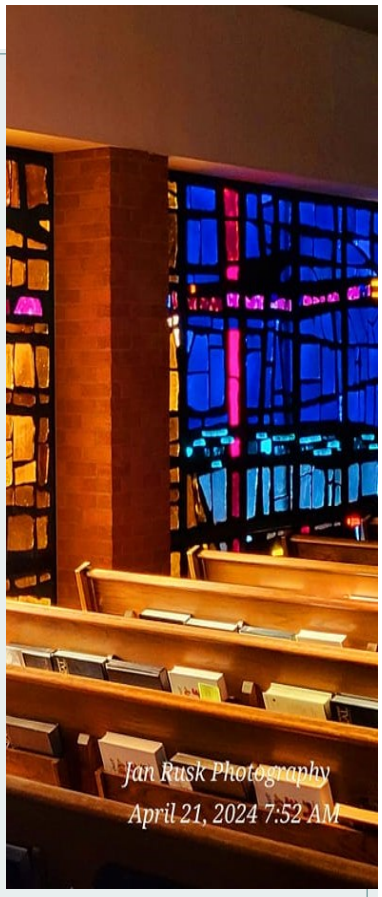
Grace United Methodist Church Newsletter

August 2025



UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

A quote from the book of 150 years in mission from Women United for Change: "Encountering the Jesus of the gospels means encountering a man who called women as his disciples and demonstrated his respect for them in significant ways. (They) reveal his affirmation of women and his openness to their participation in ministry."

It hasn't always been that way in the church or in society. And so…It actually was a dark and stormy night in Boston, Mass. The year was 1869; the rain was falling as two women, Mrs. William Butler and Mrs. Edwin W. Parker, made their way toward the church to give Methodist women the chance to hear from these two missionary wives on furlough from India. Because of the nasty weather, only six other women came out in the storm to hear them speak. Those who showed up were Mrs. Thomas A. Rich, Mrs. Lewis Flanders, Mrs. Thomas Kingsbury, Mrs. William B. Merrill, Mrs. H. J. Stoddard, and Mrs. O. T. Taylor.

Mrs. Parker began to share, "There are so many needs that burden my heart including the shut-in women who because of customs in Asian countries cannot receive visitors, the poor who can't receive the health care they need, and the girls who have almost no opportunity to receive an education." Mrs. Butler added, "Single, trained, and dedicated women are needed for medical and educational work." The group discussion noted that women were expected to be seen but not heard in public as it was shameful for them to have and share opinions. It seemed easier for women to go to far off countries as missionaries rather than do any actual work locally. What were women with husbands and families to do besides pray and give their nickels and dimes? After prayer and much discussion, the six women present covenanted together with Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Butler and God, electing officers, and forming an organization, not an auxiliary, but an independent society called the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society. By November of that year they had raised funds to send two females, one a teacher and the other a physician, to India where they established what became the first women's college and first women's

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MISSION STATEMENT

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

hospital in Asia. The missionaries also started orphanages, schools, churches, and were social workers. The term "Women's Work for Women" would be reflected in all women's societies that followed.

In 1880 the Women's Home Missionary Society began but didn't really expand much until 1939 when mergers created the Methodist Church and the women became a separate organization again, The Women's Society of Christian Service or WSCS. Then in 1973 the name was changed to United Methodist Women until our most recent name change to United Women in Faith to reflect that our organization is not limited to only Methodist women.

The focus from the beginning was to improve the lives of women and children through education and healing around the world. Thousands and thousands of women have reached out to their sisters in other lands and seen Christ in their faces. Here at Grace I noted a reference to the Ladies Aid Society in 1893 contributing $200-$300 toward the building of a new church building. In the 1960's and 70's there were about 200 Grace church women involved in monthly Circles. Over the years, the womens' societies have also had great influence in the Social Gospel movement through the suffrage movement, the temperance movement, immigration issues, racial justice, the civil rights movement, the treatment of indigenous peoples, environmental issues; all working toward establishing the kin-dom of God.

The current priority issues for United Women in Faith are climate justice, maternal and child health, the criminalization of communities of color and mass incarceration, and economic inequality. We gain more knowledge in these areas through the programs presented at our local meetings and speakers as well as regular podcasts of Voices in the Field showing how our dollars support the missionaries in the field, Energy4All (climate justice), Religion and Race (the school to prison pipeline), and interviews on Faith Talks along with the bi-monthy *response* magazine. There is an educational experience each year called Mission u along with a Spiritual Growth session and district, state, regional, and international meetings connecting us as an organization. Also there was recently a Soul Care Retreat for our Camp Clear Lake District at our own Okoboji Methodist Camp that six of our group attended and thoroughly enjoyed.

UWFaith has a reading program. Each year books are recommended to enhance our learning in the five categories of Social Action, Education on Mission, Leadership Development, Nurturing for Community, and Spiritual Growth. Dorothy DeGroot is our secretary of program resources and picks out about 20 new books each year which are on the northwest shelf in the church library and can be checked out by anyone. We have also purchased some books for children.

UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH (cont'd)

Along with our yearly district pledge (currently $1,500.00), we give to other offerings quarterly as well as the Legacy Fund and our state mission institution, Families Forward. Jane Ingledue is not only our treasurer but also coordinates the prayer shawl and prayer square ministry. Many thanks for Linda Bress and others for the hours put in as well as others like Linda Dobbins who add the printed prayers. These shawls are prayed over as they are made as well as by the UWFaith group and are available for anyone who would benefit from the warm embrace of a prayer shawl. At least 575 have been shared to date. In addition, Marietta Johnson has knitted hundreds of sweaters as part of her mission. With money from a Be Bold Grant, we are putting together hygiene bags for such agencies as CAASA, Upper DM, released prisoners, etc.

We hold a yearly fundraiser, sometimes as a ladies bazaar or a virtual tea.

The money raised helps cover our annual pledge with the extra of the past few years going to Many Hands for Haiti, Discovery House for area youth fighting addiction, Woman at the Well services at Marshalltown Prison, Wings of Refuge aiding victims of human trafficking, CAASA victims of abuse, Upper Des Moines Opportunity, Heifer International, the JumpStart paper drive, and youth camperships.

Our group currently meets every other month, February through December, on the first Thursday at 1:30 pm. There are also two Circles meeting at Grace sharing Christian fellowship. Two pins recognizing action in missions are given out each year, and our members are involved in many aspects of Grace UMC.

Currently there are ½ million members worldwide in 50 countries with 200+ mission programs. We are a 156-year-old women's movement still saying YES to God's call to mission and would welcome all women to join us; contact any of us if you have questions. We believe love in action can change the world!

United Women in Faith

https://uwfaith.org/

2025 Officers

Cyndi O'Hara
(712)363-3185

Lisa Elliott
(712)240-0929

Shurmaine McAlpine
(712)592-1636

Jane Ingledue
(605)413-7034

Meeting Dates	Esther Circle
Thursday at 1:30 pm August 7 October 2 December 4	on the 4th Tuesday at 5:00 September Ruth Circle 3rd Thursday at 1:30 pm starting in March

Our next meeting is August 7th at 1:30 pm

To contact Pastor Michael

Email:

ThePastor @spencergumc.

Call:

712-262-5970

Pastor Michael's BLOG:

The Bare Church

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR MICHAEL

Last month, I started my 15th year of professional ministry. That does not include the two and half year leave in which I worked as a Department Manager for the industrial door manufacturer VT Industries. In symbolic material of a wedding anniversary, 15 years is represented by crystal; beautiful, elegant, and very fragile. I'm hoping year 15 in ministry is the complete opposite. I am hoping to be a Christian that gets involved in what the world calls ugly. I want to find myself among the poor in material and spirit. I hope to develop ministries that are not fragile and vulnerable to season or finances. I hope to develop long, sustainable, and strong ministries based on relationships and meeting people's needs.

In my experience with ministry, I have discovered how the activity in the church revolves around the community schools. That means July is typically.....slow. For me, July has become a season of renewal, discernment, and preparation. I have encouraged Grace UMC's leadership team to do the same. Therefore, I am seeking to encourage all those connected with Grace to join us in these activities.

First, take some time for self-reflection. Are there needs in your heart and soul that you are neglecting? For our congregation to be "church" together we must first create a culture of emotional safety. We must create a safe place for people to share their vulnerability and needs. As Midwesterners, it is common to hear the phrase "we are just private people." Privacy is responsible in some cases. Most of the time it is an unwillingness to appear weak before others. May the church be a people you unafraid to share your vulnerabilities. This practice is great for renewing the individual spirit as it receives God's care and love through the Church. It also renews the corporate spirit of the Church. Meeting each other's' needs reminds us of the transformative power of grace we work toward within our community.

"Carry each other's burdens and so you will fulfill the law of Christ." -Galatians 6:2-

Second, our eyes are often keenly open to the needs of those around us as we receive care for our own needs. As you experience the presence of the renewing power Christ by being cared for by the Church, we are called and sent by that very same Christ to share what we have experienced with others. What are the needs of people that you encounter daily? Christians often fall into the rut of believing their discipleship is solely focused on personal holiness or "being a good person". God's redemption story is consistently about reconnecting. As we experience God's love and redemptive power, we are sent to

THOUGHTS FROM PASTOR MICHAEL (cont'd)

share it. In July, be attentive to the needs of others around.

"Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others. Adopt the attitude that was in Christ Jesus." - Philippians 2:4-5-

Finally, make an action plan. As you are renewed by God through the actions of the Church and discerning the needs of those around with eyes opened by the Holy Spirit, go and be the hands and feet of Christ in the world around you. Write up an action plan to meet one or two needs that you see. Set one or two goals you would like to accomplish by May of 2026. Make sure those goals are centered on meeting the needs of others. You don't have to change the world. God is already actively redeeming it through the Holy Spirit and through the Church. You are called simply to give back to the world what a great and loving God gave to you.

"People plan their path, but the Lord secures their step." - Proverbs 16:9-

July is a great month. Fourth of July celebrations. Many people travel for vacation and family fun. I invite you to also include activities that help you renew, discern, and plan. These are constant processes that can always occur throughout the year. This month gives a unique rhythm and opportunity to practice intentionality. Don't miss out on what God is doing in your life, in the work of the Church, and in the redemption of all of creation.

CORE VALUES WORD SEARCH

R	K	K	Z	L	T	X	T	D	L	F	A	T	U	S
O	W	G	C	F	N	O	V	U	K	Q	C	O	W	H
G	A	N	T	Y	E	E	F	O	Z	T	C	T	S	Q
A	T	Z	W	F	I	H	S	F	N	W	E	H	E	R
C	F	E	G	I	T	Y	M	R	L	F	P	A	P	M
D	H	Y	L	U	A	A	Z	D	B	G	T	K	T	W
C	U	U	R	M	P	L	A	J	P	B	I	N	Y	Q
I	J	T	M	W	X	T	P	Q	X	C	N	W	L	X
A	L	N	O	B	C	G	U	N	M	O	G	O	A	M
C	U	F	R	T	L	W	V	T	V	L	V	O	A	W
N	C	K	S	F	S	E	M	K	M	I	A	A	J	I
R	A	U	Z	H	W	Y	Q	F	N	X	W	C	N	C
D	J	G	K	D	U	J	A	G	J	Y	O	B	K	E
K	K	I	N	D	E	V	I	S	U	L	C	N	I	J
N	B	E	N	L	B	V	C	P	P	D	P	I	G	F

MISSION PROJECTS

The Mission Committee have been busy preparing for the Mission activities that are ahead of us as we wind down our summer.

1. We have asked the congregation to spend the summer months purchasing paper products for our Head Start families such as toilet tissue, paper towels, Kleenex as well as personal hygiene products, such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, shampoo, bath soap, and deodorant. About the middle of August we will begin to ask for items from a grocery list scheduled for delivery in the middle of September. Keep in mind that there are members of the Mission Committee that will shop for you if you wish to participate in supporting the paper products/personal hygiene items campaign.

2. Keith Bress has arranged for a couple of Mission opportunities for GUMC members. On Sept. 3 @ 5:30 we will have an opportunity to participate in the Feed Just One Project at the Emmetsburg First United Methodist Church. Also on October 18th those who are interested can serve a meal at The Banquet in Sioux Falls, SD. For more details please check out the easel in the narthex or speak to Keith about either or both of these mission opportunities.

3. Our Sleep Mat ministry continues to create sleep mats at the rate of about one mat a week. These mats are used to provide a barrier between the person and the ground and have been sent to several places throughout the world. Our mats have been distributed within our community and also in the Fort Dodge area. Mats that are not distributed locally are sent to Midwest Missions in Jefferson Iowa who distribute them where needed. There has been some interest from area churches and groups within the community to learn how to create the sleep mats. Presently the sleep mat project has skilled members working on the looms on Wednesday afternoons. Other times can be arranged for by calling the church office during business hours to arrange for help or information about this ministry. To date there have been 87+ mats completed.

87!

4. We are also trying to plan for the In-Gathering which is held on Cherokee on November 1. This year we hope to make 40 school bags as well as several Cover Them With Love quilts. A workshop day is being planned to discuss construction of the quilts and to offer fabric selections to those who would like to help with this project. Look for a date for this in the near future.

Brownie Small, Mission Chair

Jump Start

Summer we are collecting

- Paper Products: paper towels, toilet tissue and Kleenex
- Cleaning products: dish soap, laundry soap, multi surface cleaners
- Personal Hygiene Items: toothpaste, shampoo, bath soap

THEN FEED JUST ONE

Sept. 3 @ 5:30

Emmetsburg First United Methodist Church

https://thenfeedjustone.org/

THE BANQUET

October 18th

https://thebanquetsf.org/

Trustees

One of the final projects post flood included removing a very large collection of discarded metal and wire that had been stock piled under the sanctuary. Completion of the elevator restoration made this project doable. A group of church members rallied together, spent a morning removing all the junk, sold it to Shine Brothers for cash, and returned a nice sum of money to the Flood Recovery Fund. After a long wait recovery work in the lower level is actually in progress. The bathrooms and showers were the focus initially. They have now been returned to working order and are already being used by the teams of volunteers that have been staying at Grace Church while working on flood related projects in Spencer. Dan, our custodian has asked to spearhead some of this work as well. He has begun by refinishing a couple of solid core doors that survived the flood. He will also be working on hanging sheetrock around the elevator and in the large storage room under the offices.

Recently two trees were removed from the east side of the church. That left yard space that required additional attention. Tracy Small has been working on reassigning bullet pavers and moving rocks in order to prepare that area for dirt and grass seed. In the green space on the west side of the Narthex Tracy has also attacked the weed problem and added red mulch to the gardens there. The Trustees wish to thank Tracy for his commitment to the beautification of the landscape around Grace UMC. It is much appreciated.

Gary Small, Trustees Chair Trustees

Welcome Jen Ingledue

Jen has been offered and has accepted the position of Event Coordinator and Community Liaison. She will begin her role in August.

Please join us in welcoming Jen to the team! We're excited to have her on board and look forward to the energy and creativity she will bring to this position.

LAY LEADER MESSAGE: SANDY HEERDT

Lord, let them see You in me.

Lenny and I traveled to Alabama in early June to work on settling my Aunt Barb's estate. She passed away in mid-May. Aunt Barb lived in low income housing, led a humble life and had experienced loss, grief, illness and pain in her lifetime. She had her passions: quilting, sewing, gardening, cooking, and genealogy. She had a full-bodied deep laugh. She laughed a lot and it was contagious. She used her passions to help others.

It was less than an hour after arriving when her neighbors started knocking on her apartment door. Each neighbor had lovely stories to share. "See these pants I'm wearing? Ms Barb made these for me." "I brought Ms. Barb food each week from the food pantry. I sure will miss her. We always had good conversations." "Ms. Barb cooked meals for me." "Ms. Barb told me that we can't be bickering. We all need each other, so we all need to be kind to each other."

As we worked to clean out her apartment we came upon many devotionals, her big Bible and notes taken from an online/TV Bible study. These were all arranged around her favorite comfy chair. I also found an obituary she had written for herself. Her last line was "Lord, let them see You in me." Yes, Aunt Barb, we have seen Jesus in you: your generosity, your love, your kindness, your humor and that special sparkle in your eyes.

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. - Galatians 2:20

"No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another,God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." - 1 John 4:12

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they maysee your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. - Matthew 5:16

2025 GUMC FOUNDATION DISBURSEMENTS

	GRACE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH				
	2025 FOUNDATION DISBURSEMENT				
	Total 2025 income available for disbursement: $63,297.71 (Guideline: = $15,824.43 per category)				
		Requessted by:	**Request**	**Approval**	**Ad Council**
	Global and Local Missions			5.13.25 Approved	5.19.25 Approved
GLM 1	The Banquet	Bress,Hitchcock,SLarson,Small,Calhoon	1,100.00	1,100.00	1,100.00
GLM 2	Feed Just One	Bress,Hitchcock,SLarson,Small,Calhoon	300.00	300.00	300.00
GLM 3	Prayer Shawl Ministry	United Women in Faith	300.00	300.00	300.00
GLM 4	Methodist Camp 200-1,875	Missions	1,875.00	1,875.00	1,875.00
GLM 5	Money for UDMO Baby/Toddler Room	Missions	750.00	750.00	750.00
GLM 6	2nd Grade Summer Reading Books Project	Missions	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
GLM 7	HeadStart Backpack 2025	Missions	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
GLM 8	JumpStart Gift Cards 2025	Missions	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
GLM 9	Congregational Mitten Challenge	Missions	500.00	500.00	500.00
GLM 10	Midwest Missions Building Project 2025	Missions	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
GLM 11	HeadStart Winter Coat Drive	Missions	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
GLM 12	Going Outside the Circle	Missions	750.00	750.00	750.00
GLM 13	Boy Scout Tents	Missions	200.00	200.00	200.00
	Total Global & Local Missions		**15,775.00**	**15,775.00**	**15,775.00**
	Capital Improvements				
CI 1	Priority List of 2025 Projects		15,824.43	15,824.43	15,824.43
	Total Capital Improvements		**15,824.43**	**15,824.43**	**15,824.43**
	Outreach & Emerging Ministries				
OEM 1	Grace Kidz - Children's Ministries	Kristin Schwenneker - Education	500.00	500.00	500.00
OEM 2	Contemporary Songbooks	Worship Committee	800.00	800.00	800.00
OEM 3	Honduras Mission Trip	Madison Schwenneker	2,000.00	2,000.00	2,000.00
OEM 4	Advertising	Communications	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
OEM 5	Attendance pads	Worship Committee	750.00	-	-
	Total Outreach & Emerging Ministries		**5,550.00**	**4,800.00**	**4,800.00**
	Educational Opportunities				
EO 1	Leadership Development Training	Pastor Michael Slininger	3,600.00	3,600.00	3,600.00
	Total Education Opportunities		**3,600.00**	**3,600.00**	**3,600.00**
	Total		**40,749.43**	**39,999.43**	**39,999.43**
		Total Available	**$ 63,297.71**	**$ 63,297.71**	**$ 63,297.71**
		Total Requested	**(40,749.43)**	**(39,999.43)**	**(39,999.43)**
		Unrequested Balance	**$ 22,548.28**	**$ 23,298.28**	**$ 23,298.28**
				Move to #22999 (Foundation Interest Payable)	Move to #22999 (Foundation Interest Payable)
	The 2025 Foundation Disbursement Committee minutes of May 13, 2025				
	Are available at the church offiice for review.				

Volunteers Needed!

We are looking for adult volunteers to assist with a variety of needs. If you're interested in helping out, please sign up on the sheets located in the Narthex. Your time and support are greatly appreciated!

Coffee @ Grace

1st & 3rd Wednesdays | 9:30–11:00 AM
Fellowship Hall

Come enjoy good coffee, delicious food, and warm fellowship! It's a great place to catch up with old friends—or make new ones.

Everyone is welcome—we'd love to see you there!

Fitness Classes at GUMC: Essentrics & Chair Yoga

We're excited to offer **two fitness classes** at GUMC, both led by Bernie Beecher!

Mondays & Wednesdays
9:30–10:00 AM – Essentrics
10:00–10:30 AM – Chair Yoga
Held at the church, upstairs in the BenTena Room

Essentrics is a strength training method that uses slow, controlled muscle-lengthening movements (eccentric contractions) to help build strength, improve balance and flexibility, and reduce injury risk.

Chair Yoga offers gentle stretching and movement using a chair for support—ideal for all fitness levels, especially those looking for a low-impact option.

No matter your experience, these 30-minute sessions are a great way to care for your body in a supportive environment.

Root Beer Floats during Main Street Market!

We have **two more nights left—August 7th and August 14th**—come join us!

Weighted Works with LOVE

Ecumenical Group that meets the Fourth Wednesday of the month 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Their purpose is to provide quality custom made weighted blankets, lap pads and shoulder wraps for individuals who could benefit from deep pressure therapy. They welcome you to visit them while we are making these custom-made weighted blankets, lap pads, and shoulder wraps.

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS

Please keep the following in your prayers:

- **Bill Prentice**, as he continues cancer treatments here in Spencer.

- **Galen Chitty**, father of Kristin Schwenneker, as he continues recovering at home.

We pray for strength and healing for both Bill and Galen, and for peace and support for their families during this time.

"He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak."
— Isaiah 40:29

Thank you from Tim Small's Family

The family of Tim Small wishes to express our thanks to the members of Grace UMC and to Pastor Michael. Thank you for the time you have devoted to us through your prayers, cards, personal messages and visits during recent weeks. Every act of kindness has been greatly appreciated. Lisa, Taylor, Seth, Kim, Addison, Rylan, Tracy, Jen, Bre, Kristen, Doug, Michele, Alex, Brandt, Ethan, Misty, Morgan, Josh, Mae, Everly (Towner), Rebecca, Judd, Evan, Lori, Garrett, Brownie and Gary Small.

Spencer Media Group's **Kevin Tlam** was the recipient of this year's Broadcaster of The Year award at the Iowa Broadcasters Association Convention in Des Moines...

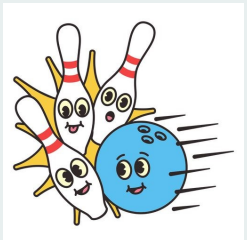
AROUND GRACE

The Slininger boys have been serving as acolytes lately—thank you for your leadership and willingness to serve! If your child or family is interested in helping with acolyting or other parts of worship, we'd love to get you involved. Reach out to the church office or speak with Pastor Michael.

Baptism of Brynlee Jo Samsel and Haidyn Nicole Samsel

You want to do what?

Brad Johnson won a silver medal at the Iowa Games in doubles bowling!



Sunday Worship

9:30 AM Worship Service (Sanctuary)

10:45 AM Fellowship (Narthex)

10:45 Aam Adult Education (Wesley)

Children's & Youth Ministry	August 12	6:30 PM	Library
Church Council	August 25	6:30 PM	Fireside
Finance	August 11	5:30 PM	Wesley
Grace Cares	August 27	3:00 PM	
Missions	August 4	3:30 PM	Library
SPRC	August 4	6:00 PM	
Trustees	August 11	6:30 PM	Library
Worship	August 13	4:00 PM	Alison's House

Committee Meetings

Chair Yoga	Monday & Wednesday	10:00AM	Wesley
Coffee @ Grace	August 6 & August 20, 9:30AM	9:30AM	Narthex
Essentrics Class	Monday & Wednesday	9:30AM	Wesley
Esther Circle	August 26	5:00PM	
Grace Band Practice			Sanctuary
Loom Work Session	Wednesday	2:00-4:00 PM	Fellowship Hall
Men's Bible Study	Wednesday	1:00 PM	Narthex
Ruth Circle	August 21	1:30 PM	
UMM	no meeting this month		
UWFaith	August 7	1:30 PM	Fireside
Weighted Works with Love	August 26	9:00 AM	Fellowship Hall
Adult Study Group	Sunday	10:45 AM	Wesley
Hymn Sing	Friday	4:00 PM	Chapel

CHAIR PERSON OF MINISTRY BOARDS:

Church Council: Judith Olson
Co-Lay Leaders: Sandy Heerdt, Ben Pullen
Lay Member to Ann. Conference: 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: Lisa Elliott
UWF: Cyndi O'Hara and Pastor Shurmaine McAlpine
UMM: Bill Elliott
Youth Rep:
Church Council Secretary: Joan Waller
Finance Secretary: Sandy Thomas
Director of Communications: Alison Herman

GRACE
United Methodist Church

JOIN US FOR...
Inperson/Live Stream Worship
Sundays @ 9:30 AM- Sanctuary

CONTACT US
Grace United Methodist Church
311 2nd Ave W
Spencer, IA 51301
Phone: 712-262-5970
office@spencergumc.com

OFFICE HOURS
Monday - Thursday
9:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Friday - Sunday
Closed