April 14
- \$50/ child: after April 14
- Registration ends June 1



Questions?

Grace Lutheran Church
563-322-0769
pastorkirsten@gracewelcomesyou.org

Ewalu Camp
563-933-4700
camp@ewalu.org/day-camps



Hollie Swain is looking to get a group together at Circa 21 for the Broadway musical "Come From Away". This beautiful musical tells a true story that has become something of a legend: on September 11, 2001, the residents of the small town Gander, Newfoundland welcomed thousands of airplane passengers into their town on a moment's notice, building lasting connections with them through empathy, music, and an open bar in the week they stayed there. Critics call it the most heartwarming evening available at a theatre.

Dates available are September 24; October 1, 8, 15. Cost will depend on how many sign-up. These are Wednesday dates for the matinee and the theatre opens at 11:45am. We can also plan a possible car pool from Grace. **If you are interested in attending, please contact Hollie Swain at 563-514-4022 or email - k75hollie@gmail.com.**



LSI serves Iowans of all ages; families with newborns navigating parenthood, refugee and immigrant elders, and children of all ages. One of the most crucial populations LSI serves is children in middle and high school. April Howe of LSI shares the impact of LSI programming that she sees in schools across Iowa.

"I love it when a whole classroom of middle schoolers run down the auditorium hallway for an LSI class shouting 'April!' with excitement, ready to learn about healthy relationship skills and self-esteem," said April Howe, a Program Supervisor for LSI's Clinical Services team.

Our LSI Clinical Services team provides various local community programs in schools across Iowa. Whether it's mental health therapy or programs providing teen pregnancy education, they all share the goal of wrapping care around adolescents at a local level.

Specifically, April and her team conduct two community programs in nine northwest Iowa counties: Community Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention (CAPP) and Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP).

CAPP supports and educates Iowa youth by providing sexual health and pregnancy prevention classes for healthy and successful relationships. PREP helps youth build social, emotional, and life skills to develop a positive sense of self and to connect with peers in their community. PREP utilizes the Teen Outreach Program and Wise Guys evidence-based curriculum.

"Thank you for teaching our class and taking time out of your day to come to our school. I learned a lot about healthy relationships and how to handle my anger and other emotions. You opened my eyes to my family's habits and what I want to take with me when I have a family of my own." - High school student to LSI staff

"The letters that high school students write to our staff about what they learned in class and how they will use the knowledge in their everyday life shows the programs' tremendous impact," said April. "We meet the youth where they are at, but also encourage healthy decision-making along the way, which plays a huge role in making prevention education successful."

(continued on page 8)

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<div style="background-color: #4a4a6a; 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	3 Pray & Play 8:30am-4pm 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer	4 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Personnel Meeting 5pm Property Meeting	5 Ash Wednesday 11am THE STORY Bible Stu 12pm Men's Lunch Group 5:30pm Grief Support Grp 6pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm Ash Wednesday Worship	6 11pm Prayer Group 6:30 pm Praise Band Practice 7pm THE STORY Bible Study	7	8
9 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Adult Education 10:30am Contemp. Worship	10 1:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 6pm PEO (Private Event)	11 9am Quilters 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Social Ministry 2:30pm Outreach & Welcome 6pm CYF Mtg	12 9am Quilters 11am THE STORY Bible Stu 12pm Men's Lunch Group 6pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm Lenten Worship	13 6:30pm Praise Band Practice 7pm Worship & Music Mtg	14	15 8:30am Page Turners
16 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Adult Education 10:30am Contemp. Worship	17 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 5:00pm Sweet Arts Club 7pm Luther Properties Mtg	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 6pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm Lenten Worship	20 6:30pm Praise Band Practice	21 11am Council Reports Due	22
23 8:30am Healing Worship 9:30am Adult Education 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 6pm Choir Rehearsal 7pm Lenten Worship	27 6:30pm Praise Band Practice	28	29
30 8:30am Healing Worship 9:30am Adult Education 10:30am Healing Worship	31 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer					

Worship Needs

Worship is central to the Christian faith and is an essential way to connect with God. Grace is in need of a few more volunteers to help with our worship services.

Most needed are acolytes, crucifers, and assisting ministers. If you feel called to serve in any of these capacities (or even as an usher, greeter, bread baker, sound system monitor, making coffee, bringing treats, etc) please talk with Pastor Stephanie or contact the office at office@gracewelcomesyou.org.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 Bill McCullough | 25 Jimmy Carter, Jr |
| 3 Annie Nau | 26 Elizabeth Linde |
| | 28 Dean Rock |
| 4 Karen Cornish | 29 Diane DeHaas |
| 5 Pr. Kirsten Lee | Leon Lagerstam |
| 8 Paris Spotten | 30 Don Haugen |
| 16 Karla Ellingworth | 31 MaryAnn Lindsay |
| Keith Rossmiller | |
| 17 Dennis Boehme | |
| 18 Ann Lorentzen | |
| 19 Chrissy Hartman | |
| 20 Brynn Kanwischer | |
| 21 Gabrielle Tee | |
| 23 David Arp | |



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

ADMIN STAFF

Pastor Stephanie Wood

pastorstephanie@gracewelcomesyou.org

Pastor Kirsten Lee

Director of Outreach & Youth Ministries

pastorkirsten@gracewelcomesyou.org

Annie Nau, Office Administrator

office@gracewelcomesyou.org

Jason Halkias, Custodian

custodian@gracewelcomesyou.org

Claudia Wood, Treasurer

treasurer@gracewelcomesyou.org

Vey Rodriguez, Worship Tech

worshiptech@gracewelcomesyou.org

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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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Council Corner

Council welcomed new members Lori Haugen and Gail Walton. A new job description for the church treasurer was approved. Justina Pessein was hired as staff for Pray and Play. The last Pray & Play session had 21 students.

Pastor Kirsten outlined plans for VBS, June 23-27, 8am-4pm Grace will join with Trinity (PV) and Saint James. A bus would transport Grace and Saint James participants to Trinity. -Peace, Paul Lewellan, Council Pres.

Staff Update

Claudia Wood, our wonderful Treasurer, has shared that she will be resigning from her position at the end of May. While she will be greatly missed, we are excited for her as she will be moving to Chicago to be near her grandkids. Please be sure to thank her for her 15+ years as Treasurer. Also, if you know of anyone who may be interested, please let them know about the position and have them contact the church office for a job description and employment application.



LSI

(continued from page 6)

LUTHERAN SERVICES IN IOWA
people focused • results driven

Furthermore, April's team encourages conversation and participation by providing incentives in the classroom, such as packaged snacks and other LSI materials. "When it comes to engagement in the classroom, I always say, 'When their stomachs are full, their brains are full,'" shared April with a smile. "Some students would skip school all day, but they show up to the last class of the day, taught by LSI. That, right there, is a win for my team."

April's team has seen significant success in response to their CAPP and PREP community programs. Based on a post-program evaluation, 96% of students in the CAPP program reported that they learned "some" or "a lot" that they didn't already know about sexual health topics, and 53% agreed that they are now more likely to start conversations about these topics with others.

"Pregnancy rates have dropped over the last four years in many of our counties served, proving our services are making a difference in our communities," said April. "Reaching the youth on their level and prioritizing prevention makes our program successful."

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.