

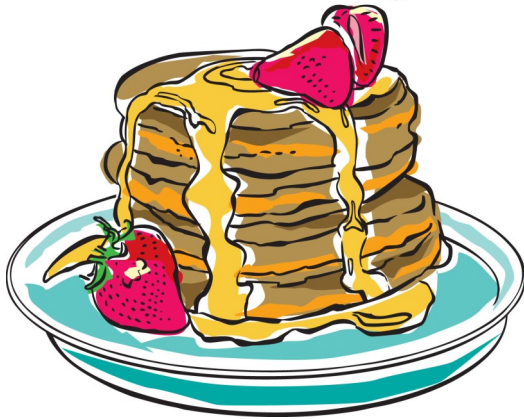
Grace Lutheran Church | 716 8th Street | PO Box 549 | Dawson, MN 56232
Providence Valley Lutheran Church | 2495 120th Street | Dawson, MN 56232

Providence & Grace Notes

February 2022

Grace Lutheran & Providence Valley Lutheran Newsletter

Shrove Tuesday



Pancake Supper

Tuesday, March 1st

5:00pm-7:00pm in
Grace Hall

Free Will Offering!

All proceeds will go towards
the roofing project.

**We are collecting "rolls" for
Dawson Area Food Shelf
Super 'Roll' Sunday!**

February 13th, 2022

We are collecting all types of toilet paper, paper towels, Kleenex, cleansing wipes, etc.

Drop off can be on or before 2/13.



VISIT US ONLINE gracedawson.org | pvl.org



Winter Worship Schedule

Grace Lutheran

9:00am Worship Service

In Person/Online/Radio

10-10:45am Sunday School
(No Classes 2/20/2022)

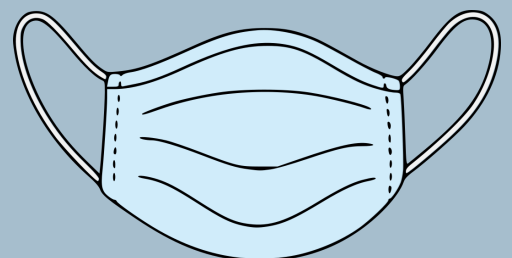
10:00am Coffee Fellowship

Providence Valley Lutheran

10:45am Worship Service

Due to the sudden influx of illnesses in our community, the leadership at Grace Lutheran & Providence Valley Lutheran have made the decision to **require masks and social distancing** during worship until further notice.

Thank-you for understanding, and please stay safe and healthy.



Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. - Psalm 90:1

This verse points to what it means to be a church. We're more than just a social club, or a service organization—we are the Body of Christ. Christ is our home. Christ is our dwelling place now and for eternity! Grace Lutheran has a rich history and tradition. Many of you have had family who has helped make this congregation what it is today. Others of you are relative newcomers to Grace. All of us are called into this community by God to offer our own unique gifts and to accompany each other on the journey of faith. This church was here long before any of us were born and unless Jesus returns in glory, the Church and Grace Lutheran will be here long after all of us have died. What a gift to be on this journey of faith together! It will take more than a global pandemic to thwart the work of Christ's Church.

"Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations." A good verse for us to remember as we reflect together on this past year at Grace. This past year could be summarized as one where we have had to "CCC" - *Continue to Cope with Covid!*

You and I were hoping that the focus on the pandemic that began early in 2020 would have subsided and our lives would have returned to a more familiar and regular routine. However, we have had to continue maneuvering and changing due to the Covid virus. The world and our world as a church family has drastically changed! Some of these changes we have learned to live with in 2021. We have had to pivot our ministry priorities and make adjustments to continue to stay connected while the virus attempts to pull us apart. Even in 2021 some of us have wanted to continue to worship online and others who have been able to attend in person. We have learned to live more fully into social media to connect with more people, and it better equipped us for a virtual worship platform on Facebook and YouTube. So we have learned to live with not just an either/or, but we adjusted to a both/and as we focused together on our ministry. This has been a time where we have protected what we believe should be protected and this has been a time to change the things that we think could be improved. There is much to protect and celebrate at Grace. We have continued our variety of

worship offerings - traditional and contemporary - while moving to one service. It is a gift that you have received this change with flexibility and we have indeed seen the abundance of good worship, children and youth and our older members all together building bridges across generations and service times. We held a week long emphasis on our ministry that culminated with some fun for our Intern Pastor and

"Our lives are different and we have been both changed and transformed and some of the changes forced upon us will remain. The apostle Paul wrote in Roman 12:2,

"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so you may discern the will of God-what is good and acceptable and perfect."

me. I guess we were the sitting ducks for some flinging of that Thanksgiving Feast at us!

We all had fun celebrating this congregation's great support for the work God has called us to do. The youth of this congregation are bright, kind, and goofy. We are continuing to build a faith community as we look forward to what we hope will be a more predicable year ahead. Worship, as mentioned above took a few

different turns, but we never closed.

We opened our doors to our neighbors early in the summer as Food Service from Dawson Boyd Schools utilized our kitchen space while much of the school was still under construction. We also hosted some of the office personnel from the Puris Company as they renovated their office space. In addition to weekly responsibilities, we attended Synod Assembly via Zoom this year. I also continued to serve on the Synod Candidacy Committee for Southwest Minnesota Synod, presided over the Dawson Ministerial and also served on the Dawson Housing Board.

If I have learned anything over the past few years it is that I will not be able to predict exactly how 2022 will shape up. With that said, I also know that God is faithful and Grace is a resilient community led by a superb staff. Our staff has continued to respond to each new challenge and opportunity with grace and I hope that you will join me in thanking them for their faithfulness! There is much to look forward to. Yet there are many surprising gifts and blessings in the present. Even amid the losses and uncertainties, I hope we will inspire one another to practice generosity and notice God's presence in unexpected ways. (Continued...)

In this present moment, we have been reassured of hope and a new day! Yes, our lives are different and we have been both changed and transformed and some of the changes forced upon us will remain. The apostle Paul wrote in Roman 12:2, ***“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so you may discern the will of God-what is good and acceptable and perfect.”*** Our minds have been renewed with new possibilities for ministry. We will do our best to make it as ***“good and acceptable and perfect”*** as possible as we worship God together and stay connected.

As we look back on the last year and the impact it had, here are some lessons I would like to suggest that we have learned together.

⇒We have learned how fragile life itself is. We have always known of our mortality, but Covid-19 has taught us that we are all just one breath away from eternity. In Psalm 90 Moses reflects on the brevity of life. He writes, ***“Teach us to number our days that we may have a heart of wisdom.”*** Let’s remember our fragile existence with wisdom.

⇒We learned to have a deep gratitude for the serving professions. In particular, I’m so grateful for the selfless and tireless work of our medical and health care professionals in our community. I am thankful for our teachers, staff and administration that have worked tirelessly for the best interests of our young people. God has blessed this community with dedicated and resilient workers from the care center to the farm to the businesses on main street and around our town. These dedicated folks have kept things moving along, serving us and we thank God for the blessing they are to make this community strong and vibrant. Many have lived out their calling to serve in extraordinary times with faithfulness, love and care for this community! We thank them and continue to pray for them.

⇒We have learned the privilege of gathering with God’s people.

⇒We have learned the need for practical service to our neighbors.

⇒We have learned the need to lament. Individually,



we lamented the deaths and suffering of loved ones and of the spread of COVID. We lamented the political divisiveness. Lament is letting God deal with our sorrow and asking for help. Lament brings our complaints to God, our desperation to God, our fears to God, our anger to God. Lament is admission of powerlessness over the circumstances around us.

We bring them to God and there’s no better place!!

⇒We have learned the durable flexibility of God’s people. You, our members and the great staff that serves you gave me a lesson in durability, perseverance, and flexibility. We are not out of the woods yet with the pandemic. We have a long way to go. But I am so thankful for the energy, patience, and perseverance of all of you. We have seen you respond faithfully and with tremendous resolve in the face of the pandemic, and we are glad for this!

⇒Finally, we have learned Christ is our all in all. Jesus is everything and the gospel is what we cling to the most. As all of us watched our routines stripped away, saw people we love afflicted with illness, saw the universal fight against the pandemic, it exposed our need for a Savior who has conquered death, disease, fear and sin. Our hope is in Christ and Christ alone. ***He is our dwelling place for all generations.***

2021 has shaped us all. But let’s cling still to the hopes and dreams that Christ has inspired us with through Christ’s Spirit among us. Sustained by God’s grace, I look forward with you, to the future of God’s love, grace and goodness God has promised for us as the Grace Lutheran community. So, let’s make a deal in 2022!! Let’s commit ourselves to the joy of Jesus when joy presents itself AND let’s commit ourselves to lament when it is time to grieve. There is so much pain and grief in our world. And yet, there is also cause for celebration and joy. The One who has come into the world – who lives within you – is stronger than all that threatens to divide and cause us harm. Our dwelling place is with our Redeemer. God will never leave you nor forsake you. For a new day is dawning, filled with healing and light for 2022.

Always grateful for you,

Pastor Kendall

FROM THE INTERN PASTOR:

(From Annual Report to the Congregation)

Friends in Christ,

It's hard to believe it hasn't even been six months since I joined the Grace and Providence Valley communities. The only explanation for how at home I feel is the loving reception I've gotten from you all, and especially the church staff. Not a day in the office goes by where I don't experience FOMO (fear of missing out) when I see someone chatting across the hall and have to put a pause on what I'm doing in order to investigate! It has been a blessing to get to know you all so far, and I'm eager to continue learning with you all through the summer of 2022.

Apart from Sunday morning worship leading and preaching, teaching confirmation has been a major part of my learning so far. I am working through the major stories of the New Testament with the seventh and eighth graders, trying to get to know a little better who this Jesus we serve is. The mentor program is off to a solid start, and I am really believing God will deepen faith in both mentors and mentees as they continue to grow together this year. Big events like the Junior High Youth Gathering in Willmar - as well as attending different sports and extracurriculars - have also been highlights for connecting with the youth and getting to know them better.

My teaching has also extended to Bible studies and Release Time. The first and second graders that come for Release Time each Wednesday can certainly be a wild bunch eager for reprieve from the classroom, so I've been learning to let go of a perfect lesson and focus instead on loving them, creating an atmosphere for them to feel truly welcome at church. It's also been a pleasure to study books like John with the men's and Isaiah with the women's Bible studies; their lived faith experiences and curiosity to understand the scriptures have truly encouraged me.

I've been able to visit outside the church with several folks so far, including some combine rides last fall! It is a privilege to get to know so many people's stories, and I intend to visit with more of you in this new year. Please do not hesitate to reach out if you are in need of someone to talk to, or simply stop by my office when you're in the church. I'm happy to talk whatever - from Bible and theology, to life's struggles and triumphs, to simply surviving winter in Dawson! The peace of God be with you.

Yours in Christ,
Austin Krohnke (Intern Pastor)



LQP Conference Assembly



Sunday, February 27th

*2:00pm at Salem Lutheran
in Monte*

(Registration begins at 1:30)

***The plan is to meet in person but the technology is
available if we need to move online*



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

***The Grace Lutheran
Congregational
Meeting***

will be held

***Sunday, February
6th***

At 10:00

Following worship

*Parish Planning Council
met on*

*Wednesday, January 26th
at 7:00pm.*



***The Providence Valley
Congregational
Meeting***

will be held

***Sunday, February
13th***

At 11:45am

Following worship

*PVLC Financial meeting
is*

*Wednesday, February 9th
at 7:00pm.*

YOUTH

I want to thank all of the teachers that have been teaching Sunday school for the 1st half of the year. You have all done an amazing job! **We are so blessed to have people volunteer to teach our kids.** A very special thank you goes out to our teachers; Danielle Wager, McKenzie Lee, Breanna Long, Chelsea Ludvigson, Courtney Bergeson, Stacie Larson, Danielle Stotesbery, Amber Tuff, Bethany Wager, Serena Brown, Jake Kieft, Sarah Lee, Lindsay Ourada, Ryan Stotesbery, Kelly Tufto and Ashley Anderson. I also want to thank our music teachers; Tammy Kruse, Brandon and Allysa Hurley.

Many of our teachers are continuing to teach the 2nd half of the year which we are very thankful for. New teachers for the 2nd half of the year are Val Olson, Ben and Chelsie Bothun.

"Super Roll of Caring" will be taking place on February 13th. We are asking for everyone to bring anything that comes on a roll for our local food shelf. We are excited to see how many rolls will come in!

Our next **YAP and Mentor/Mentee meeting** will also be held on Sunday, February 13th. The YAP meeting will be at 10:00 and the Mentor meeting will be at 11:45.

There will be **NO Sunday school on Sunday, February 20th**. The Christian Ed board goes along with the school calendar on extra- long weekends. There is no school on Friday, Feb. 18th or Monday, Feb. 21st.

The 7th, 8th and 9th grade **confirmation retreat has been rescheduled to February 20 and 21st**. We will be going to Lake Shetek Bible Camp near Slayton, MN this year. The kids always have a great time on these overnights!

Our youth and their families will once again be providing **meals before our Lenten services** each week. I know this is a huge undertaking for our 5th – 12th grade parents, but it is really appreciated by the congregation. It's a great time for fellowship with one another. Suppers will begin on Wednesday, March 2nd before the worship service. The letters are being sent out this week.

We got word today that after much prayer and conversation, the National ELCA Youth Gathering has been cancelled for this summer due to the ongoing pandemic, the recent COVID-19 surge and public health considerations. The next gathering will be held in 2024.

I now have to share with you that this will be my last monthly newsletter. I have decided to retire from my position here at Grace after 18 years. I have enjoyed working with the best staff around and with the most wonderful people here at Grace! Thank you for giving me this wonderful opportunity of working here as the youth director!

God's Blessing to all of you!

Tammy Wager



After **18 years** of working at Grace Lutheran Church, our youth ministry director, Tammy Wager, is retiring! What a gift she has been for so many years and to so many people. Tammy has done endless things to make our church community run smoothly.

Thank you for all you have done for Grace Lutheran Church, cherish every moment of this time and revel in this new stage of your life. Happy retirement, Tammy!

❄️ Winter Clothing Drive

*He who has two coats, let him give to him who has none.
He who has food, let him do likewise." Luke 3:11*

Wow! The amount of generosity our community showed during this winter clothing drive was amazing. We received enough warm clothing and financial donations to bless 10 school kids, 55 families (with multiple members per family) and 21 wish list items. The ability to give the gift of warmth is heartwarming during these frigid Minnesota winters. This time of year can be tough financially for families with the holiday spending on top of still needing the daily necessities. It was a blessing to see our community show up and show the members of our community that we care. To give kiddos the necessary items to play outside with their friends was heartwarming. Some of our "take aways" from the coat drive:

God was at work! God provided! It was amazing to see a need arise and then have one of our next donations meet that need. The financial donations allowed us to meet the needs of people when we didn't get donations for that particular size or item.

Our community is generous! We are surrounded by good people who care about meeting the needs of others. We were given four gift bags full of toys and household items which gave us the opportunity to surprise four families.

Perspective! "One mans trash is another mans treasure". Our favorite experience was when an item was donated that was in tough shape. We put it to the side thinking it wouldn't probably go. A woman came and was looking for the same item we had put aside. Going out on a limb I asked her if she wanted to look at this item. I prefaced that it was in tougher shape and might need some mending. She immediately mentioned that she had a sewing machine at home and it would be no problem to mend and item.

I brought her the item and she sat down and cried. She was so thankful for the item and she was equally excited to be warm when she went out for walks. She had recently had heart surgery and was in need of warm items to walk outside for her therapy. Praise God!

Another perspective we had was how we tend to take for granted what we have and how most often we don't have to worry about supplying the necessities, while others do. We were able to help a student at school who didn't have the items she needed to play in the snow with her peers during recess. Due to the generosity of our community we were able to purchase her a new pair of snow boots. When she received the boots the little girl had tears in her eyes and was excited to be able to play outside with her friends.

Danielle Stotesbery
& Lindsay Ourada



*"Don't forget to do good and
to share what you have
because God is pleased with
these kinds of sacrifices"*
Hebrews 13:16

Upcoming Events:

- ♦ Sunday, Feb 6th: Grace Congregational Meeting
- ♦ Sunday, Feb 13th: Souper Bowl Sunday
- ♦ Sunday, Feb 13th: YAP 10:00am/Mentor Meeting 11:45AM
- ♦ Sunday, Feb 20th-21st: Confirmation Retreat (Rescheduled)
- ♦ Wednesday, Feb 23rd: 50+ Potluck 5:30pm
- ♦ Sunday, Feb 27th: LqP Conference Assembly 2:00pm at Salem Lutheran in Monte.



FYI:

**There will be no
quilting during the
month of February.**



Grace Lutheran 2021 Financial Report

December Income: \$ 68,095

December Expense: \$ 67,345

Year To Date Income: \$ 446,319

Year To Date Expenses: \$ 426,283

2020 Comparison (same period):

Year To Date Income \$ 393,041

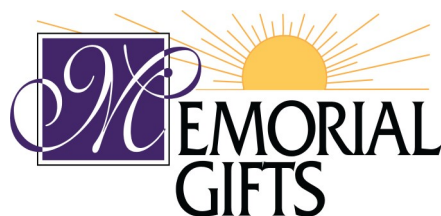
Funerals

May our Heavenly Lord keep in tender love the lives which we hold in blessed memory and comfort their family and friends in their grief.

Chris Femrite - Dec.4th, 2021

Carol Nelson - Jan.7th, 2022

Raymond Gordon— Jan. 21st, 2022



In Memory of Darrell Benson
Radio Fund \$10

In Memory of Lois Larson
Kitchen Fund \$200
Roof Fund \$200

In Memory of Sylvia Lee
Radio Fund \$210
Memorial Fund \$20

In Memory of Darin Sorby
Roof Fund \$500

In Memory of Blanche Jordahl
Memorial Fund \$125

In Memory of Chris Femrite
Memorial Fund \$25

Baptisms

Through the sacrament of Holy Baptism, we welcome into the Lord's family these children of God and receive them as fellow members of the body of Christ and heirs with us to all the benefits of God's Kingdom.

*Palmer Grace Gritmacker
December 9th, 2021*



Grace Lutheran

December:

9:00pm: 98

Christmas Eve:

3:00pm: 238

4:30pm: 194

Christmas Day:

10:00am: 24

January:

9:00am: 75

Holy Communion

2:00pm in Grace Hall
Tuesday, February 8th

9:30am at Riverside Manor
Thursday, February 10th

10:00am at JMCC
Friday, February 11th



February Circle Groups

Lydia Circle

Monday, Feb 28th, 9:30 am

Place : Grace Lounge

Bible Study: Emily Stelter

Ruth Circle

Monday, Feb 28th, 7:00pm

Place: Grace Lounge

Bible Study: Emily Stelter

Prayer Concerns

Grace Lutheran Church: Jim Anderson, Tom Beals, Ken Club, Jack Flayton, Monica Kennedy, Brad Madsen, Lauren Thoen, Mike Thompson, Julie Miron, Joey Anderson-Urness, Clarice Olson, Kristi Peterson-Tomas, Ken Menning, Asher Fjerkenstad, Aurora Brielle Bukowski, & Ann Hegg (Thoen)



Providence Valley Lutheran Church: Joy Windingstad, Arlys Buer, Evelyn Lundgren, Madalyn & Wilton Gustafson, Linda Tollak-

Beginning Ash Wednesday March 2nd

Joint Wednesday Lenten Services begin on Ash Wednesday, March 2nd, at 7:00pm at Grace Lutheran and will continue through Wednesday, April 6th.

Please join us for supper served by Grace & Providence LYO at 6:00pm these evenings in Grace Hall.
The suggested donation \$5.



Grace Lutheran Church

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Providence Valley Lutheran Church

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Dawson, MN 56232
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Grace Lutheran & Providence Valley Lutheran

Our Church Staff

Pastors: Kendall L. Stelter

Austin Krohnke, Intern

Membership Care Director:

Emily Stelter

Youth Director:

Tammy Wager

Organist/Pianist:

Chris Lehne (Grace); Beth Borstad (Providence Valley)

Financial Secretary:

Karen Collins (Grace)

Office Secretaries:

Jesi Martinson (Grace); Heidi Prestholdt (Grace)

Karen Bengtson (Providence Valley)

Church Custodian:

Keith Nelson (Grace); Phyllis Lund (Providence Valley)

Grace Lutheran Leadership

Tim Borstad, *President*

Stacy Stratmoen, *Vice President*

Sandy Smaagaard, *Secretary*

Sharon Johnsrud, *Treasurer*

Grace Lutheran Board Directors

Christian Education

Danielle Stotesbery

Church Property

Peter Lee

Evangelism

Serena Brown

Lay Ministry

Ryan Stotesbery

Parish Fellowship

Deb Boe,

Carol Phillips

Stewardship

Steve Tufto

Youth

Jesi Martinson

Providence Valley Leadership

Harvey Swenson, *President*

Karen Bengtson, *Secretary*

Melanie Peterson

Bruce Lund

Josh Beninga

Kris Bach

Doug Breberg



Grace Lutheran and Providence Valley Lutheran
are member congregations of the ELCA -
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



The *Beauty* of *Creation*