



GRACE UNITED  
METHODIST  
CHURCH  
PO BOX 67  
624 ELM AVE.  
STORY CITY, IA 50248

### Contact Information

**Pastor Jonathan  
Cooney Ph.D.**  
jonathan.cooney07  
@gmail.com

**Shannon Koppes**  
Administrative  
Assistant  
office@grace-umc.com  
515-733-4712

www.grace-umc.com

"Like" us on  
Facebook—Story City  
Grace

Office Hours:  
Monday — Friday  
8:30 AM — 12:30 PM

The Visitor is a  
monthly publication of  
Grace UMC, Story City.  
If you would like to add,  
change or remove your  
name from our mailing  
or e-mailing list

\*correct your address

\*submit news to be  
published in  
*The Visitor*...

Mail us the information  
Grace UMC;  
624 Elm Ave.  
P.O. Box 67  
OR call us  
(515) 733-4712  
OR email us:  
office@grace-umc.com

# The Grace Church Visitor

VOL. 74 NO. 7

JANUARY 2023

## Happy New Year



The church youth put on a  
fabulous program for the  
church on December 18.



### What's Inside

**Page 2 – Jan. Birthdays, Lectionary Readings, From Our Pastor**

**Page 3 – G.R.A.C.E. Teams, Sympathy, Congregational Assess.  
Tool Meeting, Jan. Volunteers, Decorating,  
Staff Appreciation Sunday, 2022 Giving**

**Page 4 – Prayers, Gifts, Presence, Witness, Service, MS Youth,  
Adult Studies Class, Thank you**

**Page 5 – Mission Brunch, Adventure of a Lifetime,  
Worship Links, Poinsettias**

**Page 6 – Inclement Weather, Scholarships, Winter Gear Swap,  
UWF News, Funeral Committee, Christmas Program**

**Page 7 – Pictures of Grace**

**Pages 8 & 9 – Leadership Development Report for 2023**

**Page 10 – January Calendar of Events**

*Grace = God's Riches At Christ's Expense*

## January Birthdays

Braylen Loots	1/3
John Barclay	1/4
Susan Bohner	1/4
Owen Ness	1/4
Beverly Tesdall	1/4
Gabriella Tesdall	1/4
Tepricia Reeder	1/5
Alyssa Loots	1/10
Caitlin Mander	1/13
Loretta Parker	1/15
Marcia Hofsommer	1/16
Truman Flaspohler	1/18
Jenna Hoskins	1/19
Helen Caruth	1/20
Candi Holm	1/21
Laila Tesdall	1/24
Corinne Brown	1/30
Christine Semler-Blue	1/30

*If we're missing a birthday please accept our apologies and let us know so we can update our records!*

## January Lectionary

### January 1

Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14;  
Ephesians 3:1-12; Matthew 2:1-12

### January 8

Isaiah 42: 1-9; Psalm 29; Acts 10:34-43;  
Matthew 3:13-17

### January 15

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11;  
1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42

### January 22

Isaiah 9:1-4; Psalm 27:1, 4-9;  
1 Corinthians 1:10-18; Matthew 4:12-23

### January 29

Micah 6:1-8; Psalm 15; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31;  
Matthew 5:1-12

Deadline for submitting *Visitor* information is the 20th of each month. Information for the weekly bulletin and *This Week at Grace* is due in the office by noon on Wednesdays.

## From Our Pastor



Beloveds,

In Roman mythology, Janus was a god with two heads that looked in opposite directions—one into the past, and one into the future. He was the god of gates, doors, entrances, and exits. His name comes from the Latin for “gate.” He was prayed to at the beginning and end of every important action—especially war.

Of course, the month of January is named for him.

I know that many people don’t want to look back, they insist that the past is the past and it is important to stride confidently into the future. Of course, I am an historian, and I am convinced that, as Churchill reportedly said, those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Even if the past is painful, why should we waste all that grief and not apply what we’ve learned to the here and now?

When Fred Darbonne was your pastor and transition specialist he led you through a process of evaluation and introspection that produced a big document entitled “Congregational Study, Strategic Priorities, and Implementation Plan” in 2017. A year later I was asked to read and familiarize myself with that document before I visited Grace United Methodist Church and met with the staff-parish relations committee for the first time. The next year I reviewed it with some of the church members and meant to do that yearly. Well, things got in the way.

In November and December of 2022 we asked members and friends of the congregation to complete the Congregational Assessment Tool (CAT). We were more than pleased with the congregation’s response—we received far more than the minimum required and exceeded the “best” number for a reliable interpretation. I am hoping some of us will sit down and try to digest the results of this survey, lay them side-by-side with the document you prepared in 2017, and look back and forward to get some idea where our church is now and where she could be in the future.

I am inviting our church leadership and **everyone in the congregation who is interested** to attend a meeting at the church Sunday, January 8, at 5 p.m. when our CAT interpreter, Josh Smouse, will go over the raw data and give us some insight into the results. Please join us.

Your Servant for Christ’s Sake, Jonathan  
*Don’t Stop Me If You’ve Heard This One Dept.*

“Praise God from Whom All Blizzards Flow”

Words: Linda Bonney Olin; Music: “All Creatures of Our God and King” (UMH #62)

Praise God from whom all blizzards flow, when snow comes down and cold winds blow!

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God for shovels, gloves and plows when four-foot drifts surround your house!

If more snow falls, praise for snowballs.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

## G.R.A.C.E Team "L"

### Dale and Lynn Henricks - chair

Mark & Joan Barrett, Jerrilyn Boman, Melissa Brown, Kurt & Denise Carlson, Jan Feil, Chris & Kate Feil, Alex & Amy Franco, Val Gregori, Andrea Jensen, Craig Jensen, Mike & Patsy Jensen, LeRoy & Priscilla Johnson, Brent & Jody Larson, Blake Larson, Riley Larson, Kevin & Linda Larson, Duane & Sharon Matson, Claudia Pauk, Louis & Tep Reeder, Elizabeth Rickerl, Gloria Sampson, Sam & Becky Senti, Dan & Marilyn Webster

## Sympathy

Our condolences to the family of Linda Poore. Linda passed away on November 30. Funeral services were held on December 5 at Grace.

Condolences to the family of Jim Dale. Jim passed away on December 11. Funeral services were held on December 14 at Grace.

Condolences to the family of Geneva Chelsvig a long time previous member of Grace. She passed away on December 17. She had a brief service and burial on December 20 here in Story City.

## Congregational Assessment Tool

Members of the church and friends of the congregation are invited to a meeting at the church Sunday, January 8, at 5 p.m. Josh Smouse, our interpreter, will review the raw data collected from the Congregational Assessment Tool and help us start to understand its implications for Grace United Methodist Church. The response was impressive—now we need to learn from it!

## January Volunteers

### Sunday, January 1

Liturgist — Gini Michel

Ushers — Dale and Lynn Henricks  
Donyel and Helen Caruth

### Sunday, January 8

Liturgist — Kurt Carlson

Ushers — Chris & Kate Feil, Jan Feil

### Sunday, January 15

Liturgist — Becky Barclay

Ushers — Gloria Sampson, Val Gregory

### Sunday, January 22

Liturgist — Gloria Sampson

Ushers — Mike and Patsy Jensen

### Sunday, January 29

Liturgist — Dave Doolittle

Ushers — Dale and Lynn Henricks

## Decorating

You are invited to come help take down all of the holiday finery in the Sanctuary on **Sunday, January 8<sup>th</sup>** following the worship service. We need a bigger group to help with this as it involves not only taking down decorations, but also dismantling and putting the tree away. Garlands and Nativities will need to be put away.

## Staff Appreciation Sunday

Join us for staff appreciation Sunday January 15 during morning worship. Our employed staff will be recognized and receive a sweet treat from the staff-parish relations committee. Our staff includes Shannon Koppes and Cathy Hermanson, administrative Assistants; Rhonda Hampton, choir director, choir accompanist, and worship accompanist; Judy Brekke, adult bell choir director; David and Marlene Doolittle, custodians; and Adam Hubert, bookkeeper. We share a youth minister, Joel Chambers, with St. Petri and Bergen Lutheran Churches.

## 2022 Giving

2022 will be closed on January 5th. If you want to give towards 2022, make sure it is in the church office by January 5th. Thank you!

Lorijo Lounsberry (Financial Secretary)





## Our Prayers

Brady Bohner; Donyel Caruth—Prayers for friend Desiree Mauro; Sara Dappen; George Janvrin; Pauline Kokemiller; Kermit Miskell; Loretta Parker; The Taylors; Jim Wirth

## Our Gifts

**Offering Dec 4—Dec 25:**  
\$15,651.25

## Our Presence

**Attendance Dec 4—Dec 25  
(including Christmas Eve)**  
**Worship:** 525 Total/105 Avg.  
**Sunday School (Dec 4—Dec 18):**  
105 Total/35 Avg.

## Our Witness

We appreciate our December liturgists Nate Warwick, Becky Barclay, Gloria Sampson, Claudia Pauk and Cathy Hermanson

## Our Service

Thank you to Terry Gustason, Priscilla Johnson, Linda Larson, Patsy Jensen, and Lynn Henricks who helped prepare the luncheons following Linda Poore and Jim Dale's funerals.

Thank you to everyone who filled out the Congregational Assessment Tool survey. The information we get will be very helpful to our church.

Thank you to all of the officers and committee members who so faithfully served on our 2021 committees.

## Middle School Youth

I am really excited to announce to all of you that Compass will be taking a retreat in January to Riverside Lutheran Bible Camp where we will be enjoying fellowship and growing in our relationships with the Lord as well. We will be focusing on how to be great ambassadors of the church in our schools and wherever else we might be. This will occur Friday January 6 - Saturday January 7.

With this in mind, If you have a child in the program or a child anywhere from 5th - 8th grade we would love to see them go. If your child would like to bring a friend that's okay as well. If you could email me that your child is wanting to go or for sure will be attending that would be great. The trip is completely funded through a grant given to St. Petri so there is no payment necessary. We are looking to get about 25-30 kids to go so Riverside can cook food for us.

Joel Chambers  
bspgyouth@gmail.com

## Adult Studies Class

Beginning on January 8 and for the month of January we will discuss "The Case For Christmas" a book by Lee Strobel.

"The Case For Christmas invites you to consider why Christmas matters in the first place. Somewhere beyond the traditions of the holiday lies the truth. It may be more compelling than you've realized. Weigh the facts...and decide for yourself."

Lee Strobel is an award winning journalist who was an atheist. Then he decided to conduct an investigation into Christmas and now he is a Christian. This book gives the reader lots to think about and an opportunity to examines one's own faith.

If you would like to be a part of this discussion and you haven't already received a copy of the book, please see Rhonda Hampton. All are welcome.

## Thank You

Thank you for all the treats you blessed me with during the holiday season. A special thank you to the UWF for your kind gift this Christmas. Thank you for the very warm welcome to the Grace family when I started working here this fall. I hope and pray everyone has a blessed and wonderful 2023.

Shannon Koppes

## Mission Brunch

Our December Sunday Brunch was enjoyed by several people. Sharla Mander, Cheryl Semler, Tori Fournier, Gini Michel, Peyton Rickerl and Savannah Jensen and G.R.A.C.E. Team E members hosted this month. \$1688 was raised for the Taylor Family! Please join us January 22nd for our next mission brunch that will benefit the Roland-Story middle school food pantry. They will be serving baked French toast.

## Adventure of a Lifetime

Registration is now available online for the 2023 Iowa United Methodist Camps at Wesley Woods and Lake Okoboji.

Please check out:

[www.iaumc.org/camps](http://www.iaumc.org/camps).

Remember, you need to give Gini Michel a copy of your registration in order to be reimbursed.

Grace pays:

- \* Methodist Camp for church members / 100%
- \* Another faith-based church camp / 75%
- \* Non Methodist persons attending a Methodist Camp with church member / 50%
- \* Non faith-based camp / 50%

## Worship Links

Here are links to two special worship offerings:

Story County United Methodist Churches Circuit, including A Touch of Grace Bells and two of our young people leading the call to worship!

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1N71CgJWqmrYNCpA8CZodbadkoxiG0GWv/view?usp=sharing>

And a Worship offering from the Iowa Annual Conference.

<https://vimeo.com/781283938>

We hope you can access these to make your holiday more meaningful.

## Poinsettias



Our sanctuary was graced during the Advent season by families sharing lovely poinsettia plants in remembrance and honor of loved ones.

### In Memory Of

**Russell and Diane Clayberg**

By Mark and Cathy Hermanson

**Donald and Jeanetta Caruth, Roberta Mather, Stefan, Helena, Ziggy, Laura and Johnny Suchan, Diane Antic, and Bert and Kia Scheuko**

By Helen Caruth

**Gary and Renee Hubert**

By Adam and Valerie Hubert

**LuVerne and Mary Hults  
Kenneth and Marjorie Balo**

By Ray and Betty Hults

**Karen Keech**

**Dick and Karen Keech**

By Kent Keech

**Bud and Florence Mason**

By Janet Mason

**Chuck and David Matheason**

By Ruby Matheason

**Norah Neff**

*Our Granddaughter and her favorite color is pink*

By Louis and Tepricia Reeder

**Marlo Schnurstein**

**Roger Swenson**

By The Schnurstein Family

**Louie and Bessie Sinn**

By Kent Keech

### In Honor Of

**Toroyana Sr., Toroyana Jr., and Jaylin Caruth,  
Sandra and Loren Anthony, Desiree Mauro**

By Helen Caruth



## Inclement Weather

When there is a weather related early out at Roland-Story schools, all church activities for that day will also be cancelled. As a general rule, worship services will NOT be cancelled in the case of inclement weather. But, if authorities are advising no travel in the cases of heavy Saturday night snow and severely low temperatures, we will adhere to their advice. In that case, tune into KCCI TV, check your email or consult Facebook as we will post the information there by as early as 7:00 on the Sunday morning in question. You are urged to use your own good judgment as to if you are able to attend the service when the weather is nasty.

## Scholarships

The Iowa United Methodist Foundation offers over 100 scholarships each year to United Methodist students in Iowa. At least one scholarship goes unclaimed every year because the right candidate doesn't apply. Help us grant all possible scholarships this year by urging the students you know to visit our website and learn about their scholarship eligibility!  
<https://iumf.org/scholarships/>

## Winter Gear Swap



**Community Winter Gear Swap**  
*Brought to you by RScityserve!*

*Bring the old stuff in and pick up some new ones!  
 Or just come check out what we have in stock!*

**Accepted Donations:**  
 Gently used, clean, any size (Infant-Adult)

- \*socks \*gloves/mittens \*boots
- \*hats \*snow pants \*coats
- \*sweatshirts

*Donations are not required to take items!*

\*Open Dates for 2022-2023 Winter Season:  
 NOV. 5, 12, 19 - DEC. 3, 10, 17  
 JAN. 7, 14, 21, 28 - FEB 4, 11, 18, 25  
 \*10-Noon on Saturdays, 403 Broad St. in Story City.

**R-S CITYSERVE**

RScityserve.org || facebook.com/RScityserve

## UMW News

In lieu of a regular meeting in December the United Methodist Women met on Wednesday, December 14, 2022. We filled Christmas tins with cookies we had brought and signed Christmas cards. We divided into teams and delivered our Christmas goodies and visited with shut-in church members. UMW does many service projects during the year but this is one of the most enjoyable. A holiday afternoon spent with good friends, enjoying their company.

## Funeral Committee

The Funeral Committee of Grace Church provides a luncheon after a funeral for those who request one. A part of the luncheon includes bars baked by the women of Grace. This is a 10x15 (jelly roll pan) of bars of your choice. A list is kept so the same people are not called for each funeral. If you would like to be a part of Grace "bakers" please call Terry Gustason at 733-4562.

## Christmas Program

Our Christmas program was wonderful and thank you to many who helped make it a success. First thank you to Cathy Her-manson for putting the program together and directing the children and youth. Our Sunday school teachers, Beckey, Chrissy, Craig, Val, Shelly and Pastor Jonathan are so valuable to our children and we are so blessed to have them teaching. Thank you to all the children and youth who participated whether it be singing or speaking, you are the best.

It was a blessing to work with the children as they learned all the music. And Claudia and I are pleased the children's bell choir were part of the program.

I must add a special thank you to the Taylor family whose children were able to be part of our program and to (grandma) Rhonda Hampton for working with them.

Finally, many thanks to the parents of our talented children. Thank you for making sure they were at rehearsals and that they practiced a bit at home. We appreciate all the ways you help them to succeed so beautifully.

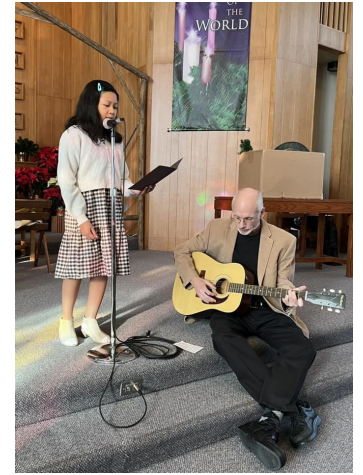
Happy New Year and we hope to see everyone at Sunday school beginning again on January 8th!

Erma



# Pictures of Grace

December 18, Children's Program





Leadership Development Report for 2023  
(by classes—the year represents the *last* year one will serve)

**Retired Clergy:** Rev. Brian McNamara

**Pastor:** Jonathan Cooney

**Lay Leader:** Claudia Pauk

**Lay Member to Annual Conference:** Claudia Pauk

**Council Chair:** Gloria Sampson

**Secretary:** Cathy Hermanson

**Bethany Life:** Mary Loupee

**Loaves and Fishes:** Louis Reeder, Jan Feil

**Staff-Parish Relations Committee** (five to nine)

2023	2024	2025
Rod Bohner	Lauren Crawford	Chris Feil
Rick Welke	Krystal Ness	Cathy Hermanson

**Trustees** (three to nine)

2023	2024	2025
Jacob Ness	George Janvrin	Louis Reeder
Angie Schnurstein	Jim Hassebrock	Grace Welke
Dave Barclay	Kurt Carlson	

**Finance** (many ex officio but could add others)

2023	2024	2025
Alejandro Franco	Gloria Sampson	
Becky Barclay		
<b>Chair:</b> Becky Barclay		
<b>Treasurer:</b> Mary Loupee		
<b>Financial Secretaries:</b> Larijo Lounsberry, Stephanie Fournier		
<b>Auditor:</b> Candi Holm		

**Endowment**

2023	2024	2025
Dave Loupee	Dan Webster	Shelley Hassebrock
	Dale Henricks	
	Candi Holm	



**Leadership Development Committee/Nominations** (no more than nine)

2023	2024	2025
George Janvrin	Michelle Hassebrock	Terry Gustason
Malinda Warwick		Ray Hults
Judy Andrew		

**Memorials Committee**

2023	2024	2025
Doug Doolittle	Ray Hults	Marilyn Webster

**Membership Committee**

2023	2024	2025
Linda Larson	Dee McNamara	

**History Committee**

2023	2024	2025
Kate Feil	Cindy Spurlock	Mindy Kardell
Claudia Pauk	Shelley Hart	Jerilyn Bouman

**Communications Committee** (mostly ex officio but could add others)

Sharla Mander	Caitlin Mander
David Barclay	Mike Marti

**Worship Committee** (mostly ex officio but could add others)

Cheryl Semler, chair	Judy Brekke	Gini Michel
Cathy Hermanson, secretary	Erma Schaefer	
Rhonda Hampton	Lynn Henricks	

**Altar Committee:** Sue Jacobson, Janet Schuck, Mindy Kardell, Judy Brekke, Cheryl Semler, Jane Jackson

**Congregational Assessment Tool Team:** Claudia Pauk, Gloria Sampson, Cathy Hermanson, Rod Bohner, Denise Carlson

**Christian Education Committee**

<b>Chairs/Superintendents</b>	Raejean Bickelhaupt, Gini Michel
<b>Teachers</b>	Becky Witthuhn (3 years-first grade)
	Christine Semler-Blue (2 <sup>nd</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> grade)
	Craig Jensen, Val Gregori (5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> grade)
	Shelly Hart (high school)
	Rhonda Hampton (adult)
	Jonathan Cooney (confirmation)



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship No Sunday School	2 	3 	4 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	5 	6 MS Youth Retreat @Riverside Shannon Out of Office	7 MS Youth Retreat @Riverside
8 9:15 Worship Communion 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 5:00 CAT Leadership Meeting	9 6:30 Worship Comm.	10	11 1:30 UWF 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	12	13	14
15 8:00 Trustees 9:15 Worship Staff Appreciation 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School	16	17	18 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	19 9:00 R-S Ministerial @ Grace	20	21
22 8:15 Missions 9:15 Worship Children's Bells 10:15 Mission Brunch 10:30 Sunday School	23 5:30 Finance 6:30 Council	24	25 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	26	27	28
29 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School	30	31				