



January 3, 2019

Greetings friends,

Well Mark's and my 2018 sure ended in a most lovely way – we welcomed a new grandson! Yes, Miss Cora Mae has a little brother and we couldn't be more excited!

Sullivan Mack Hermanson arrived on the afternoon of December 26th and seems to be very laid back when compared to his big sister's bright-eyed eagerness to soak everything in from her first moments. Sully will get to it...later...probably. It will be interesting to see if this early chill attitude will persist going forward.

For now, his folks are overjoyed with this special blessing and are trying to adjust life to accommodate a newborn. Cora vacillates between being intrigued and/or thrilled by him and being puzzled when her folks are so tired and not always immediately available to accommodate her desires. Meanwhile, G'pa and G'ma are busy figuring out excuses to make trips over to visit as often as possible. 2019 is going to be filled with wonderful adventures!

Wishing you special blessings, good health and joy in 2019!

This Week at Grace, Pastor is using Isaiah 60:1-6 and Matthew 2:1-12 as inspiration for his message - "Tis the Season for: A Star". We will celebrate Communion and the Chancel Choir will sing, *Amen! Tell It on the Mountain*. Greeters on Sunday are Owen & Gloria Sampson and Mike & Patsy Jensen. Those serving as ushers include Dale & Lynn Henricks and Duane & Sharon Matson. Hubert Bicklehaupt, Rod Bohner, and Kevin & Linda Larson will usher wheelchair bound residents to worship at *Bethany Life*. Christine Semler-Blue is making her debut as our liturgist this week. Worship begins at 9:15 with Christmas decoration take down & put away immediately following the service. We won't have coffee time this week. Kids will meet for Sunday school beginning at 10:30. Please join us!

THIS Sunday, Jan. 6th, we will be taking down and putting away all of our Christmas decorations at the church following the worship service. Please plan to stick around to lend a hand!

The Story City EDC is hosting a Trivia Night on January 18th at 7:00pm (doors open at 6:00) at the Story City Community Center. We'd like to get a team or two together to represent Grace Church. Team size is 8 players and tables are limited, so we'll want to get registered soon. This is a themed event with participants encourage to come dressed as a favorite TV or movie character. Teams can coordinate and even decorate the table to fit their group theme. Let Jonathan know if you'd like to participate – there is a table fee of \$12.50 per person.

Living Faithfully: The United Methodist Church and Human Sexuality is a little book that, in just four short chapters—leads us through a discussion of the issues at the core of our church's current struggle. What is the conflict about? What do people on either "side" have to say? In February a special general conference will receive—and perhaps act on—a report from *The Commission on A Way Forward*. This commission was tasked with finding a way for the United Methodist Church to continue its ministry while our people remained in connection with one another. I feel it is my responsibility to lead the congregation into some kind of understanding of the issues involved. We will be discussing this book in the adult Sunday school class beginning January 13. I would also like to make another time available: perhaps Sunday evenings, Tuesday evenings, or Wednesday before choir practice. Please indicate your preference on the attendance pad. The office is purchasing a number of books to get us started.

Many of us may not know what this is all about. Some of us may already have strong opinions (and this discussion is not meant to change anyone's mind). Quite a few of us have been affected either within our families or extended circle of friends. Let's take some time to talk. –Jonathan

Jonathan will cover the material three times each week beginning January 13th.

Sunday mornings during the Sunday school hour (10:30-11:30)

Wednesday afternoons from 5:30-6:30

Thursday evenings at 7:00-8:00

It is a 4 to 5 week class. The Wednesday and Thursday sessions will meet in the Chapel. Participants may come to whichever session that suits their schedule each week. Additional Living Faithfully books will be available on the north table in the narthex hallway. A \$10 gift would be appreciated, but is not required.

As you pray this week, please remember these friends and hold each up in special prayer:

Marlys Janvrin; Renee Menz (Dale & Lynn Henricks daughter); Tracy Matson; Sara Dappen; Velda Frette; George Sellers; Pat Skowronski; Joan Cooney; Lois Johnson; Garry Gerjets; Clarence (friend of George Sellers); Jackie Royer (Sharla's friend); Cooper Leeman; Taylor family in Africa

News You Can Use

Sunday, January 6

9:15 AM Worship

10:15 AM Take down decorations

10:30 AM Sunday school

11:30 AM Education – note change of day, time

Wednesday, January 9

1:30 PM UMW

5:00 PM Kids' Bells

7:00 PM Choir

8:00 PM Bells

Sunday, January 13

9:15 AM Worship

10:15 AM Coffee Fellowship

10:30 AM Sunday school – “Living Faithfully” study begins!

Please “like” our Facebook page, [@storycitygrace](#) and receive regular updates on “what’s happening” at Grace Church! Our website, www.grace-umc.com is full of information and pictures about the life and activities of our Grace Church family. Please check it out!

**Faithfully,
Cathy**