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Grace

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Monday — Friday  
8:30 AM — 12:30 PM

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# The Grace Church Visitor

VOL. 75 NO. 7

JANUARY 2024



## Happy New Year 2024!



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

## January Birthdays

Bently Haskin	1/3
Braylen Loots	1/3
John Barclay	1/4
Susan Bohner	1/4
Owen Ness	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
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!*

## New Year Fresh Start

## January Lectionary

### January 7

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29;  
Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

### January 14

1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18;  
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

### January 21

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12;  
1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

### January 28

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111;  
1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

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,

According to some news media, Christian Nationalist Nick Fuentes recently said, "It's the name Jesus, talk about it, say it. Pray to Him, talk about the sacrifice on the cross, that's the answer. Because so many of the people that are perpetrating the lies and the destruction on the country, they are evil doers. They are people that worship false gods, they are people that practice magic or rituals or whatever, and more than anything those people need to be, when we [his America First Movement] take power, they need to be given the death penalty. Straight up...No, you must be a Christian. And you must submit to Christianity." I would like to give him the benefit of a doubt; assume he is quoted out of context, but...

Christian nationalism is an oxymoron. That is, it is a combination of contradictory words. The Gospel is the message of God's grace for all people and it is not meant for one race, ethnic group, or nation. Neither Jesus nor Paul (or any other writers of the New Testament) understood the faith as limited to any particular demographic. The Roman empire was broad and diverse, containing ethnic groups and languages from three continents, and the apostles moved quickly to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). There was no dream of a Christian republic. In fact, the story of the first century church was played out against the backdrop of a pagan world. Historians have argued that the Christian faith has spread more quickly and taken root more authentically when a government is not forcing people to adhere to a state-sponsored church.

Fuentes' call for the death penalty can hardly be considered a Christian policy. Jesus Christ surrendered himself to death upon a cross. The two greatest commandments are to love God with all one's heart and soul and strength and to love one's neighbor as oneself. Nowhere in the New Testament are we urged to preach the gospel at the end of a sword. Fuentes' words can hardly be considered appropriate for our nation. I believe that the United States of America has been blessed to be a servant of God for the sake of the world. That's a heavy responsibility but we must lead by example. We have a Constitution and a Bill of Rights and if they ever seem frustrating or inconvenient, remember they're there to protect you, too.

The kingdom of heaven does not come about through terror or violence. Souls are won through love and compassion. John the Baptist calls Jesus the *lamb* of God.

United Methodist pastor Benjamin Cremer writes, "It is quite the fragile god who needs political power to preserve and enforce their will. It is quite the powerful God who is born into poverty, partners with the poor, washes feet, heals the sick, advocates for the oppressed, is unjustly killed and still changes the world."

Your Servant for Christ's Sake,  
Jonathan

*Don't Stop Me If You've Heard This One Dept.*

A New Year Prayer for the Elderly (I used this in 2018, but who among us can remember?):

"God, grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones that I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference."

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

### Mark & Cathy Hermanson - chr

David & Becky Barclay  
Rod & Sue Bohner  
David & Marlene Doolittle  
Doug Doolittle  
Terry Gustason  
Rhonda Hampton  
Jim & Shelley Hassebrock  
Matt & Amber Hoskins  
Isabel Hoskins  
Jenna Hoskins  
Jane Jackson  
George Janvrin  
Fred Larson  
David & Mary Loupee  
Sharene Lykins  
Norm & Cindy Spurlock  
Tim & Kim Tryon  
Rick & Grace Welke  
Lon & Beckey Witthuhn  
Jori Witthuhn

## Office Hours

The office will be closed on January 1 for New Years Day.



## January Volunteers

### Sunday, January 7

Liturgist: Angie Schnurstein  
Tech: Louis Reeder  
Ushers: Dave and Mary Loupee

### Sunday, January 14

Liturgist: Lauren Crawford  
Tech: Chris Feil  
Ushers: George Janvrin, Rick and Grace Welke

### Sunday, January 21

Liturgist: Kurt Carlson  
Tech: Nate Warwick  
Ushers: Rod and Sue Bohner

### Sunday, January 28

Liturgist: Becky Barclay  
Tech: Kurt Carlson  
Ushers: David and Becky Barclay  
Brunch: 1 Gal. Milk : Rhonda Hampton  
1 Gal. Juice: Cindy Spurlock  
Cleanup: David and Mary Loupee

## 2023 Giving

Lorijo will close the 2023 books on January 5, 2024. Any giving has to be in the church office by then and dated 2023.

Thank you!  
Lorijo Lounsberry  
Financial Secretary

## Capital Campaign

The trustees have approved a three year capital campaign to raise \$225,000. The money raised will go to help replace the church roof, repave the parking lot, update the HVAC systems, and add handicap accessible doors. If you wish to give this year towards the campaign, money needs to be donated before January 5 and dated 2023. If you have any questions, contact Louis Reeder (402-641-6722) or Jim Hassebrock (515-708-0946).





### Our Prayers

Dorothy Carbaugh; Donyel Caruth—sister Tawnya has cancer; Cathy Hermanson—Cancer; Marvin and Pauline Kokemiller—daughter-in-law, Dr. Kimberlee Walker-Kokemiller, had open heart surgery; Kevin and Linda Larson—Daughter, Jamie, has cancer; Loretta Parker; Paula Sampson—Cancer; The Taylors;

### Our Gifts

**Offering Dec. 3—Dec. 24:**  
\$17,145.50

### Our Presence

**Attendance Dec. 3—Dec. 24 (2 services)**  
**Worship:** 430 Total/ 86 Avg.

### Our Witness

We appreciate our December liturgists: Becky Barclay, Dave Doolittle, Angie Schnurstein, Kurt Carlson, Del Johnston, and Virginia Swenson

Thank you to our tech team who ran the power point in December: Kurt Carlson, Louis Reeder, Riker Warwick, Chris Feil, and Savannah and Craig Jensen

### Our Service

Thank you to all of the officers and committee members who served on our 2023 committees. Your service is very much appreciated.

Thank you to our G.R.A.C.E. team leaders for organizing our ushers and anything else needed for the month.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered at the church in 2023. No matter how small or big the role was, the church couldn't function without you.

### Mission Brunch

On Sunday, December 17, we had our monthly mission brunch. They raised \$1100 that will be given to the Taylor Family. Thank you for your generous contributions for our mission. We hope you join us next month on January 28. Money raised will go to support the Roland-Story Middle School food pantry.

### Adult Sunday School

Jonathan Cooney will be leading a study of *Unrelenting Grace: A United Methodist Way of Life* by Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr., during the Sunday school hour beginning January 7 and ending before Lent in mid-February. Bishop Kennetha Bingham-Tsai of the Iowa conference has been leading a study of this book online and has received a tremendous response. We may be able to use some of her videos. The theme of the book is that as unsettling as current disruptions are, God is with us; we are not alone; and God's grace is sufficient. Books are available in the narthex. We will try to structure the discussion so as not to exclude anyone who has not read the material.

### Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who has brought me treats and goodies in the last few weeks. Everyone is spoiling me with all the wonderful treats. I appreciate everyone and thank all of you for making every day a joy to come to work. I look forward to working with all of you in 2024.

Shannon Koppes





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

### In Memory Of

**John and Pauline Andrew, Sally Donald,  
Janet Maas, and Jim Donald**

By Judy Andrew

**Helena, Ziggy, Stefan, Laura and Johnny Suchan,  
Diane Antic, and Donald and Jeanetta Caruth**

By Helen Caruth

**Dorrel and Barb Doolittle and Grandparents  
Arnold and Burdella Peterson**

**Frank and Nora Doolittle**

By Doak and Doug Doolittle

**Gary and Renee Hubert  
Scott Muxfeldt**

By The Hubert Family

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

By Ray and Betty Hults

**Chuck and David Matheason**

By Ruby Matheason

**Florence and Bud Mason**

By Janet Mason

**Norah Neff**

By Louis and Tepricia Reeder

### In Honor Of

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

By Helen Caruth

Beloveds,

Every once in a while the holidays don't go quite as planned. During worship on Christmas Eve morning I suddenly became ill as I walked across the chancel to receive the offering. I sat down during the last hymn and considered skipping the benediction. After church everyone was very solicitous of my wellbeing. I remember Patsy getting me some lemonade and Mike offering to see me next door. Over the afternoon my condition deteriorated. I made it over to church for the evening service just as the choir was ready to process in. When Brian asked if I could get through the service I suddenly had a vision of not being able to hold myself up even for the next hour. I was afraid the evening might be memorable for all the wrong reasons--something I try to avoid. For the first time in 41 years I missed worship due to my own health emergency. I collapsed on the bench next to the chapel and Catherine and Dee talked me into going to the ER. It was a Christmas miracle--the waiting room was empty! After tests and an IV we decided it was some kind of infection and I was sent home.

I would have been thrilled and very proud if the congregation had just enjoyed the scripture and music but thanks to Brian for filling the pulpit and Del and Catherine for carrying on with the liturgy. Rhonda, Jarod, Denise and the choir provided such wonderful music for both services that day. The worship committee and all the volunteers and staff worked so hard to help the congregation celebrate. God bless you all. You know what to do.

Your Servant for Christ's Sake,  
Jonathan





### 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.

### Food Pantry



On December 9 it was Grace's turn to volunteer at the Loaves and Fishes food pantry. There were 15 volunteers this month and they helped 19 families (55 individuals) that morning. Thank you to everyone who volunteered!

### UWF News

In lieu of a regular meeting in December the Grace United Methodist Women met on Wednesday, December 13, 2023. We filled Christmas tins with cookies we had brought and sign Christmas cards. Because of COVID this Christmas season we left the goodies at some places rather than an in-person visit. Some personal visits were able to be made. We are hopeful that next year we can again visit with all our friends. This is one of the most personal and enjoyable service projects we do each year.

Submitted by Terry Gustason

### Scholarships

The Iowa Methodist Foundation is offering over 100 scholarship for the 2024-2025 school year! Some scholarships are specifically for Methodist colleges, and many are open to anyone. Check out our website <https://iumf.org/scholarships/> to read the criteria and apply! Applications are accepted December 1—March 1 annually. With over \$250,000 to award this year, we want to help the student in your life graduate with less debt!





## Pictures of Grace





Leadership Development Report for 2024  
(by classes—the year represents the *last* year one will serve)

Leadership Development Report for 2024  
(by classes—the year represents the *last* year one will serve)

**Retired Clergy** Rev. Brian McNamara

**Pastor:** Jonathan Cooney

**Lay Leader** Dave Doolittle

**Lay Member to Annual Conference** Virginia Swenson

**Council Chair** Gloria Sampson

**Secretary** Cathy Hermanson

**Bethany Life** Mary Loupee

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

**Youth Representatives** Craig Jensen, Valerie Hubert

**United Women in Faith President** Patsy Jensen

**Meals on Wheels** Cathy Hermanson

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

2024  
Lauren Crawford  
Krystle Ness

2025  
Chris Feil  
Cathy Hermanson

2026  
Alejandro Franco  
Janet Mason  
Ray Hults

**Trustees** (three to nine)

2024  
George Janvrin  
Jim Hassebrock  
Kurt Carlson

2025  
Louis Reeder  
Grace Welke  
Jacob Ness

2026  
Angie Schnurstein

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

2024  
Gloria Sampson

2025

2026  
Rick Welke  
Becky Barclay

**Chair:** Becky Barclay

**Treasurer:** Mary Loupee

**Financial Secretaries:** Lorio Lounsberry, Stephanie Fournier

**Auditor:** Candi Holm



## Leadership Development Report for 2024 (cont.)

### Endowment

2024  
Dan Webster  
Dale Henricks  
Candi Holm

2025  
Shelley Hassebrock (ch)

2026  
Dave Loupee

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

2024  
Michelle Hassebrock  
Judy Andrew

2025  
Terry Gustason  
Ray Hults

2026  
George Janvrin  
Melinda Warwick

### Memorials Committee

2024  
Ray Hults

2025  
Marilyn Webster

2026  
Doug Doolittle

### Membership Committee

2024  
Dee McNamara

2025  
Melinda Warwick

2026  
Ruby Matheason

### History Committee

2024  
Cindy Spurlock  
Shelley Hart

2025  
Mindy Kardell  
Jerilyn Bouman

2026  
Dee McNamara

**Missions Committee** Jan Feil, (ch)

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

Cheryl Semler, chair  
Cathy Hermanson, secretary  
Rhonda Hampton

Judy Brekke  
Erma Schaefer  
Lynn Henricks

Gini Michel  
Mindy Kardell

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

### Christian Education Committee

**Chairs/Superintendents**  
**Teachers**

Raejean Bickelhaupt, Gini Michel  
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)



# January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Office Closed	2	3 7:00 Choir 8:00 Bells	4	5	6
7 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 11:30 Youth Council	8 5:30 Worship Comm. 6:30 SPRC	9	10 1:30 UWF 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir 8:00 Bells	11	12	13
14 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 4:00 Axis	15	16	17 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	18	19	20
21 8:00 Trustees 9:15 Worship 10:15 Fellowship 10:30 Sunday School 4:00 Axis	22 5:45 Finance 6:30 Council	23	24 5:00 Children's Bells 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir	25	26	27
28 9:15 Worship 10:15 Mission Brunch 10:30 Sunday School 4:00 Axis	29	30	31 6:00 Compass 7:00 Choir			