



February 23, 2018

Greetings friends,

I do believe the “dreary wearies” of winter have taken up residence. As I write this (Thursday), the sky is gloomy, our little corner of the world is ice covered and lots of snow is in the forecast over the next few days. Spring seems a long way away on days like this. As is often the case, when the weather is bad, all I can think about is making comfort food.

What is it about inclement weather that prompts that response? It’s the same impulse that creates long lines at the grocery store as folks rush to pick up milk, eggs, bread and other essentials before the storm hits. Out on the prairie in days of yore, one could understand such emergency stockpiling. Perhaps for more rural, big families with small children and before easy transportation, refrigerators, and huge snow plows it made sense. But in Mark’s and my case, as two middle-aged, empty nesters living in town just blocks from the store, I wonder. I can’t recall a storm so ferocious that we were snowbound for days.

Still, there I am cooking up a different kind of storm as bad weather approaches. Often this “Storm Cooking” takes the form of a meat-filled soup of some sort or a huge casserole or big meat and potatoes meal. It’s fortunate we’re leftover fans at our house.

But, true confession time, even when the weather is nice we like to cook big meals a few times a week and then dine on leftovers for a couple days. I’m not sure if this is laziness or efficiency. I just know we don’t go hungry on stormy winter days at our house.

Be safe this weekend!

This Week at Grace –Pastor Fred’s message, *A Sure Foundation* is inspired by Mark 8:31-28. The Children’s Bell Choir will play, *Sweet Hour of Prayer*. Greeters this week are Val & Camille Hubert and Bill & Susan Mardock. Those serving as ushers include Adam & Owen Hubert, Carroll Brekke and Gene Schaeffer. Worship begins at 9:15 with Coffee Fellowship at 10:15. Sunday school and Confirmation class will meet at 10:30. Please join us!

Grace Church is responsible for leading work at the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry in 2018 and we need lots of volunteers to help. All kinds of opportunities abound – a sign-up sheet is on the north table in the narthex hallway. Please plan to get involved with this *Grace Church-wide* project this year.

PLEASE NOTE THE **ENDOW GRACE** REPORT ON THE NEXT PAGE!

March/April Upper Rooms are available in the narthex. We’ve changed our subscription and only get the larger print copies now.

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer: Jackie Royer (Sharla’s friend); George Mackey; Tim (Becky Barclay’s brother); Denny Michel; Julie Jacobson; Sara Dappen; Norman Patti; Pam Hillis; Lois Johnson; Cooper Leeman, Taylors in Africa

News You Can Use

Sunday, February 25

- 9:15 AM Worship – children’s bells
- 10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship
- 10:30 AM Sunday school and Confirmation

Monday, February 26

- 5:30 PM Finance
- 6:30 PM Council

Wednesday, February 28

- 7:00 PM Choir
- 8:00 PM Bells

Sunday, March 4

- 9:15 AM Worship – choir, Communion
- 10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship
- 10:30 AM Sunday school

Faithfully,
Cathy



FINANCIAL REPORT – December 31, 2017

At the end of the fourth quarter of 2017, Grace’s **General Endowment Fund** had a balance of \$45,345, with a year-to-date income of \$208.03. The **Hendrickson Fund (undesigned)** had grown to \$13,124, earning \$60.42 through December. The **Beckman Fund (Camping)** had a balance of \$4,002, with a year-to-date income of \$18.36. The **Frandsen Fund (Youth)** had grown to \$13,387, earning \$61.62 through December. The **Elevator Fund**, instituted in February 2014, had a balance at the end of December of \$10,107, with a year-to-date income of \$47.72.

Overall, Grace’s Endowment Funds earned \$396.15 in 2017, growing to **\$85,965** from an initial principal investment of \$69,251. Grace’s funds are conservatively allocated with 54% invested in **Equity Funds** – which have grown 20.20% over the last twelve months – and 46% in **Fixed Income Bond Funds** – which performed at -0.89% over the last twelve months.

The **average annual net returns** for the funds invested in by Grace (and managed by the Iowa United Methodist Foundation), as of December 31, 2017 follow:

	<u>1 year</u>	<u>3 years</u>	<u>5 years</u>
Equity Fund	20.20%	8.91%	11.66%
Bond Fund	-0.89%	0.80%	0.80%

Grace’s Endowment Committee encourages you to consider the various ways your giving can help to **Endow Grace**, preserving the future of our Church.

Please contact the church office at 515-733-4712 or office@grace-umc.com or visit our website at <http://www.grace-umc.com/endowgrace.aspx> .