



December 8, 2017

Greetings friends,

Last week we said good bye to our dear friend, Al Rau. What a privilege it has been to worship with him and get to know him since he retired here so many years ago. I've written several times about the wonderful people who are members, regular attenders and faithful servants of Grace Church. Al Rau was certainly one of those.

Coming as he did to our church family as a retired pastor, Al never overstepped boundaries of pastors currently serving. He stood ready to help as called upon and served in many other ways. His annual birthday messages, begun when he turned 90 in 2011, were always greatly anticipated. His messages were well thought out and an inspiration to everyone who listened. Anyone who took the time to personally visit with

Al and get to know him came away from the encounters richer for the experience. The simplest way to put it is to say that he loved. Al loved.

Al Rau loved life. He remained curious and interested in the world around him throughout his time here on earth. For as long as he was able, he got out to explore and experience life first hand by walking, biking, motorcycling and flying both locally and in more exotic locales. If Iowa was closer to the ocean, I have no doubt he would have been a scuba diver, too! I'll bet he tried snorkeling!

Al loved and cared deeply for his family and for his Grace Church family as well. His ever-present, genuine smile and gentle ways were a special blessing. His greeting was always heartfelt and made you feel as if he had been waiting all morning, just to speak to you.

Al Rau will be missed by many of us for years to come. God bless our memories of Al Rau.

This Week at Grace – This Sunday on the second Sunday of Advent, Jerry Spencer brings us the message this week, "O Lord It's Hard to be Humble, When You're Perfect in Every Way" is inspired by Mark 1: 1-8. *The Touch of Grace Bells* will share "Still, Still, Still". Chris, Kate and Lena Feil will serve as Advent Candle lighters. George Janvrin is our liturgist this week with the Warwick family serving as greeters. Dave & Linda McVicker and Gene & Erma Schaeffer will be acting as ushers. As always, worship begins at 9:15. Following our worship service, you're invited to come down to visit with friends and munch on snacks and coffee. Sunday school program practice begins at 10:30 in the sanctuary. Please come worship and fellowship with us!

Baked Goods needed! The Bethany Life Volunteers are hosting their annual Bake Sale/Craft Sale on Sunday, December 10th. We need donated baked goods to sell that day. If you have a bit of spare time to bake some brownies or cookies, a cake, pie or bars, please drop them off to the front desk at Bethany Life on Saturday, December 9th, before 7 PM. Thank you SO much for supporting our residents and tenants.

Angel Tree gifts wrapped and tagged with the wish list slip are due at Immanuel Church by THIS Monday, December 11th.

If you haven't yet turned in your bright green pledge card for 2018, please do so at your earliest convenience. You may place it in the offering plate on Sunday morning or get it to the church office. Thank you!

The Story Theater will present the animated Nativity movie *The Star* on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Dec. 8, 9, 10, at the Story Theater in Story City, with showings at 7 p.m. each evening, plus matinees on Saturday and Sunday at 4:30 p.m. Admission is only \$4 and it's rated PG.

You are invited to a Christmas Piano Recital presented by the students of Milianna Carlson today (*Sunday, December 10*) at 3 P.M. at Immanuel Lutheran Church. Come for some holiday tunes and stay for a reception featuring favorite treats!

After church on Sunday, please drop by The Households of Bethany and purchase a baked good and/or craft item to support the annual Volunteer Christmas Bake Sale/Craft Sale. All proceeds go to support Bethany Life. The sale is between 9 AM and 1 PM! The volunteers hope to see you there! Come early to get your Potato Cakes!

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer: Natalie Tryon; Denny Michel; Sara Dappen; Julie Jacobson; Lois Johnson; Sharon Matson; Terry (niece of George Sellers); Norman Patti; Pam Hillis; Cooper Leeman; Taylor family in Africa mission

News You Can Use

Sunday, December 10

- 8:00 AM Trustees
- 9:15 AM Worship – Jerry Spencer leads, Bells play
- 10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship
- 10:30 AM Sunday school program practice

Monday, December 11

- 5:30 PM SPRC

Wednesday, December 13

- 1:30 PM UMW
- 4:30 PM Christmas program practice
- 7:00 PM Choir
- 8:00 PM Bell Choir Christmas party at Hermanson's

Thursday, December 14

- 5:00 PM Scrapbooking in Fellowship Hall

Sunday, December 17

- 9:15 AM Worship – choir sings
- 10:15 AM 3rd Sunday Brunch – Biscuits and Sausage Gravy – to support of Jerry Spencer's ministry training
- 11:00 AM Sunday school Christmas Program – "Make a Joyful Noise!"
- 6:00 PM Choir Christmas party at Carlson's

**Faithfully,
Cathy**