

January 2024

GRACE NEWSLETTER

Ministers: All God's People!

Grace Mission Statement:

Everyone is invited to know and feel God's love, experience spiritual growth, encounter forgiveness, receive respect and gain hope.



Welcome to 2024

Welcome to the beginning of a new year. For many of us we begin with a reflection on the past year. In 2023 we were challenged in many ways, and this called us to remember who we are and to reclaim our heritage as United Methodists here in Spencer Iowa. We grew in grace by building a safe community for everyone to belong, seek and discover their faith, a place where everyone is recognized as a Child of God – a Person of Worth and a place where everyone can make a difference in the world through missions. It truly has been a year of Growing in Grace.

TS Eliot writes:

What we call the beginning is often the end.

And to make an end is to make a beginning.

The end is where we start from.

Grace UMC has had a new beginning in 2023 and is moving onward. We may not know fully what we will become but as Martin Luther King Jr said:

“Take the first step in faith. You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”

To help you take focused steps in faith during 2024 I shared on Sunday a book:

My One Word: Change Your Life With Just One Word by Mike Ashcraft (Author) and Rachel Olsen (Author)

Take steps to Grow in Grace during 2024. Using a focus word from the scriptures can help you be intentional in going deeper in your relationship with God and help you make healthy spiritual changes in your life. As we work on our relationship with God we are empowered by that relationship to serve others with Grace and make a difference in the world with Grace.

Message from Pastor Barrie continues on Page 2

Let us pray for our world:

Creator God,

We thank you for all that you have done in 2023, and we look to the future with Hope. Our world is full of brokenness, so we pray for your grace to move in this world and through us to boldly proclaim the Hope we have in You. We pray for believers all over the world – that they would be unified in You, loving, and supporting each other. Let us not be judgmental and condemning of others but full of grace, love and kindness. In all things, help us to focus our lives on You this year. Give us strength to persevere, courage to share Your good news, and peace in knowing that You are always with us. Help us to daily Grow in your Grace.

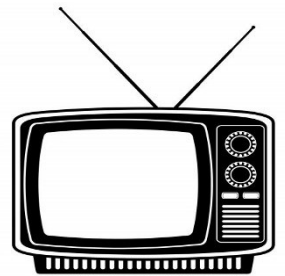
In Jesus name, Amen.

Grace,

Pastor Barrie Tritle



SMU airing of previous Sunday worship:
Wednesdays @ 7:00 PM & Thursdays @ 10:00 AM



Catch the Spirit Broadcast on KICD costs \$70 per Sunday. Your donations to pay for our radio ministry are very much appreciated.

RightNow Media

Every person in our church can access Biblically-based videos on topics like marriage, parenting, youth, recovery, leadership, finances and much more. These videos stream anytime and from anywhere. Text the code SGUMC to 49775. Download the FREE APP and get started.

SING
UNTO THE LORD!

Join us for a Hymn Sing prior to the worship service every 5th Sunday of the month.

March 31, 2024

June 30, 2024

September 29, 2024

December 29, 2024

REFLECTION

The New Year---A Time for Reflection

Since January is the first month of the calendar year, many people look at it as a time of beginnings. Traditionally, people may make resolutions for improvements in their life.

But, there can't be beginnings without endings. Sometimes external events or other experiences have impacted or greatly affected our life; a disabling accident or illness, death, divorce, the loss of a job, or an economic downturn. Other experiences may include: an awareness of an inner loss, an opportunity that we ignored, the realization that a long-held hope will never be attained, or the recognition that our self-perception and reality don't match.

The ending of one year and the beginning of next is a chance for reflection; a chance for evaluation and assessment. Are you content with the past year; with what was accomplished or experienced? Was it a year of growth? Do you wish some of your life experiences had been different? Whether the past year has been one of pleasant or unpleasant events and circumstances, you can learn from your experiences and choose to be transformed by them.

*"It is not what happens **to** us that matters so much as what happens **in** us. If I want transformation, I must let go of what could have been and pursue what can be."*

(A Grace Disguised by G. Sittser)

The New Year---A Time for Reflection continued on page 4

With this viewpoint I invite you to use the whole month of January as a time of reflection. Each week, take an afternoon or evening to intentionally write down or process with a friend or family member events or experiences from the past year.

- * The endings you have experienced
- * What you had hoped to accomplish
- * What you actually accomplished
- * Unexpected events or experiences
- * How you are coping and feeling about the unexpected and/or unrealized
- * The state of my relationships with family, friends or God
- * The path of your life without any changes happening
- * Hopes or changes for the next 3 months
- * Actions or things that would help those hopes to happen

Reflect on what you have written or discussed. Place yourself, the past year, and future before God. Ask for healing regarding the losses, the might-have-been's, and the what-if's. We can't change the past, but we can choose to learn from it and let it transform us into a different and better person.

Ask for guidance with the hopes and changes you are considering. Ponder what speaks to your inner self. Let God influence you in choosing one or two that actually seem possible. Put into place specific action steps to accomplish those hopes. Ask for God's presence and strength each day to practice your action steps. May this process of inner reflection help transform you into the creation that God means for you to become.

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teaching and helping one another in all wisdom and gratitude” (Col 3:15-16 NRS)

Kae Tritle, RN

Community Faith Nurse

Thank you so much for sharing the joy of the Christmas season with us through cards, encouraging words, goodies, and other gifts. Your thoughtfulness has given us smiles and touched our hearts. We have been blessed to share the Hope, Love, Joy and Peace of the Advent and Christmas season with you. Blessings as we all begin the New Year.

Pastor Barrie and Kae Tritle



January, 2024, UWFaith Bible Verse: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." Romans 6:23 (NRSV)

Our group gathered on the afternoon of December 7th for our Christmas Tea/Coffee in the BenTena Room and delighted in welcoming five guests. We shared in a Christmas devotional and the singing of hymns throughout the meeting of "Mary, Did You Know", "Joy to the World", and "Silent Night". Ruth Circle, led by Lorraine Conley, presented a program highlighting the importance of Mary, Joseph, the angels, shepherds, and wise men in the Christmas story with Bonnie Foust sharing a Christmas poem.

Sandy Thomas has expressed concern regarding the amount of time she has available to act as the group's treasurer even though she served us well and is much appreciated. Therefore, it was motioned that Jane Ingledue return to the office of Treasurer. Shurmaine McAlpine and Cyndi O'Hara were nominated to share as Co-Presidents for the coming year.

The new programs for 2024 were passed out with meetings planned for: February 1st, April 4th, June 6th, August 1st, October 3rd, and December 5th.

Our February meeting @ 1:30 pm in the BenTena Room will include installation of officers and Pastor Barrie serving communion. Esther Circle is responsible for treats. At that meeting we will need to make a decision on a fundraiser for 2024. As the year closes, Spencer Grace UWFaith had donations of \$1,716.00 to distribute to worthy causes. In light of our vision of "turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children, and youth around the world", it was voted to donate \$500.00 to Wings of Refuge in Ames, IA that serves those affected by human trafficking, \$500.00 to the new Discovery House of Spencer assisting those dealing with addictions, \$500.00 to the Camp Scholarship fund for local youth, and \$166.00 going to the diaper tree mission for Birthright.

Remember that all women, not just United Methodists, are welcome as United Women in Faith.

UNITED METHODIST MEN

The next meeting for United Methodist Men will be January 13, 2024, at 8:00 AM.

The speaker, Craig Cadman, will tell us about Camp Laurel in Maine. He has worked there each summer for many years with many interesting experiences.

This meeting is sponsored by UMM.

Everyone is invited to join us for breakfast at 8:00 AM in the BenTena room. A good meal, good conversation, and interesting information are certain to find you here.

Trustees Committee Update

At the time of this writing the demolition on the bathrooms on the west end of the Education Wing is well under way. The plumbers are expected to be here to start their portion of the remodel on December 26th. We will try to keep everybody informed of the progress as it happens. The roof on Fellowship Hall has shown no signs of leaking so far this winter as there were no leaks reported after the last rain. At the present time maintenance of that roof is scheduled to take place in the Spring of 2024. A new electronic sound system was installed in the bell tower just prior to the Christmas holiday. We now have the ability to program music, chimes, and bell ringing, bringing new life to our bell tower once again. Thank you to the group of dedicated individuals who made this dream a reality. The Trustees are grateful for warmer temperatures so far this winter as it has been a great help in keeping our heating budget in check. Thank you to everyone who has also made the effort to turn off lights and turn down thermostats when rooms are vacated. Every effort has helped to control our utility expenses.

-Gary Small, Trustees Chair

Weighted Works With Love

The Weighted Works With Love group will return to work on the 4th Tuesday of January (Jan. 23rd) from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. We have four orders waiting to be started and will be putting effort into developing inventory to take to Family Fest early in March. If you would like to order a weighted lap pad, shoulder wrap or blanket, now is a great time to do so. We are glad to help you select fabric or purchase items we have on hand. Sue Hitchcock (712-262-7604) or Brownie Small (712-262-7420) look forward to helping you with your order.

-Brownie Small, WWWL



Widow Fellowship

January 24, 2024 at 10:00 AM

Golfview Meeting Room

1900-4th Ave SW, Spencer

*Gathering for coffee & fellowship

Missions Opportunities at Grace

The Shopping Cart had a great response to our request for soup mix, saltines, canned fruit and peanut butter for the month of December. 120 bags were packaged and delivered December 13th, prior to the Christmas holiday. In addition 240 pairs of socks (from our sock angel) were delivered to the HeadStart/Jump Start children. The new grocery list for the month of January is posted on the grocery cart and includes the following items; Pancake Syrup and Jelly. A full menu is listed below. We will be packing all the groceries on Wednesday, January 17th, after the morning coffee for delivery to HeadStart/JumpStart.

January Grocery List

Pancake mix (UDMO is providing)

Pancake Syrup 24 oz.- no sugar free

Jelly 32 oz.

Canned fruit (already collected)

Volunteers Wanted: Johnson School continues to seek volunteers to donate about one hour a week to read to a student or to perhaps have lunch with them. Hours vary with each teacher. Principal Mrs. McGuire indicates that the “teachers are willing to accommodate the volunteer and are excited to have this opportunity.” With the new semester beginning soon this may be a good time to think about donating some time to this opportunity.

Call Sue Hitchcock at 262-7604 for more details.

Loom Project - Sleep Mats: Grace UMC now offers training on our looms on Wednesday afternoons for anyone interested in learning how to make the sleep mats from plastic grocery bags.. There are a few steps needed to get the bags ready for weaving and we are glad to help you learn them all. 19 mats have now been completed. Some have been delivered to Johnston for delivery where needed and others are being used locally. If you would like to learn about our loom project we are glad to show you how to be part of this great on-going mission opportunity.

Missions Opportunities at Grace, continued....

Diaper Tree Project: The Missions Committee asked for the congregation's help in creating a diaper tree out of disposable diapers for BirthRight during the month of December. I am pleased to announce that you donated 2606 diapers toward this project. These diapers will be delivered to BirthRight for them to dispense to families who need this help. Thank you for helping to successfully grow our diaper tree.

Adopt a Family: We have heard that our 'adopt a family' had received our gift just before Christmas and that they were able to obtain some much needed items for each member of their family. The Spirit of Christmas that our congregation showed was much appreciated. The Missions Committee thanks each of you for your participation in this "Love Offering".

Brownie Small, Missions Chair

WANTED

Your Lenten Devotion submission to be shared and assembled into a booklet and utilized for daily use from Ash Wednesday through Easter, 2024, by our Grace Church family. We need approximately 40 devotionals of 35 lines or less fitting a 7" X 8.5" bulletin size page plus a short prayer based on your own scripture choice or on the lectionary list provided. The deadline for submission is 1/29/2024 in order to be available by 2/11/2024. Please sign up in the narthex or the church office. These devotionals were such a hit a few years ago —let's do it again!



What goes up, must come down!

Anyone who is willing to help take the Christmas decorations down is welcome to join members of the Worship Committee on Sunday, January 7th following worship. We will complete that task and hang banners for the next church season the next day, January 8th, starting at 9:00 AM. There is plenty to do. Lots will need to go back in storage. Muscle is needed. Young bodies that will climb ladders will be especially appreciated. Thanks!

LEADERSHIP 2024 - Grace United Methodist Church - Spencer, Iowa**Church Council****Pastor:** Rev. Dr. Barrie Tritle (319-930-7214)**Chair:** Judith Olson (262-2516)**Vice Chair:** Cyndi O'Hara (363-3185)**Lay Leaders:** Sandy Heerdt (212-5364) Ben Pullen (260-5566)**Lay Member to Annual Conference:** Lenny Heerdt (212-5397)**Lay Member to Annual Conference:** Jenn Ingledue (346-7720)**Lay Member to Annual Conference:** Bri Pullen (363-3349)**Lay Member to Annual Conference Alternate Representative:** Judi Calhoon (260-5358)**Director of Communications:** Alison Herman (262-2372)**Secretary:** Joan Waller (229-9399)**Treasurer:** Sue Burdick (260-3873)**SPRC:** Ric Guerrero (260-2816)**Trustees:** Gary Small (346-8184)**Finance:** Paul Kassel (260-3389)**Mission:** Brownie Small (363-4184)**Worship:** Linda O'Clair (260-7415)**Children's Ministry:** Kristin Schwenneker (363-2063)**Grace Cares:** Cyndi O'Hara (363-3185)**UWFaith:** Jane Ingledue (605-413-7034)**UMM:** Brad Johnson (641-425-8535)**Youth Representative:** Riley Herman (363-5898)**Finance Secretary:** Sandy Thomas (837-3785)**Staff/Parish Relations Committee: Ric Guerrero (260-2816)**

2024

2025 Elaine Orthmann (240-6283) Gordon Watson (580-3507)

2026 Ric Guerrero (260-2816) Dorothy DeGroot (229-1244) Nancy Hoffman (262-3979)

Ex Officio - Pastor. Lay Leader: Sandy Heerdt

Lay Member to Annual Conference: Jenn Ingledue

Children's Ministry: Kristin Schwenneker (363-2063)

2024 Crystal Handy (346-7107) Becky Prentice (260-9712) Jenn Ingledue (346-7720)

2025

2026 Jamie Horning (346-7836) Lisa Elliott (240-0929) Nancy Hoffman (262-3979)

Ex-officio - Pastor

Nominations and Leadership Development: Rev. Dr. Barrie Tritle (319-930-7214)

2024 Mike Carlson (260-1306) Linda Bress (262-0111)

2025 Linda O'Clair (260-7415) Jane Ingledue (605-413-7034)

2026 Bonnie Foust (580-6201) Jim Cullen (262-7793)

Memorial Committee: Judi Calhoon (260-5358)

2024 Kevin Tlam (240-7396)

2025 Anita Edwards (262-6978)

2026 Marsha Larson (363-4741) Judi Calhoon (260-5358)

Missions	Committee: Brownie Small (363-4184)
2024	Keith Bress (260-8240) Shirley Oswald (319) 631-4507
2025	Heidi O'Clair (260-7245) Lorraine Conley (363-1441) Jannis Liekwig (580) 3721
2026	Sue Hitchcock (260-6481) Sheryl Larson (346-7720) Brownie Small (363-4184) Kristin Schwenneker (363-2063)
	Ex-officio: Pastor
Trustees	Committee: Gary Small (346-8148)
2024	Roger Ingledue (262-2596) Lenny Heerdt (212-5397) Nancy Hoffman (262-3979)
2025	Ben O'Clair (260-0151) Bill Elliott (240-0930) Rich Prentice (262-2947)
2026	Jim Herman (262-2372) Marsha Larson (363-4741) Gary Small (346-8148)
	Ex-officio: Pastor
Worship	Committee Convener: Linda O'Clair (260-7415)
2024	
2025	Alison Herman (260-0566) Becky Prentice (260-9712)
2026	Linda Bress (260-0111) Sheryl Larson (346-7720) Jan Watson (580-3507) Linda O'Clair (260-7415)
Finance	Committee: Paul Kassel (260-3389)
2024	
2025	Bill McAlpine (592-9533)
2026	John Cotton (260-7636) Paul Kassel (260-3389)
	Ex-officio: Pastor, Church Council Chair: Judith Olson Church Council Vice Chair: Cyndi O'Hara, Lay Leader: Ben Pullen Lay Member to Annual Conference: Lenny Heerdt Treasurer: Sue Burdick
Grace Cares Leadership:	Cyndi O'Hara (363-3185)
	Linda Bress, Sue Burdick, Lorraine Conley, Bonnie Foust, Crystal Handy, Marietta Johnson, Lenny Heerdt, Sandy Heerdt, Shurmaine McAlpine, Elaine Orthmann, Becky Prentice, Phyllis Sitter, Kae Tittle, Linda Wittstruck
Foundation Disbursement Team:	Rev. Dr. Barrie Tittle (319-930-7214)
2024	Lenny Heerdt (212-5397)
2025	Karen Seversen (260-0235)
2026	Bernie Beecher (641-860-0529)
	Pastor; Church Council Chair: Judith Olson (262-2516) Vice Chair: Cyndi O'Hara (363-3185)
Staff:	Pastor: Rev. Dr. Barrie Tittle
	Administrative Assistant: Bri Pullen
	Finance Manager: Sandy Thomas
	Children's Ministries: Kristin Schwenneker
	Choir Director: Jessica Schable
	Bell Choir Director: Judi Calhoon
	Music: Tom Fuchs, Ray Meyer, Sean Pulatie
	Custodial & Maintenance: Dan Harris

An Online Bible Study for Cold Wintry Nights

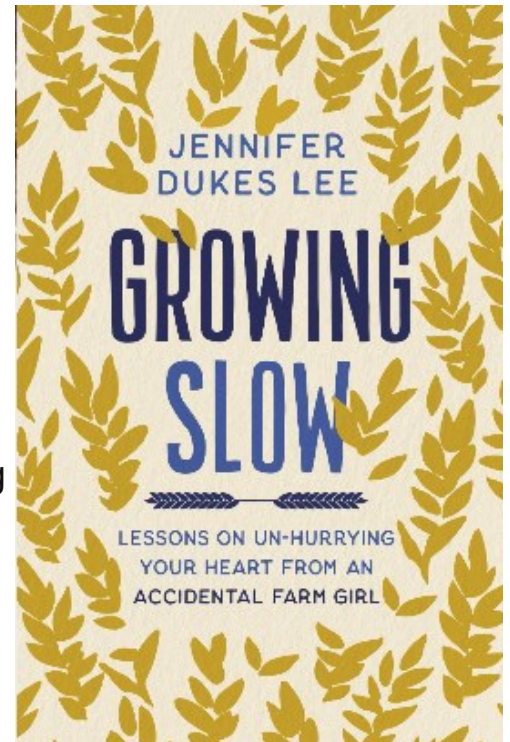
Start 2024 off with a Bible study you can access from your home via Zoom. Dorothy DeGroot will lead this study based on the book, **Growing Slow**, by Jennifer Dukes Lee. Jennifer grew up in Marathon, Iowa. After attending Iowa State, she was a journalist in Des Moines. The decision to become the fifth generation to farm her husband's family farm caused many changes in her family's life. As Jennifer grew accustomed to their new life, she realized that, despite moving to a rural setting, she still had a "hurried heart". This book is the story of how Jennifer relies on the Bible and God's love to turn from a fast pace of life to "...unhurried living by returning to the rhythm of the land."

The church office will have copies of the book, **Growing Slow**, that you may purchase for \$10. You may choose to buy the accompanying Bible Study workbook, but that is a personal choice, and it is not necessary to participate in the class.

Class will begin, via Zoom, on Thursday, January 25th at 6:30 PM. It will last approximately 2 hours each evening and be held on 6 different Thursdays: January 25, February 1, February 8, February 15, February 22, and February 29. (Yes, 2024 is Leap Year!).

The church library will also host a Zoom session on each Thursday if you cannot access the class on your own computer. Check with Bri and Sandy T. in the office regarding those arrangements.

From Dorothy: I'm very excited to read and discuss this book with many of you. Send me your email address at dorothydegroot@gmail.com so that I can send a Zoom invitation and a Welcome to each of you. As a final note, we are communicating with Jennifer to arrange a one-day in-person program at Grace. This will be held in early fall. When you read the book, you will discover that she has allowed summer to be a large part of her personal growing slow time.



A HUGE THANK YOU!

I would like to put out a HUGE thank-you to everyone that stepped up and helped out with our Kids Day Out Without Parents on Saturday, December 9th. This was a great success with approximately 103 kids attending. This would not have been possible without everyone working together as a team!
THANK-YOU!

-Kristen Schwenneker, Director of Children's Ministry



THANK YOU!

The family of Julie Masters Hanson is very grateful for the many acts of kindness given at this time of sorrow. We so appreciate Pastor Barrie, the many prayers, hugs, cards, calls, flowers, food, memorials and memories shared of our beautiful Julie.

God bless each of you!

Ron Hanson, Kyle and Jordan Hanson

Amber and Jordan Richardson

Al and Sue Masters, and Tim and Eric Masters

Thank You!

Thank you to the United Women in Faith for the beautiful Christmas card and message signed by so many of you. It was a lovely surprise. Good things are going on at Grace...and I enjoy hearing about them from you. See you in April.

Blessings for a 2024 filled with much Love and Joy!

Dorothy DeGroot

I would like to thank everyone who helped with Dinner Church and Wednesday Night Meals last year. It really does take a village, or in our case, it takes a Church. If you planned a meal, cooked a meal, served, did dishes, washed tables, provided ingredients, or baked a dessert. THANK YOU!

If you would like to plan a Dinner Church meal, have a suggestion for entertainment, or want to lead or be on a team for the Wednesday Night Meals, please contact Alison Herman.

The next Dinner Church is Saturday, January 20th. Dinner and entertainment will be announced after the first of the year.

Wednesday Night Meals will restart on Wednesday, January 10th. That schedule is still in the works.

Alison Herman

Hospitality on Sunday Mornings.

I would like to thank the '92 plus' people who have graciously helped and provided snacks and treats at the counter on Sunday morning each week before and after church. It is a joy to have smiling faces in the wonderful mix of conversation, laughter and having fun in a spiritual environment. Thank you God! Rich, you are appreciated for taking the commitment in doing beverages every Sunday and we do appreciate your dedication. Thank you to Jamie Horning and Nancy Hoffman for stepping up and doing clean-up duties. You two are faithful servants as well.

For the first and second Sundays in January we are having 'potluck' snacks and treats at the Narthex counter before and after church. If you have leftovers from Christmas please share in those 2 weeks. Or if you wish you may bring healthy food of any kind. Thank you in advance to all of you who make this job FUN for me in lining up the schedule. I have good people to work with and God is there all the way.

In Christ's Love,

Marietta Johnson

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
January 2024	1 Office Closed	2 Missions Mtg 5:30PM	3 Coffee @ Grace 9:30AM Chair Yoga 10AM	4	5 Office Closed	6
7 Worship 9:30AM Fellowship 10:30AM Adult Education 10:45AM Take Down Christmas Décor-following worship	8 Put up décor 9AM NO CHAIR YOGA	9 Children's Ministry 6:30PM	10 Chair Yoga 10AM Men's Bible Study 1 PM *Regularly Scheduled Wednesday Night No Bell Choir	11	12 Office Closed	13 UMM 8AM —Speaker, Craig Cadman
14 Worship 9:30AM Fellowship 10:30AM Adult Education 10:45AM Finance Mtg 10:45AM	15 Chair Yoga 10AM Newsletters DUE to Bri	16	17 Coffee @Grace 9:30AM Chair Yoga 10AM Men's Bible Study 1 PM *Regularly Scheduled Wednesday Night No Chancel or Bell Choir	18 Ruth Circle 1:30PM Worship Mtg 5:30PM SPRC Mtg 6:30PM	19 Office Closed	20 Dinner Church 5:30PM
21 Worship 9:30AM Fellowship 10:30AM Adult Education 10:45AM	22 Chair Yoga 10AM	23 Weighted Works With Love 9AM-3PM Ester Circle 5PM	24 Chair Yoga 10AM Men's Bible Study 1 PM Grace Cares 3:30PM *Regularly Scheduled Wednesday Night	25 "Growing Slow" Bible Study via Zoom 6:30PM	26 Office Closed	27
28 Worship 9:30AM Fellowship 10:30AM Adult Education 10:45AM	29 Chair Yoga 10AM Church Council 6:30PM	30	31 Chair Yoga 10AM Men's Bible Study 1 PM *Regularly Scheduled Wednesday Night	*Wednesday Night Schedule 3:30 PM Loom Work Session 5:30 PM Free Meal. 6:00 PM Grace Kidz 6:00 PM Confirmation (10 & 31) 6:30 PM Chancel Choir Practice 7:30 PM Bell Choir Practice		



Grace United Methodist Church

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office@spencergumc.com

NON-PROFIT

ORGANIZATION

U.S.POSTAGE

SPENCER, IA 51301

Worship:

Sunday 9:30 AM- Traditional

Return Service Requested

Pastor Barrie Tritle

barrie.tritle@gmail.com



Chair Person of Ministry Boards:

Ad Council: Judith Olson

Co-Lay Leaders: Sandy Heerdt, Ben Pullen

Lay Member to Ann. Conference: Lenny Heerdt, Jenn Ingledue, Bri Pullen

Treasurer: Sue Burdick

SPRC: Ric Guerrero

Trustee: Gary Small

Finance: Paul Kassel

Missions: Brownie Small

Memorial: Judi Calhoon

Grace Cares: Cyndi O'Hara

Worship: Linda O'Clair

Children's & Youth Ministry: Kristin Schwenneker

UWF: Cyndi O'Hara and Pastor Shurmaine McAlpine

UMM: Brad Johnson

Youth Rep: Riley Herman

Church Council Secretary: Joan Waller

Finance Secretary: Sandy Thomas

