

Grace Greetings

April 2018

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Did I Hear That Right? Is the Sunday School Really Buying a Cow?

Yes, you heard right! In fact, Grace Sunday School is inviting you to share with them in their efforts to help raise **\$500 to buy a dairy cow in the ELCA Good Gifts program for a family in Africa.**

One cow can produce as many as 3 or more gallons of milk each day. Besides providing nutritious, calcium-packed milk to help ensure that children grow up healthy and strong, milk can also be used to make cheese, yogurt, butter and other dairy products to eat and sell for a steady source of income. With food and funds, as well as fertilizer for their fields, a cow is a total package for a family in need.

ELCA Good Gifts provides more than 50 different gift-giving options that grow the church, fight hunger and transform lives. These gifts provide direct support for the churchwide ministries of the ELCA.

Please watch for further notices about opportunities to donate to our Sunday School's benevolence project to purchase a cow.

Mystery

One of powers of the resurrection is that it comes with a bit of mystery. We like to have things figured out and solved, but at least when it come to the Gospels, there is often a sense of mystery.

Early Sunday morning the women were on their way to the tomb. At that point, you would have to think they were second guessing the hope of the resurrection since they brought spice to anoint what they thought was going to be a dead body. What they found, however, was an empty tomb and hope. But hope, as it most often is, was a little less certain.

The four Gospels report this story in subtly different ways. In each of them, the truth of the resurrection is not as outwardly apparent as we might expect, and centers around the truth that Jesus is not in the tomb.

We often lack a sense of certainty as well. We have read the stories and we have embraced the truth, but it is in the mystery of life and living that the Gospel finds its place—**Jesus Christ Risen From the Dead!**

In Christ,

Pastor Scott Duffus

News & Upcoming Events

New Baptisms at Grace

Congratulations on the recent baptisms of **Traeton Allen, son of Zach and Whitney Schmidt**, and of **Mila Jo, daughter of Tyler and Ashley Ollendieck**. May God guide and bless these parents and children as they continue to grow in the Christian faith.

First Communion Celebrated

Congratulations to **Colton Bergmann, McClain Franzen, Braden Harken, Grace Mowatt, Dallas Page, Amelia Rader, and Laura Seehase**, who received their first communion at Grace on Palm Sunday. We welcome you to the Lord's table and encourage you to commune often.

Our Sympathy

Christian sympathy is expressed to the family and friends of Gordon Mueller, brother of Jean **Bremer** and uncle of **Suzi (Al) Schweer** and great-uncle to **Ben Schweer** and **Whitney (Zach) Schmidt**. May the God who reigns over life and death comfort you and give you peace.

Mission Cross Donations

Contributions of baking products such as flour, sugar, brown sugar, powdered sugar, PAM, and cooking oil are being requested for the Helping Hands Food Bank during April. Thank you for sharing!

Bremwood Auxiliary Meetings

The spring salad luncheon and auxiliary meeting dates for Lutheran Services in Iowa have been set for **Friday, April 20, at 1 pm**, and **Friday, May 18, at 1 pm**, at Bremwood in Waverly. Please bring one salad for every two members attending. If you want to donate anything to this ministry, Bremwood could use new twin-size mattress pads or sheet sets and bed-size pillows. They could also use men's and women's body wash, deodorant, shampoos/conditioner, etc.



Please pray for those who are ill: **Bob Kuhrt, Bill Kuker, Carma Kvidera, Ron and Nancy Fowlkes, Logan Liddle, Hollis Niemeyer, Paul Bremer, Ray Bloem, Betty Johansen, Madeline Figanbaum, Jean Bremer.**

Please remember to also pray for: **Hans Schult, Marilyn Schult, Esther Oberheu, Leisa Nolte, Carol Johnson, Kurt Schult, Loretta Mahlstedt, Gertrude Dettmering, Gloria Siggelkov, Ordella Freyholtz, Dick Marvets, Tony Lechtenberg, Trent Pavelec, Christine Bush.**

We also pray for those in the Armed Services: **Michael Bush** with AFRICOM/U.S. Army in Stuttgart, Germany, **Michael Dornbusch** stationed in the U.S., **Josh Everett** in Kuwait, **Brian Krueger** in Texas, **Matthew Krueger** in Tennessee.

Remember Our Shut-ins

- At Home: **Ruth Bergmann, Ray Bloem, Ordella Freyholtz**
- Bartels (Waverly): **Gloria Siggelkov**
- Cobblestone (Sumner): **LaVerne & Pauline Lobeck, Joyce Nuss, Gladys Rettig**
- Crestview Sunshine Area (Charles City): **Dane Frahm**
- Hillcrest Home (Sumner): **Gertrude Dettmering, Hans & Marilyn Schult**
- Omaha: **Vernon Kirchhoff**
- Tripoli Nursing Home: **Luella Harms, Elna Kuecker, Loretta Mahlstedt, Dale Petersen**
- Willow Winds (Denver): **Bob Kuhrt**

Youth Fundraisers

Luther Leaguers will sell raffle tickets from April 1 through the end of May for a picnic table that separates into two benches donated by Darol Stahlhut of Frederika, a pieced quilt donated by Carol Boldt, and several small items. The drawing will be held on June 3.

Don't forget that our youth can also help you with any of your projects (indoor or outdoor cleaning, yardwork, etc.). Please call **Carol Boldt at 319-830-1935** with requests.

Watch for more information about the stock investment program in the May newsletter.

March Church Council Meeting Highlights

The monthly Church Council meeting was called to order Sunday, March 11, 2018, at 6:35 pm by President Carol Boldt.

Pastor Duffus offered devotions and summarized the findings of the Barna Study and the declining attendance of worship by Christians. He also discussed his growing concern about the low attendance at Sunday School and Sunday worship.

Financial Report: Offerings are below budget on a year-to-date basis, but expenses are also below budget. Lawain Judisch motioned to approve the report, and Jocie Moeller seconded. Motion carried.

Fellowship Report: The card craft night has been scheduled for Sunday, March 18, at 3:00. Four cards will be made by participants.

Youth Report: Fundraisers have been going well, and there are a few more coming up. An estimated \$3,273 is needed yet for the youth gathering trip. The adult spots for the trip have been filled.

Parish Ed Report: Day camp is scheduled for June 11-15 and will cost \$25/student with a maximum of \$50/family. Confirmation will be held on Sunday, April 29. The last day of Sunday School will be May 6. There will be a bake sale on Palm Sunday with the proceeds being donated to the Luther League for the youth gathering.

Adult Education Report: There has been good turn out during the Wednesday evening Bible study.

Cemetery Report: The contact person for purchasing cemetery plots is Kathy Fink. Dave Shinstine continues to work with the committee to organize information.

Old Business

- Deacon Schedule: There has been interest in members volunteering to set up and serve communion. A list will be developed and shared.
- Electronic Giving Update: This system has been set up and a few people have enrolled. So far it is working well, and will be further explained and offered to the rest of the congregation through the monthly newsletter and Sunday bulletins.
- Worship Time Change: The Worship Committee continues to discuss the time preferences before setting a new worship time.
- New Database: Database is working well so far, and the office continues to update church member information and photos.

New Business

- Sunday School: The low attendance at Sunday school is at crisis level, and we are looking for a change to help draw people in. One proposal is to have family Sunday School where parents can attend with their child, do projects together, etc. For children whose parents can't attend, another church member could partner with that child.
- New Website: We are doing more research on expected service and maintenance costs before website construction begins.

Barb Bush motioned to adjourn the meeting; motion seconded by Mary Jo Rathe. Motion carried. Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Introducing Electric Giving Option at Grace

The Grace Stewardship Committee and Council are pleased to announce the introduction of an electronic option for making your regular church offering. With this capability, you will be able to automatically deduct contributions from your savings or checking account, or use a credit card or debit card to make deductions. This program is designed to offer convenience to you and to provide needed consistency for our congregation's budget.

If you would like to join those who have already enrolled in our automatic deduction program, please contact **Pastor Scott at 507-390-4306**, or **Jocie Moeller at 319-230-1431**, and they will give you the information to enroll.