



NOVEMBER 2026 ISSUE 84-11

GRACE Notes

Dear Friends,

"I will bless you... and you will be a blessing." ~Genesis 12:2

What does it mean to be blessed? When a rustic looking wooden sign reads "Blessed" or a social media post has the tag #blessed, it generally illustrates how someone feels thankful or lucky in their life or in the moment. I am #blessed to be on this vacation, to have this home, or to eat this delicious food.

"Bless", for such a small word, has so many implications. It is an action; it can be used as an adjective or reformed into a noun. In religious contexts, "blessed" can refer to something consecrated like water or to someone bestowed with divine favor.

Before Abraham ventures into the unknown and goes on a journey for which he cannot comprehend the ending, he is given a promise, "I will bless you." The path was not always

easy for him or his descendants, but God was faithful. Throughout the Bible we see how the people of God are blessed, even throughout the worst of circumstances. Our status as blessed is not contingent on the amount of stuff we have, the quality of our health, or how easy we feel our life is.

Instead, we are blessed because we are in relationship with a God who gives us life and is always seeking to be in relationship with us. We are blessed to worship a God who chooses compassion over anger, grace over vengeance, and above all, always leads with love. The true blessing we experience is in the spiritual renewal of our minds, our unique talents, and the gifts of God's peace, courage, and strength.

The blessings we receive from God, the physical and spiritual blessings, aren't meant to be hoarded or kept from others. When Abraham receives the promise of being a blessing, it is paired with the promise of how they can live into that blessing, by blessing others.

Rabbie Ariel Burger says the Hebrew word for blessing is related to the word "knees" and the placement of the knees when you need to bend to

carry something heavy. He suggests that being blessed can be a challenge to carry, a responsibility while at the same time lifting us up. *"It's liberating to live for something bigger than myself. It frees me of my own smallness, my self-consciousness, my anxieties. Compassion is the greatest medicine for anxiety, the greatest medicine for small-mindedness. And so there's a way that we can be a blessing to each other and bear witness to one another... And that will lift us up. That's what a blessing really is."*

Stewardship season is often an opportunity for me to reflect on our past year's ministry together. We are a community that has been blessed. With that blessing we have taken on the responsibility that comes with it. We have a purpose beyond ourselves as we serve one another and our neighbor. As we look toward the future, you are essential to helping us continue our shared ministry. In the words of our opening liturgy: We are blessed to be a blessing. **We are Grace in action.**

*God's Peace,
Pastor Stephanie*



Be a Blessing

"I will bless you... and you will be a blessing." ~Genesis 12:2

At Grace, we are blessed! We have been blessed to experience God's grace in worship, receive God's love from one another and share the Good News with our corner of the world. Our goal for next year is to focus our efforts and resources on the four key ministry areas we identified in our Listening Campaign: worship, relationships, children's ministry and outreach.

The goal of the **Be A Blessing Stewardship Appeal of 2027** is to increase our gifts and offerings by \$15,000. Increasing our offering by \$500 per week will help us to retain our excellent staff and continue our ministry together. Pray for a generous response to this 2027 Stewardship Appeal. Consider increasing your giving as the Spirit leads you. **Be ready to share your commitment on Stewardship Sunday, November 15. You can bring your statements of intent to church, mail them in, or enter your pledge into our [online form](#).** Then we will celebrate on November 22, with a Give Thanks Brunch. Together we will expand and sustain the ways we connect as a community.

Thanksgiving Worship & Give Thanks Brunch

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 22

9:30am Joint Worship

10:30am Give Thanks Brunch



Join us for a service of Thanksgiving with music, readings, scripture, reflections, and prayers; and to celebrate our faithful and generous giving, we are sharing a brunch with the congregation. Everyone is invited to attend and enjoy one another's company. This will be a potluck brunch with a sign-up available on Breeze. God's gifts to us are plentiful! Let's share celebrate with one another!

Thanksgiving Boxes

For the third year in a row, we are putting God's Grace in action by sharing Thanksgiving boxes with families at Garfield Elementary School. In previous years, God's generosity poured over in your generosity! This year, we will provide **14** Thanksgiving boxes to families. In previous years, we have donated a turkey. This year, Edwards UCC will provide turkeys to the families. We have compiled a list of ingredients for each box. If you prefer, you may donate funds to cover items that weren't purchased. You may sign up for items online through Breeze or in person at church. This has been and continues to be a meaningful way to share God's Grace. It could be a fun ministry to do with family or friends. Thank you! **We need the items delivered to church by Monday, November 16.** 

Thanksgiving Box Items (for one box):

- 1 box of butter (to make mashed potatoes and for rolls)
- powdered milk (to make mashed potatoes)
- 1-2 dozen dinner rolls
- 1-2 jars gravy OR 1-2 packets gravy mix
- 2 aluminum roasting pans
- pumpkin pie OR apple pie
- 1 box hot chocolate packets
- 2-3 cans of chicken broth
- 2-3 cans of green beans
- 1 container French fried onions
- 1-2 cans of mushroom soup
- 1-2 cans of cranberry sauce
- 1 large box mashed potato mix OR 1 bag of potatoes
- 1-2 boxes stuffing mix





LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Thank you to Grace members for donations in 2026 that provided supplies so WELCA could organize the making of quilts and put together personal care kits and school supply bags. We also received a Thrivent Gift Card to assist with purchases. These items mainly go to **Lutheran World Relief**, but there have also been local donations. Thank you to Rod Levsen, Sr. and Matt Levsen for driving Grace's LWR donated items consisting of:

- ✓ **86 quilts**
- ✓ **27 personal care kits**
- ✓ **100 school supply bags**

to Cedar Rapids on October 17. LWR sends quilts and kits to places in need here in the U.S. and around the world.



WELCA quilters also donated a quilt to the Camp Ewalu Quilt Auction which was held in September. The *Cathedral Windows* quilt sold for \$200 and was chosen as **"Online People's Choice Award"**. We set aside quilts that we think are a little bit special to donate to other nonprofit organizations to help with their fundraising. Let us know if you are aware of a place we can help by donating a quilt. Contact Kathy Miller or Gloria Lange.



GRACE'S GREEN BAG PROJECT

GREEN BAG SUNDAY Sunday November 1 Between Services

We are again delivering weekly food bags to elementary children facing food insecurity. Join us on November 1, between services to pack bags and learn about the project. **How Can You Help?**

Go grocery shopping
We'll supply the list

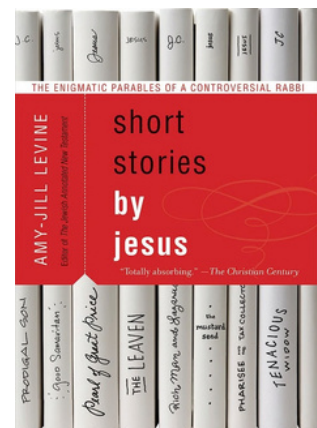
Help Fill Bags
on Green Bag Sundays

Help Deliver the Bags
Talk with Pr. Kirsten for scheduling

Donate Food Items
spaghetti sauce (no glass jars), pasta, mac & cheese, canned fruits & veggies, soup, granola bars, instant oatmeal, canned chicken/tuna, healthy snacks.

Make a Monetary Donation
to purchase food by marking your offering Green Bag Project.

All help is valuable and appreciated!
For further information, contact
Pastor Kirsten or Paul Lewellan
paullewellan@mac.com



Short Stories by Jesus

11:00am Thursdays | through November 19

It is challenging to wrap our head around life centuries before us. This fall we will dive into Jesus' short stories, his parables, by looking at the cultural context they were rooted in and how the original Jewish audience understood them. This Bible Study will follow along with Amy-Jill Levine's book *Short Stories by Jesus*, but you don't need to read the book to participate. She will be our resident expert as a scholar in New Testament and Jewish Studies. Contact Pr. Stephanie if you have any questions.

Thank you

Thank you to the following ladies and gentleman who helped provide nourishment for the youth at Safer:

Gloria Lange, Vicki Liebbe, Ruth McAndrews, Karen & Scott Jewel, Marilyn Schreiber, and Nancy Boehme. This program couldn't happen without your support!

~Hollie Swain



PLEASE JOIN US FOR A

HARVEST GATHERING

Hosted by Grace Lutheran Church, Davenport and the Luther Properties Board



Luther Manor

Thursday,
Nov 12
1:00pm

Luther Towers

Friday,
Nov 13
1:00pm

Luther Crest

Tuesday
Nov 17
1:00pm

Enjoy Refreshments, Live Music & Door Prizes

(Hy-Vee Gift Cards & Laundry Quarters)

This is a Free Event!

A Grace Special Projects Grant will sponsor Harvest Gathering events for Luther Properties Residents, offering Grace and its members an outreach opportunity.

The three events will offer refreshments, live music, and door prizes. Volunteers are welcome!

Contact Vicki Liebbe, Grace's Luther Properties Board representative with any questions or sign up in the narthex to join in this outreach opportunity.

Coffee with Council

Sunday, Nov 8 | Between Services

Please join members of council for coffee and conversation. Get an update on the budget, learn more about our efforts to cut the deficit, and provide input in the 2027 budget. This is your opportunity to share your observations, questions and concerns.



Christmas Dinner

@ Grace, Noon, Dec 25

Please RSVP by December 14

You are invited to join our Grace family for Christmas Day Dinner. As we plan, it would be helpful to know how many people may be interested. Please contact the office or sign-up [HERE](#) if you are interested. If you'd like to help, you may reach out to Ruth McAndrews or Carol Keller.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF



Marilyn Lorentzen

July 18, 1932 – August 16, 2026

Saturday, November 28, 2026

Please join us as we gather to remember, honor, and celebrate the life of **Marilyn Lorentzen**. Together, we will share memories and celebrate the love, laughter, and joy she brought.

Graveside Inurnment

Intimate family gathering

1:00 PM

Fairmount Cemetery
3902 Rockingham Rd
Davenport, IA 52802

Funeral Service

All are welcome

3:00 PM

The Outing Club
2109 N. Brady St.
Davenport, IA 52803

Celebration of Life

Immediately following

4:00 PM

The Outing Club
2109 N. Brady St.
Davenport, IA 52803

Planning to join? Please contact Joel Lorentzen at joellorentzen@yahoo.com so we can plan accordingly.



Junior Bible Studies Fall 2026

JBS meets the **First, Second, Third Sundays** During Worship, **Fourth Sunday** Between Services. This year we are using Wonder on the Go, inviting children to wonder about the characters in Bible stories and what we can learn about God. Each session will include a short video, a story from the Spark Children's Bible, and activities.

Thank you
for supporting
Pray & Play!



Thank you to everyone who contributed to Birdies for Charity this year. We received \$925 in donations for Pray and Play. This year's bonus fund was 8.85%, giving us an extra \$81.86. This extra amount will provide meals, snacks, and supplies for one program day. The donated amount of \$925 will pay for our small group leaders for two of our six program days this school year. Your financial support
(continues →)



(continued)
allows us to run this program and provide a well-supervised children's ministry. The children, small group leaders, volunteers, and I are very grateful for every donation. Your part makes a difference! ~ Pastor Kirsten

Speaking of Pray & Play...In October, we had 24 children, our highest number yet. Our next program day is Monday, Nov 30.

October Kids Club!

On October 23, we welcomed children for our Friday night Kids' Club. The kids ranged in ages three to nine. They enjoyed roasting marshmallows, playing tag with pool noodles, learning about God's care and protection, and painting pumpkins. Thank you to our volunteers who made the evening possible!



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1 All Saints Sunday Food Pantry Sunday Green Bag Sunday 8am Choir Rehearsal 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 9:40am Dementia Talk 10:30am Contemp Worship 11:30am Confirmation @ Zion	2 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer	3 Election Polling Location 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Personnel Mtg 5pm Property Mtg 6pm CYF Mtg	4 12pm Men's Lunch Group 1:30pm Nominating Mtg 3pm Spiritual Growth Mtg 5:30pm Grief Support Grp 6:30pm Choir Rehearsal	5 11am Short Stories Bible Study	6	7
8 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp. Worship	9 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer	10 9am Quilters 10am Pastor's Text Study 1:30pm Social Min Mtg 2:30pm Outreach Mtg	11 9am Quilters 12pm Men's Lunch Group 7pm Worship/Music Mtg	12 11am Short Stories Bible Study 1pm Luther Manor Harvest Gathering	13 1pm Luther Towers Harvest Gathering	14 8:30am Page Turners
15 Stewardship Sunday 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp Worship	16 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 6pm Sweet Arts Club	17 9:30am Naomi Circle 10am Pastor's Text Study 1pm Luther Crest Harvest Gathering	18 12pm Men's Lunch Group 4:30pm Conf @ St James 5:30pm Grief Support Grp	19 11am Short Stories Bible Study Noon Council Reports Due	20	21 9am Holiday Head Start Choir Rehearsal
22 Give Thanks Sunday 9:30am Joint Worship 10:30am Brunch	23 10:30am Staff Meeting 4:30pm Centering Prayer 7pm Council Meeting	24 10am Pastor's Text Study	25 12pm Men's Lunch Group	26 Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closed	27 Thanksgiving Holiday Office Closed	28
29 8:30am Traditional Worship 9:30am Coffee Hour 10:30am Contemp Worship	30 Pray & Play 8:30am-4pm 4:30pm Centering Prayer					
Pr. Stephanie Vacation						
<div>Office Hours</div> <div>Monday-Thursday 8:30am-3:00pm</div>						

Wednesdays at Noon Men's Lunch Group (p. 7)

Mondays at 4:40 pm Centering Prayer via Zoom (p. 7)

November 1 All Saints Sunday

November 1 Alzheimer's & Dementia Talk

November 1 Green Bag/Food Pantry Sunday (p. 3)

November 1 IFF Birthday Bash!

November 3 General Election Polling Location (p. 6)

November 4 Grief Support Group 5:30pm (p. 7)

November 5 Short Stories Bible Study (p. 3)

November 8 Coffee with Council (p. 8)

November 10 & 11 Quilters (p. 7)

November 12 Short Stories Bible Study (p. 3)

November 12 Luther Manor Harvest Party (p. 4)

November 13 Luther Tower Harvest Party (p. 4)

November 14 Page Turners (note date change) (p. 7)

November 15 Be a Blessing Stewardship Sunday (p. 2)

November 16 Thanksgiving Boxes Due to Church (p. 4)

November 17 Naomi Circle 9:00am (p. 7)

November 17 Luther Crest Harvest Party (p. 4)

GOOD
THINGS
AHEAD

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Michael Kelker | 16 Shirley Dohrmann |
| 2 Stacy Morrison | 17 Caroline Kelly |
| 3 George DaRosa | 18 Russ Finkler |
| 4 Ann Jepson | Katie Noack |
| 8 Ariel Carter | 21 Susan McVay |
| Bob Peters | 27 Scott Sund |
| 9 Sherry McCarty | 29 Craig Brown |
| 13 Ben McCullough | 30 Pat Hixon |
| 15 Vicki Liebbe | |

Happy Birthday

NOVEMBER
BIRTHDAYS

November 18 Grief Support Group 5:30pm (p. 7)

November 19 Short Stories Bible Study (p. 3)

November 22 Give Thanks Joint Worship & Brunch (p. 2)

November 24-30 Pr. Stephanie vacation (p. 6)

November 26-27 Thanksgiving Holiday (p. 6)

November 30 Pray & Play

Centering Prayer Mondays via Zoom

4:30pm on Zoom (link below) **Centering Prayer** is a Christian method of silent contemplation focused on experiencing God's presence through choosing a sacred word, sitting in quiet, and gently letting go of thoughts. Developed in the 1970s, it modernizes ancient contemplative traditions. Cheryl Kritsch is the facilitator. Periodically the group will meet in person in the Grace Church Choir Room providing the ZOOM option, as well. Please contact Cheryl 563-343-0135 with any questions and to verify the location (zoom or in person). **Click [HERE](#) to enter Zoom for Centering Prayer. Meeting ID: 392 407 7028 Passcode: 2020**

Grief Support November 4 & 18

5:30pm The Grief Support Group meets the first Wednesday in June, July, and August in Pat Bell Hall (first & third Wednesdays September-May. Please join us! Anyone is welcome at anytime, and please be assured our conversations are kept in confidence. **Questions?** Cindy Lee 563-370-5386.

Men's Lunch Wednesdays

Noon Men's "Lunch & Conversation" meets every Wednesday at Noon at VanderVeer Park. (In case of rain or cold, we'll meet at church.) You can bring a lunch from home or pick something up from a local restaurant. **Questions?** Contact Dennis Boehme at 563-320-2661 or boehmed@aol.com.

Service Day Quilters November 10 & 11

9am-Noon The quilts made are donated to the community and Lutheran World Relief. Anyone can join to help at church or at home cutting squares, sewing, finishing, etc. **Questions?** Gloria Lange 563-271-1542 or langejg1@msn.com or Kathy Miller kathyk1679@aol.com or 563-676-0914.

Page Turners Book Club November 14*

8:30am The Page Turners Book Club meets 8:30am the third Saturday each month at different locations for breakfast, book discussion, and great fellowship. (Haven't read the book? Join us anyways!) **November Book: [Buckeye](#)** by Patrick Ryan **Contact:** Sally Haugen 563-514-9335 ***Note Date Change**

Naomi Women's Circle November 17

9-9:30am Snacks & Fellowship, 9:30-11:00am Study & Devotions The Naomi Women's Circle meets the third Tuesday of the month September through May for refreshments, fellowship, devotions, and Bible study. All are welcome to join us! **Contact:** Nancy Boehme 563-320-6203

Sunday Morning Hospitality

Sign up to serve Sunday coffee (and heat up water for tea), bring treats, bring healthy snacks, or even all three if you wish. Clipboard in narthex - sign ups are available now thru January.



ADMIN STAFF

Pastor Stephanie Wood
pastorstephanie@gracewelcomesyou.org

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Director of Outreach & Youth Ministries
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Annie Nau, Office Administrator
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Beth Sindt, Treasurer
treasurer@gracewelcomesyou.org

Jason Halkias, Custodian
custodian@gracewelcomesyou.org

MUSIC STAFF

Sally Meier - Adult Choir Director
Kathi Parrish - Accompanist
Susan Senn - Organist
Dan Haugen - 10:30am Song Leader
Rob Leveridge - 10:30am Song Leader

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Paul Lewellan President
Deb Gustafson Vice-President
Gail Walton Secretary
Dawn Matthews Treasurer
Jackie Cain
Lori Haugen
Becky Kelly
Laura Toland

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Save the Date for the Children's Christmas Program!

This year's Christmas program will be Sunday, December 20. The program will take place during a joint worship service at 9:30am. There will be a reception to follow with treats for both children and adults. All ages are invited and encouraged to participate! We will rehearse during Junior Bible Studies in the month of December, but children are encouraged to participate even if they don't attend a rehearsal. The program is designed to welcome children without any rehearsals. Join us as we share in the glory of the Christmas story!



Notable December Dates:

- **Dec 6** Fair Trade Sales
- **Dec 9** Bonfire Church
- **Dec 11** Kids Club
- **Dec 13** Fair Trade Sales
- **Dec 13** Candles & Carols
- **Dec 20** Kid's Christmas Program Joint Worship
- **Dec 24** Christmas Eve Worship at 5pm & 7pm
- **Dec 25** Christmas Dinner

Council Corner

- At the October 27, meeting, Council welcomed our new Treasurer, Beth Sindt. She reported that at the end of September we were 75% into the year. We have received 70.06% of budgeted revenue. We have spent 70.94% of our expense budget. For the month of September, we had a deficit of \$6,290.60. For the year through September, we had a deficit of \$23,010.13. Last year at this time the deficit was -\$30,599.26. Last September's deficit was \$11,902.96
- A Special Projects grant was approved to partially fund the 2027 Block Party.
- Council met in special session to discuss Pastor Stephanie's review.
- The next Coffee with Council is set for November 8.

Food Pantry Weekends

Our next Food Pantry Collections are **Sundays November 1, December 6, and January 3** Bring your non-perishable food donations in a bag, and leave at the altar before the service.