

A Message from Pastor Aanonson:

IT'S FREE! IT'S FREE! IT'S FREE! God's gift of grace given to us through His Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior is free! Lutherans are very fond of saying that we are justified (saved) by grace through faith. What we need to remember is that we do not put a comma after the word "faith"; there is a period there. It is so easy to want to add other words after "faith" so that it reads something like "we are justified by grace though faith, but we have to....." And then we take it away. We proclaim that God's gift is given and we take it away by making it something that we have earned by what we do. A few months ago I was channel surfing and ran across a local preacher who was explaining that we are saved by grace through faith, which was God's free gift, but we had to make a decision for Jesus Christ, believe in Jesus Christ, confess our sins, and he added a couple of other thing that I don't remember. By the time he was done with the "add-ons" I was beginning to despair. Thankfully, he was very wrong in what he was saying. He was taking the gospel and making it law. In reality he was declaring that we were saved by the law, by what we do; not by what God did and does. The law (what we do) was ultimate and God's grace was penultimate. It was like God putting His grace on a plate on the table and we had to reach for it and grab it off the plate for us to have it. Those very actions of reaching and grabbing (decisions) make those actions ultimate and God's grace penultimate.

Martin Luther read 1 Corinthians 12:3, *Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.* Later as he wrote in his *Small Catechism* the explanation to the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed we hear the echo of these words, *I believe that by my own reason or strength I cannot believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him. But the Holy Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith....* Luther frankly admits that he cannot believe that Jesus Christ is his Lord. Luther cannot make a decision to believe. As sinful human beings we are incapable to making any decisions other than the decision to continue our unbelief. It takes God Himself through the Holy Spirit to break through our sin and speak the words of belief. The decision is never our decision; it is always God's decision. In John 15:16 we hear Jesus tells His disciples, *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you....* What was true then is true today. We are incapable of choosing God, but God in His love chose us and continues to choose us everyday to be His. In the end we do not have that which we prize so much, free will. Luther reminds us that only God and God alone has a free will. Do you see the trap set by so many of us of once again focusing on ourselves and putting God once again in

second place (the penultimate place)? The glorious proclamation of the Gospel is always, but always what God does. It is not what we do or have to do or better do. It is always what God has done, is doing, and will do for us through His Son Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

IT'S COSTLY! IT'S COSTLY! IT'S COSTLY! In His free will God has chosen to bind Himself to His creation. God's free gift of grace is not free. Dietrich Bonhoeffer reminds us that what is His free gift to us is very costly to God. It cost God the life of His Son Jesus Christ. God's free will, God's free costly choice was to save His creation through the death of His Son on the cross. There are no ifs, and, or buts after God's declaration of grace to us. But we are changed. God's grace changes us. God's Holy Spirit works in us daily to bring us to repentance of our sin and to raise us up to be new people, new people who are conformed to Christ. The work of the Holy Spirit is day by day to make us into people who fear, love, and trust in God above all things. That too is God's work. For all this Luther says we are to thank, praise, serve, and obey our Lord (And that too is the work of the Holy Spirit. Thanks be to God!)

Grace and Peace,
Pastor David A. Aanonson



Mother's Day is a holiday celebrated annually as a tribute to all mothers and motherhood. It is celebrated on various dates in many parts of the world. Although the origins of the holiday dates back to the times of the ancient Greeks and Romans, the modern form of the celebration of Mother's Day in the United States began in the early 20th century.

It was first celebrated in 1908 in Grafton, West Virginia, when Anna Jarvis held a memorial for her mother Ann Reeves Jarvis who, in turn, many years earlier had founded Mothers' Day Work Clubs in five cities. Anna Jarvis began a campaign to make the Mother's Day a national holiday and she succeeded in 1914, when the

U.S. President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed the second Sunday in May a Mother's Day.

In honor of our moms/ladies we ask that you wear a hat on Mother's Day, May 8th, and we will be celebrating at our coffee hour with goodies for all moms/ladies.

Happy Mother's Day to all you moms/ladies and enjoy your special day.

Special Congregational Meeting Sunday, May 1st by Don Ager

All Grace Members: In a special meeting on April 10th, your Church Council, upon the recommendation of the Call Committee, voted unanimously to extend a call to Dan Baldwin to serve as Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. A “Meet and Greet” for Dan and his wife, Aleece, was held on Saturday, April 23rd, for you to get acquainted with them.

On Sunday, May 1st, at 9:30 a.m., a Congregational Meeting will be held in the Social Hall to vote on Council’s recommendation to extend a call to Mr. Baldwin to serve as Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church. At this meeting, John Simmons, Chairman of the Call Committee, will explain Synod protocol in the call process and provide details concerning the recommended call so you can make an informed decision on the candidate. Thank you.

May 2016, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story



May 2016, LSI Bulletin/Newsletter Article and Story

In Celebration of Graduation

May’s graduation season is often a celebration of what it takes to accomplish something. We celebrate dreams, determination, hard work and support, and we celebrate the pride and joy of parents, grandparents, friends and other family members who help along the way.

We celebrate “graduations” at Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI) all year round. We celebrate when a mom or dad has completed a parenting program. We celebrate when a child has completed all his goals in a skill-building program. We celebrate when an elder refugee attends a citizenship ceremony to take the oath of U.S. citizenship or when a refugee woman completes child care training. We celebrate when teenagers graduate from LSI’s Bremwood Residential Treatment Center and begin young adulthood, often with help from churches who have donated furniture or other supplies to help them set up their first apartment.

Graduation is a celebration of community. We don’t get where we are in life on our own. We get there with support. With encouragement. With a mentor. With family.

You’re the family standing alongside so many people served through LSI as they achieve life-changing milestones. Thank you.

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.

Daring to Dream

Every day Taw Kaw Htoo pursues her dreams as a farmer, a child care provider and an English student. After fleeing violence and persecution in her native Burma, Taw Kaw Htoo lived in refugee camps in Thailand before being resettled to the U.S. She may have lost her home, but not her hope. With LSI's support, this strong, courageous woman is daring to dream.

Her day begins at dawn at LSI's Global Greens Farm where she farms a small plot, growing produce to sell to her community.

"I like farming because I grew vegetables back in my home country," she said.

After tending her crops, she moves on to her second business of the day: caring for children. LSI's child care business development program helps former refugees become state-licensed child care providers. Along with providing a small income, the program increases the availability of culturally appropriate child care for the refugee community, enabling more parents to enter the workforce.

"I didn't have any professional training on how to install a car seat or do CPR," said Taw Kaw Htoo. "LSI has helped with that. It's great that I am able to care for the children in my community."

Caring for children helps her pursue her third dream: learning English.

"My language is really important to me," she said. "I try to teach children my language every day, and they help me learn English. I really want to speak English. That's my biggest dream."

<p style="text-align: center;">Grace Lutheran Church Council Actions and Highlights – Council Meeting</p>
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Due to the change of the Church Council Meetings to the 4th Thursday of each month starting in April 2016, the Grace Lutheran Church Council Actions and Highlights will now be available the 2nd Sunday of each month in the document racks located in the Church Foyer and also on the Church Website.

<p style="text-align: center;">Grace Nite Out for May</p>
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Grace Nite Out will be Sunday May 15th at Family Restaurant, Muscatine Mall at 5:00. There will be a sign up sheet on the cadenza in the Church Foyer. Everyone is invited but we try to let the restaurant know about how many people so they can be prepared. Please join us for a time of fellowship. (no work involved)

Grace Lutheran Church High School & College Graduates for 2016

Grace Lutheran Church has three students who will be graduating this year from Muscatine High School. They are Clayton Goddard, Gavin Lippelgoes, and Brad Simmons. Sunday, May 15th, we will be recognizing the three seniors at the 10:45 a.m. service and will be holding a special coffee hour for them. Below are brief bios on each graduating senior.



Clayton Goddard: Clayton is the son of Emily and Ryan Goddard and the middle sibling to Clara and Margaret.

During his time at Muscatine High School, Clayton was involved in many extracurricular activities that included: football (9-12), basketball (9-10), wrestling (11), track (11), National Honor Society (11-12), Spanish Club (11-12) and Iowa City club rugby (12). During his senior year of football, Clayton was voted to one of five team captains by his teammates. After Clayton's senior football season, he was voted to the 2nd team All-District and was awarded Iowa Football Coaches Association Academic All-State. He has maintained at least a 3.5 GPA throughout his four years in high school. Over the past two years (and currently), during his free time, Clayton works at West Side Store.

Next year Clayton plans to attend the University of Iowa with a public health major. He will also participate in club rugby at the University.

Gavin Lippelgoes: Gavin is the son of Jeana Lippelgoes and Rod Lippelgoes.

During High School Gavin was in all sorts of activities. Freshman year he was in basketball. I also raised FFA pigs up until this year. I help out every year to work at Kiddy Barnyard and the Monsanto Days. I help in the spring with the Muscatine FFA plant sale also.

My plans for after High School is to attend Scott Community College and get an AAS in Diesel Technology and Engineering.

Bradford Simmons: Bradford is the son of John and Alice Simmons.

I am 16 years old and will graduate from Muscatine High School this May.. I was born in Hammond, Indiana and moved to Muscatine when I was 4. I attended Bishop Hayes Catholic School through 4th grade and then went to Grant School. I attended West Middle School. In school I enjoy advanced mathematics and the sciences. I have been a member of FFA for 4 years and am currently a member of The National Honor Society. I have participated in many volunteer activities for 4 years and will receive the Silver Cord. I was nominated for and accepted in the Muscatine Area National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC). Outside of school I enjoy researching (usually something about science), playing different computer games, and playing golf.

I will be attending the University of Iowa in the Fall and studying Physics and Astronomy.

Affirmation of Baptism/Confirmation



May 15th, at the 10:45 a.m. service, Jasmine Bengtson and Maggie Goddard will be confirmed in the Church for meeting the required Youth Affirmation of Baptism Guidelines. A special reception will be held at the 9:30 a.m Coffee Hour.

GLC Ministry of Literacy

Thank you again for all your support. If you could see the growth of these children you would know just how important this program is and how much your support matters to them. We have completed our spring term and will be looking forward to our summer term in July. Judy has done an incredible job serving as director and will be deeply missed. We will continue to have a strong program under the guidance of a new director. We will be needing snacks and volunteers for the July program. Our volunteer list is dwindling due to life situations. We will be looking within and outside the church for more volunteers. Please consider reading with the kids, even if you can only help once in awhile. It is truly rewarding.

We hope to fill back packs again for the children attending the summer term. Due to complicated school supply lists, we have decided to collect monetary donations to pay for the school supplies and we will purchase all the supplies at one time. Be watching for more information.

Macaroni & Cheese Months by Tammy Stein



April and May are Macaroni & Cheese months in the Sunday school at Grace. Let's fill the food pantry cart into a tower of boxed foods to feed GOD's flock.

A special treat awaits all our little angel's in Sunday school the end of May. The Congregation should feel free to help build our tower too! Thank you. Tammy Stein, Food Pantry Chair.



So far we have collected 76 boxes for the food pantry.



The middle school class met outside to enjoy the warm spring weather. Pictured: Jasmine & Jordyn Bengtson, Brenda Erber, Kylie green and Kevin Erber.

Grace Women News By Mary Hovick & Karen Hessel

An Invitation – All women of Grace are invited to join us on Tuesday May 10th at 9:30. We will meet at Church in the lounge as we continue with our Bible study series. Our Bible study will look at May and Elizabeth "Sisters across the generations Luke 1:26-56. 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!**

JOBS FOR ALL: June 14th we hope all available women will join us to do our spring cleaning. We plan to meet at 9:00 a.m. and clean the sanctuary, lounge and entry. Please bring some cleaning supplies and join us in an old fashioned fellowship of cleaning, sharing and a few laughs. We will also have some sweet treats. Mark it on your calendars.



Box Tops for Education – Please save Box Top Coupons and/or UPC Codes found throughout your local grocery store. Visit www.boxtops4education.com for a current list of participating products. Clipped coupons can be placed in the "Box Tops for Education" folder on the bulletin board across the hall from Pastor's office. The money earned by this project will be sent to Bethphage School in Axtell, Nebraska for children and adults with mental retardation and developmental disabilities.

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.**

May Anniversaries

Happy Anniversary

<i>Brad & Janice Fear</i>	<i>5/1</i>	<i>Jamie & Stephanie Ash</i>	<i>5/21</i>
<i>John & Cindy Sparks</i>	<i>5/2</i>	<i>Richard & Tara Oppelt III</i>	<i>5/24</i>
<i>John & Sandrine Gabriel</i>	<i>5/7</i>	<i>Jim & Tammy Stein</i>	<i>5/25</i>
<i>Denny & Joyce Figg</i>	<i>5/9</i>	<i>Joey & Laura Peate</i>	<i>5/28</i>
<i>Randy & Traci Lippelgoes</i>	<i>5/11</i>	<i>Marc & Mindy Wilts</i>	<i>5/29</i>
<i>Bruce & Robbie Plett</i>	<i>5/12</i>	<i>Tim & Jodi Heth</i>	<i>5/30</i>
<i>Mike & Carrie Zorich</i>	<i>5/19</i>	<i>Mike & Connie Fuller</i>	<i>5/31</i>

May Birthdays

Jack Cannon	5/01	Michael Leech	5/12	Jeff White	5/18
Kim Thompson	5/01	Addison Skipton	5/12	Clara Goddard	5/19
Shantell Gaunt	5/02	Allison Fields	5/13	Jana Batchelor	5/20
Justin Ford	5/03	Renee Kemper	5/13	Hannah Laursen	5/20
Vernalee Pameticky	5/03	Zina Schmelzer	5/13	Haylee Laursen	5/20
Jeanie Cromer	5/04	Betsy Townsend	5/13	Jane Theobald	5/20
Ann Griesenbrock	5/04	Shaun Smith	5/14	Ashley Buster-Garrison	5/21
Lucas Hall	5/04	Tibe Vander Linden	5/14	Marcy Curtis	5/21
John Hidlebaugh III	5/05	Robert Dahl	5/15	Kevin Erber	5/21
Joy Kissell	5/05	Michelle Hampton	5/15	John Ford	5/22



Allison Markey	5/07	Morgan Hogenson	5/15	Doris Holliday	5/22
Melissa Fourneau	5/08	Jerry Lange	5/15	Maxim McKasson	5/22
Marilyn Wedel	5/08	Dora Rathbun	5/15	Joyce Figg	5/23
Heather Butler	5/09	Bob Westerfelt II	5/15	Hilary Holmes	5/24
Emily Guyer	5/09	Katie Hidlebaugh	5/16	Annette Gieseman	5/25
Ethan Heth	5/09	Stephanie Ash	5/17	Kelly Thompson	5/25
Maura Chalupa	5/10	Tara Oppelt	5/17	Taylor Franklin	5/26
Janie Fahy	5/10	Phillip Chalupa	5/18	Brandon Strause	5/26
Robert Gaunt	5/10	Kasey Ford	5/18	Gavin Jones	5/27
Jordan Meeker	5/11	Grace Kissell	5/18	Karen Olderog	5/27
Stephanie Melson	5/11	Shawn Maher	5/18	Lynn Sulzberger	5/27
				Tracy McGinnis	5/29

Church Announcements

- **The new Church Directory is available in the Church Foyer. One per family. Thank you.**
- **The weekly Grace Notes PS and Church Bulletins are now published on the Church web site gracemuscatine.com.**
- **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.**
- **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 with changes. Thank you.**