

A Message from Pastor Aanonson:

It is difficult to believe that I have been your interim pastor now for four months. The time has moved along very quickly. It is good to see so many people who have so much dedication to their congregation. I am enjoying being with you. I have detected a strong desire to get along with it. I have been asked by a rather large number of people what they personally and what the congregation can do to get things going again. I applaud the attitude. Perhaps my answer has been somewhat startling. I usually tell the person that the first thing they need to do is to be patient. You need time to make the switch from one pastor to another. You need time to say good-bye to one pastor before you can fully welcome another. Now is the time to say good-bye. So, be patient and give yourself time. One of the reasons for being patient is that when a congregation begins a new ministry or adds new aspects to their current ministry is that in order for a ministry to succeed is that the new pastor needs to be in favor of that ministry and take leadership and give support to that ministry. Therefore, you need to have your new pastor in step with the congregation. So, your new pastor needs to be here and in on the planning of the new ministries that you may want to do.

The second thing that one can do is to pray. In fact, there is probably nothing more important for you to do than to pray for the Grace Lutheran Church and for the members of the congregation. Let me tell you a little about how I begin the day. A few minutes after I rise I am out walking the usual four miles. As soon as I get home I shower, get ready, eat breakfast, and then I do what I consider the most important thing that I do during the day. I sing Matins, that is, Morning Prayer. You can find it in the ELW, the red hymnal. It is one of the prayer offices in the ELW. While I sing the office, I sing a couple of psalms, sing a hymn, read several portions of Holy Scripture, read some of the writings of Martin Luther, and have a prolonged time of prayer, which includes praying for Grace Lutheran Church. I pray not just for the congregation as a whole and for the various ministries of Grace, but I also pray for the individual members of Grace. I keep a prayer diary. In that diary I write the names of those in need of special prayers, the sick, the dying, the troubled, etc. I also keep a roster of all the members of Grace and each day I pray for one page of members. So, each day about twenty members of Grace are prayed for. Some members I know and many I do not know. Yet, I pray for all members over a period of time. When that is finished I am ready to begin the other work of the day.

Now, what I encourage you to do is to pray for Grace Lutheran Church each day and to pray for the members of Grace. Pray that the Holy Spirit guide your congregation in the calling of a new pastor. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide the ministry of Grace. Pray for each and every member of Grace, by name and by need. To pray for each other also means that you must listen to each other. So, what should you do during this time of interim ministry at Grace? Become a praying congregation. Can you even imagine what changes will come to a congregation where every member is praying for every other member!

Grace and Peace,
Pastor David A. Aanonson

Grace Lutheran Church Council Actions and Highlights – December 17, 2015

MISSION: God’s purpose for Grace Lutheran Church is for us to be servant leaders in mission by loving and inspiring all people to experience the transforming grace of a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

<u>MEMBERS PRESENT:</u>	Pr. Aanonson	Don Ager	Ramona Allenbaugh
	Mike Allenbaugh	Cindy Edgmond	JoAnne Fisher
	Connor Lawhead	Shirlee Staley	Kim Thompson

MEMBERS EXECUSED: John Simmons Jim Edgmond

OPENING PRAYER by Don Ager

HAPPY TIME PRESCHOOL OF MUSCATINE:

- Don Ager gave a brief update of the on-going rental agreement negotiations. Don and Pr. Aanonson have met twice with Happy Time and will meet again on January 6 to find a amicable solution to the rental agreement.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING:

- The Annual Congregational Meeting is Sunday, January 24, at 9:30 a.m. between services. Board members were reminded to submit their annual reports to the church office on or before January 5. Congregational members who wish to have an item on the agenda must submit it in writing on or before January 10 for inclusion in the January 14th Annual Report to the Congregation.
- Since the meeting is being held during coffee hour, Council members agreed to share the duties and bring some bakery items as well.
- The Treasurer will be having a budget slide show presentation between services the Sunday before the annual meeting. Be sure to take some time to view the slide show and ask questions.

NEW COUNCIL MEMBER NOMINEES SUBJECT TO VOTE AT THE ANNUAL MEETING:

- Brenda Erber, Chair, Christian Education
- Karen Hessel, Chair, Social Ministry
- Jeanette Billingsley, Council Representative, and Tibe Vanderlinden, Co-Chairs, Congregational Life

SIGN REQUEST FROM MENNONITE CHURCH:

- The Pastor of the Mennonite Church that meets at Grace on Sunday evenings has asked the Council if they could erect a temporary sign on church property the day of their services. The Council decided it needs more information about the sign as to wording, size, and/or type and whether it would comply with the city sign ordinance. The Mennonite pastor will be informed of Council's request with further follow up at the January meeting.

CALL COMMITTEE UPDATE:

- The committee is looking to interview a possible candidate for our next pastor. John Simmons will update the Congregation on December 20th.

MEETING ADJOURNED 7:45 p.m. (One hour fifteen minutes)



January 2016, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

Giving Voice for Iowa Children and Families – Lutheran Day on the Hill

Families living in poverty. Iowa children who go hungry. Former refugees building new lives.

These kinds of issues are rarely the center of attention at the Iowa State Capitol. Let's change that!

Please consider joining Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) and the three Iowa synods of the ELCA for Lutheran Day on the Hill, an annual day of advocacy in Des Moines to uplift the needs of our neighbors. The event will be held on Wednesday, February 17. Visit www.LSIowa.org/advocacy beginning January 6 for event details, online registration and an online toolkit for your congregation, including how to participate in this year's congregational letter-writing campaign.

If you are new to advocacy, come learn more about the legislative process and your role as a citizen. If you've attended before, join us again. We hope this year's schedule will also allow you more opportunities to connect with legislators.

LSI is proud to be an affiliated social ministry organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Learn more at www.LSIowa.org and www.facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

Lisa's Gifts of Generosity and Advocacy

Lisa has the gift of generosity. And that makes her mom proud.

“She is quite a giver with her time,” said her mom Carolyn. “I love that she is generous, and people say she knows half the county.”

Lisa is an adult living in Ames, and she partners with Lutheran Services in Iowa's (LSI) daily supported community living services for people with disabilities. Because of that support, Lisa can participate in her community, and she loves giving back to others!

She volunteers at Reiman Gardens, she participates in ACE (Advocacy, Connections, Empowerment) through Mainstream Living and she is the President of the Cyclone County Aktion Club, a service organization created by the Kiwanis for persons with special needs. She's helped with fundraisers for neonatal maternal health and food drives for local pantries.

When Lisa was in middle school and high school, LSI helped her work on goals such as cooking, taking care of herself and becoming active in the community. Today, she lives with roommates in her own apartment, supported by LSI.

She is also an advocate, attending LSI's Lutheran Day on the Hill to speak with legislators.

“I'm proud to be out in the community and show them I can do this,” Lisa said. “I can be an advocate so that no one puts down anyone with special needs. I appreciate that I can be independent.”

<p style="text-align: center;">Grace Lutheran Annual Meeting Sunday, January 24th, 9:30 a.m.</p>

The Annual Congregational Meeting is Sunday, January 24th, at 9:30 a.m. between services in the Fellowship Hall. All voting members are urged to attend. Congregational members who wish to have an item on the agenda must submit it in writing on or before January 10th for inclusion in the January 14th Annual Report to the Congregation.

H.O.P.E.S.



Members of Grace Lutheran always come through for our projects. For the children that are provided services by LSI we collected 28 gifts and served a Christmas dinner to families that might not have had these common luxuries. Together with Zion Lutheran we were given the opportunity to do mission work in our own community. The families were grateful and many extended their thanks. I want to thank all of those who provided a gift to be given to the children that night. A special thank-you needs to go to Connie Hanes, Karen Laursen and Joanna Wilts for helping prepare and serve the dinner. All of you were a blessing to those families. Karen Hessel

Grace Women News By Mary Hovick & Karen Hessel

An Invitation – All women of Grace are invited to join us on Tuesday January 12th at 9:30. We will meet at Church in the lounge as we start a new Bible study series. Our winter Bible study, Christian Citizenship 101, is an exploration of the book of Philippians. This session will focus on: Confidence in God's beginnings and endings (Philippians 1 1-16). Please join us in this time of fellowship and sharing. People share as they are comfortable in doing so. You are invited to just come and listen or join in the discussion. **All are welcome!**

January 7, 2016: Please join us at 9:00 to take down the Christmas decorations. The more hands the faster the work will be done. Usually it is only takes 1 to 2 hours plus we have a lot of time to visit while we work.

No Board Meeting in January

Grace Nite Out

The next Grace Nite Out is scheduled for Sunday January 10th, at 5:00 p.m. at Boonies. We hope that everyone attends so we can show Boonies what support we have for the activity.

Grace Trivia Night – March 6th

SAVE THE DATE! MARK YOUR CALENDAR AND WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS IN FEBRUARY.

MITTEN TREE by Karen Hessel

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to our Mitten Tree. You may have noticed dozens of handmade mittens and scarf's. Linda Kleindolph starts early in the summer to make all of those wonderful items to help keep people warm in the winter. All of the mittens, hats and scarves were taken to multiple organizations to distribute to those who need them. **THANK YOU!**



Anniversaries and Birthdays

Please save the next page to use for your prayer list. Pray for each person on their birthday and anniversary. By the end of the year, you would have prayed for everyone in the congregation. **If we have missed a birthday or anniversary or if corrections need to be made, please call the church office at 263-5680. Thank you.**

January Anniversaries

Happy
Anniversary

David & Stephanie Olson	01/05	David & Judith Neelson	01/12
LeRoy & Dixie Brookhart	01/06	Zacharie & Sarah Eagle	01/17
Tim & Kathryn Byrnes	01/06		

January Birthdays

Pamela Cantrell	1/03	Jay Logel	1/14	Richard Boyer	1/20
Bert Green Jr.	1/03	Jim Townsend	1/14	Madeline Wagner	1/21
Sally Miller	1/04	Lafe Westerfelt	1/14	Geraldine Dunker	1/21
Brady Franklin	1/06	Alayna Carlson	1/15	Pam Houseman	1/23
David Smith	1/06	Brenda Hidlebaugh	1/15	Hannah Morgan	1/23
Jason Christofferson	1/07	Leanna Schmelzer	1/15	Jennifer Staack	1/23
Emily Markey	1/07	Owen Gabriel	1/16	Richard Alexander	1/25
Cindy Lane	1/08	Christina Pohl	1/16	Jeanette Billingsley	1/25
Roxanne Allen	1/09	Teri Schlutz	1/16	Michael Kottman	1/25
Dennis Figg	1/09	Sona Ingalls	1/17	Stephanie Nowysz-Ward	1/25

★ HAPPY ★
BIRTHDAY!

Aaron Morgan	1/09	Karen Laursen	1/17	Eric Pohl	1/25
Quinn Chalupa	1/10	Robin Fields	1/18	Jordan Woods	1/25
Wesley Sturtz	1/11	Bret Green	1/18	Kayla Gaunt	1/28
Ruth Allinger	1/12	Laura Peate	1/18	Nicolas Markey	1/28
Brendyn Little	1/12	Aaron Sparks	1/18	Isabelle Mathis	1/28
David Freers	1/13	Amy Griffey	1/19	Susan Havemann	1/29
Ryan Henning	1/13	Millie Lothringer	1/19	Matthew McCleary	1/29
Tammy Stein	1/13	Barbara Sander	1/19	Meggie Gear	1/30
Michael Hartsock	1/14				

Church Announcements

- **The Annual Congregational Meeting is Sunday, January 24th, at 9:30 a.m. between services in the Fellowship Hall. All voting members are urged to attend. Congregational members who wish to have an item on the agenda must submit it in writing on or before January 10th for inclusion in the January 14th Annual Report to the Congregation.**
- **If you have not already done so, please check out the new look of the Church website at gracemuscatine.com.**
- **Updates for the Church Calendar can be found at gracemuscatine.com. Thank you.**
- **Please remember to provide the office with any name, address, email changes, or other pertinent information, so that we have correct information in our Shepherds Staff member file system and email system. Call the office at 263-5680 or email us at glc@machlink.com with changes. Thank you.**



May the New Year bring to you Warmth of love and a light to guide your path towards a positive destination. Happy New Year!