

Fredsville Lutheran Church

August 2025 Newsletter

THE REV. LEE R. GABLE, PASTOR

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319-989-2065

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Please Remember Them In Your Prayers

Carol Watson – Has on-going health concerns.

Jerry Christensen – Recovering from a fall.

Catherine Petersen - Wound care.

Whitney Howe – In a year long youth ministry certification program.

These names were received by the church from the individual or their family and have consented to have their names released to the Fredsville congregation. Please do not hesitate to contact the church office (319-989-2065) to be included in our weekly prayers or contact Pastor Lee.

August Birthdays

Audrey Stefan- 1
Colton Harberts- 1
Olivia Bakker- 3
Susan Green- 3
Beth Koenen- 3
Eric Andersen- 3
Devon Lotts- 4
Beth Petersen- 6
Joan Thuesen- 6
Abby Camarata- 7
Tonya Nicholson- 7
Larry Dufel- 8
Timothy Stage- 9
David Stage- 9
Katellynn Adams (Bergmann)- 10
Reid Hermann- 11
Hank Johannsen- 11
Lane Brekke- 11
Caeden Bakker- 11
Jerrold Christensen- 12
James Bruhn- 12
Nathan Bakker- 12
Kirsten Petersen- 14
Ja Nette Mikkelsen- 15
Shelby Ohrt- 17
Vic Vandelaar- 17
Jordyn Valentine- 17
Carol Dufel- 19
Keene Petersen- 19

August Birthdays Continued

Kyle Aronson- 20
Linda Freese- 20
Chris Shoemaker- 20
Letha Petersen- 21
Brynn Harberts- 22
Whitney Howe- 23
Nolan Swinton- 24
Margaret Christensen- 25
Macy Hermann- 29
Jerry Green- 29
Lisa Dumler- 30
Michelle Reinicke- 30
Jeri Karr- 30
Dale Danielsen- 31
Ron Meyer- 31

August Anniversaries

Jarrod & Shari Bakker- 2
Jerrold & Sandra Christensen- 5
Vernon & Margaret Johnson- 5
Marvin & Kathy Folkerts- 9
Todd & Shannon Mikkelsen- 11
Jason & Megan Yearous- 11
Timothy & Nancy Stage- 14
Jim & Jean Loger- 23
Brent & Kelley Knutson- 26
Michael & Kathryn Petersen Hinds- 29

Pastoral Pondering ... In Jesus name, I get to ...

Each month for our congregational council meeting I write a summary of my pastoral activities for the month. It is not a checklist, nor is it an accounting problem 1 of these 2 of those. I choose to share my ministry activity in a narrative format, that shares the story of what ministry in our community looks like each month. I have chosen categories to frame these ministry narratives, Worship, Pastoral Care, Education, Spiritual Formation/Professional Development, Evangelism / Mission / Outreach / Stewardship, Ecumenical / Community Involvement, Administration, & Looking Ahead.

The activities in each of these categories fluctuates with the season and needs of the community. Sometimes I have invested more time in pastoral care, while other months it may be education. Each month as I write this report it reminds me of what I get to do in the name of Jesus. Ministry is not a checklist, that would not be life-giving. Ministry is a living relationship with God and God's beloved people. I get to lead worship, visit people and hear their stories. I get to teach confirmation, study the Bible, and attending meetings. I also get to read books that challenge me to grow. I get to participate in the wider church through the Northeast Iowa Synod, Candidacy committee and Care of Creation Team. I get to be part of the community by attending events at the school and more. I get "to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ," Ephesians 4:12.

I find writing this monthly report is almost a spiritual practice, a journal, that reminds me what living in the way of Jesus has looked. That is important because it is easy to forget. It is easy to overlook the good we do in the world and in our community. That made me wonder, if you wrote down your "ministry report" what would it look like? What do you get to do in the name of Jesus? I invite you to try writing out a short narrative about your ministry activities. You might try using some of categories listed above, or you could start by using the fruits of the Spirit to get started. Each person has something valuable to contribute. This activity might reveal areas that you are doing more than you thought. You might also notice some gaps that you could focus on and challenge yourself to try something different. We are blessed that each of you are part of our Fredsville Family. I hope you will take time to jot down your ministry story and remind yourself that God is at work in and through you. Give it a try.



Q & A

by Sue Green

Cole Mikkelsen & the Children's Cancer Connection

August 2025

One of the organizations that Fredsville's Endowment Committee makes a donation to is the Children's Cancer Connection. This organization was brought to the Endowment Committee's attention because Cole and Tanner Mikkelsen attend their camp. Shannon and Todd Mikkelsen, along with Cole and Tanner, took time from their vacation to kindly answer my questions.

Q: What kind of cancer did Cole Mikkelsen have? Where did he get his treatments? How long did the treatments last?

A: Cole Mikkelsen was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic B-cell leukemia (ALL-B) on June 2, 2017 at the University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital, which was 2 days after his 5th birthday. He proceeded to undergo chemotherapy for just over 3 years... until he completed his active treatment on August 11, 2020. This journey started the summer before he started 5-year-old preschool. Over that period of time, Cole swallowed 3,872 pills, received 10 types of chemotherapy, had his Port accessed 62 times, received 18 lumbar punctures – 8 were without sedation, had 8 trips to the ER, and underwent 6 MRIs.

Q: Where is the Children's Cancer Connection camp located at? Do Cole and his older brother Tanner attend the same camp? If so, do they room together? How many years have they attended?

A: Children's Cancer Connection – through Camp Heart Connection, takes place at the Des Moines YMCA located in Boone, IA. Cole, now going into 7th grade, has gone for the last 3 years. Tanner, going into 9th, has gone the last 2 years. They go to camp at separate times. Cole goes with the oncology kids – all the children who have had or are currently battling some kind of cancer. Tanner goes to the sibling camp. Those kids all have siblings that have had cancer including some who have lost their brothers and sisters to that disease. They each room with other kids that are similar in age.

Q: How did the boys find out about the Children's Cancer Connection camp?

A: Children's Cancer Connection (CCCIowa.org) does a ton for kids and families dealing with cancer. We found out about his organization through the University of Iowa when Cole was first diagnosed. They offer multiple different camps, outings, and programs to help families that are battling his devastating diagnosis.

Q: How long does the camp last? How many children attend? What do the children do during the day/evening? What were Cole's and Tanner's favorite parts of camp?

A: Cole's oncology camp this year took place June 8-14. Tanner's sibling camp was June 29-July 5th. There are several hundred kids that attend these camps. The camp is filled with activities such as horseback riding, archery, rock wall climbing, swimming, zip line, and lots of singing, dance parties and evenings around the fire. The week finishes with "Wish Night" where the kids can share their stories along with their hopes and dreams for the future. Cole's favorite thing at camp is to go horseback riding, along with hanging out with new friends. Tanner's favorite part is making new friends.

Q: From a parent point of view, how has Cole and Tanner attending the Children's Cancer Connection camp benefitted them?

A: This camp gave both boys the opportunity to be kids, branch out to do something new by themselves, and to meet people that had similar stories to their own. There is strength in knowing that you are not alone and in meeting people who have something like this in common with you.

Q: If a child was told that they have cancer or if they had a sibling that was diagnosed with cancer, what advice would you give them?

A: Both Cole and Tanner gave the same answer: "You are not alone! Stay positive. Keep moving forward one day at a time. It's not going to be easy but you can do it."

Q: I always finish my Q & A's with the same question: What is your favorite Bible verse?

A: Cole: I have two favorite verses. **Matthew 19:26** "But Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible." And, **John 3:16** "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life."

A: Tanner: **Jermiah 29:11** "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Q: Is there anything else you would like to add?

A: Shannon and Todd: We want to express our deepest thanks to Fredsville for their continued support of Cole and our family through this journey. The funds sent to the Children's Cancer Connection from the Fredsville Endowment committee have helped so many families and helped kids touched by cancer to "just be kids".

Thank you, Shannon and Todd, Cole and Tanner for answering my questions! The members of Fredsville congregation were glad to be able to give you support while your family was on Cole's cancer journey. As the boys stated, "You are not alone". In 2024, the Children's Cancer Connection served 871 families, hosted 496 campers and provided 19,133 volunteer hours.



Cole (7th), Todd, Tanner (9th) & Shannon Mikkelsen

A Word From Fredsville's Council President



Hello Fredsville

Hope you all have had a good summer. My question for the month is: Do you know me? I mean do you really understand who I am? Now, that is not just a question directed at me personally but as a general question to those people you meet and talk to. Do you typically take the time to get to know the person or just engage in casual conversation?

In May, I went on a cruise to Alaska with my parents. It was a wonderful vacation and one that I would recommend. The scenery was nothing less than picturesque and the relaxing motion of the sea was memorizing. I woke up early the first morning and went down to get some coffee where I found myself amongst a group of folks standing in line waiting for the breakfast area to open. I joined in the conversation with the group while I was anxiously waiting for the doors to open.

Once inside, we waited for a second door to open. So, I found myself talking with an elderly gentleman. I learned that he was alone, no spouse, no children, no family. He wore a hat with his name on it, so people would remember his name he said. I felt bad that he was all alone; but I was so excited to be on a real vacation and away from all the chaos of my normal day that I don't think I was really focused on the person that I was talking to.

Once inside we all ran our separate ways to get our morning caffeine and to get the best seat on the ship to watch the waves as they effortlessly passed by. After an hour or so, my parents wandered down and shortly thereafter we got breakfast. The gentleman I had met earlier had wandered by so I introduced him to my father. They talked and talked and talked.

A couple days later, our paths crossed again. He stopped me and said, "I have something to show you". Then he pulled an envelope out of his pocket and opened it just enough for me to see what was in it. It was a check for \$18,000 that he won at the casino. I congratulated him and expressed my happiness for his winnings. He then said, "I bet you will talk to me now."

Well, I felt pretty bad after that. Wondered how I treated him at our first encounter. I was so excited and caught up in my own world that I was not attentive to his needs. So, I wondered what did I see when I met him? Was I really engaged in our conversations or more worried about what was going to happen with my day? My life is so busy and quite honestly scheduled right down to the hour some days, that it is sometimes hard for me to slow down enough to breathe and really be present in the moment. Why is that? Why are we so busy that sometimes we miss the real moments? I thought I was present that day but obviously I missed something. Note to self, the hat should have been a clue. Nevertheless, I didn't really see the person I was talking to and did not recognize his need for belonging.

Have you ever met someone or known someone who you feel could see right through you? They can see through the exterior and look right inside and really see you. They are focused on you and what you have to say, how you feel, and what you need. What do you see when you look at people? I think it is natural to see the exterior, but do we take the time to look and see what's inside? Facial expressions, body language, and conversations can give you an idea of who a person is and maybe even what's going on in their life. So, do we genuinely engage in conversations or just go through the motions of social etiquette?

The most fascinating thing I see when I look at someone is their eyes. If I focus on someone's eyes, I think I listen better. I watch the fluctuations in their pupils which can indicate their interest in the conversation, sadness, stress, anxiety, happiness and all the other emotions we have. I believe your eyes can unlock the vulnerable you for others to see.

I have a picture of Jesus in my kitchen and every time I look at it, it seems as though his eyes pierce right through to my inner core. It's almost eerie and comforting at the same time. He sees me. The real me. My good days, my bad days, and every day in between. My encounter with the gentleman was a teaching moment for me. We are called to love our neighbors as ourselves and I failed to recognize his need to be seen that day.

I encouraged you to take the time to "see" someone this month. Slow down. Be present in the moments. Be patient, observant, and listen; you might be surprised at what you see. After all, don't we all just want to be seen and heard?

God Bless,

Brenda-

FREDSVILLE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Minutes

Date: Sunday, 06/29/2025 after worship

Attendance: Linda Nielsen, Tony Norton, Wanda Nielsen, Roy Stefan, Tom Verhulst, Brenda Cooper, Keene Petersen, Pastor Lee Absent: Abby Brekke, Amy Camarata, Todd Mikkelsen

Call to Order: Brenda Cooper, President

Opening Reflection and Devotion: Discussion centered on what gets in the way of living the gospel in everyday life. Common obstacles included work, busy schedules, and overcommitment. Members shared personal stories about finding balance. Pastor encouraged seeing daily tasks as opportunities for prayer and service and reminded members about the importance of Sabbath day of rest.

Secretary's Report: Approved previously via email and acknowledged during the meeting.

Financial Report: Provided by Linda Nielsen-Treasurer.

- Building Fund: \$20,454.00
- General Fund: \$54,859.56
- Memorial Fund: \$6,202.84

New Business

- Villa Usage Request: Approved temporary housing for a couple (no pets) starting July 17.
- Flock Canoe Trip: Went well, hot weather but successful. Planning to build on this with future ELCA youth events.
- Vacation Bible School: Set for August. Need volunteers for setup and leadership.
- Watermelon Days: Focus will be on worship service at the Sports Complex. No parade float is planned unless someone volunteers to lead.
- Service Day: Discussed painting fire hydrants in New Hartford and supporting Dike Park Pavilion project. Some funding in place.
- Gospel Music Group: Proposal to host a gospel group for a Sunday evening event. It would require planning and volunteers to make an event like this possible.
- Discussed Pastor's upcoming vacation and need for someone to lead service (Amy C. possibly).
- Pastor shared that he was invited to join the Iowa Faith & Climate Network Board. The council was supportive.
- Noted energy savings from solar panels. We paid nearly the same for the Parsonage as for the Church building and Villa. Council agreed it is important to share impact in the newsletter or social media.
- Stressed the importance of mentoring new leaders and re-evaluating the church's organizational structure to be sure all work is completed and not on the shoulders of only a few.

Pastor's Report

- WORSHIP

Fredsville hosted the NEIA Synod Assembly Opening Worship, with over 100 in attendance—a first for a congregation. Worship has shifted to a simplified summer format with spoken liturgy. Upcoming events include VBS, Watermelon Days Community Worship, Backpack Blessing, and Confirmation Kickoff.

PASTORAL CARE

Pastor Lee led worship at Westview Estates, made home visits, and had several spiritual check-ins and informal conversations with members.

EDUCATION

A blessing service was held for The Flock's canoe trip. Planning for VBS (Aug 3–6) is underway, along with faith formation strategy sessions involving parents. Weekly Bible study continues with lectionary-based discussion, and a preliminary Confirmation schedule is in development.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Pastor Lee is reading 'On Earth as in Heaven' by N.T. Wright, providing individual spiritual direction, and participated in a NEIA Candidacy meeting.

EVANGELISM / MISSION / OUTREACH / STEWARDSHIP

June collections supported the Salvation Army Men's Shelter and House of Hope. Pastor Lee will attend a synod solar meeting and was invited to join the board of the Iowa Faith & Climate Network, offering a rural Lutheran voice.

ECUMENICAL / COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community connections at Dike Farmers Market, Pickleball courts, and Joyful Java Coffee. Fredsville helped with a library summer program day, though volunteer sign-up remains a challenge.

ADMINISTRATION

The Mutual Ministry team met for ongoing reflection and support. Pastor Lee continued managing communications for events.

Upcoming Events:

July 7: IT Sub-Committee To review video recording and editing roles

July 23 & 30 at Slice, 6 PM: Education Team Meeting

Aug 3–6: VBS

August 18: Mutual Ministry

August 24: Backpack Blessings

Sept 7: Service project (God's Work Our Hands)

Council Representatives for the following Committees:

- 1.) Finance: Todd Mikkelsen
- 2.) Property: Tony Norton & Keene Petersen
- 3.) Social Ministry: Brenda Cooper, Wanda Nielsen, & Keene Petersen
- 4.) Christian Ed: Abby Brekke
- 5.) Mutual Ministry: Brenda Cooper
- 6.) Cemetery: Roy Stefan
- 7.) Endowment: Tom Verhulst
- 8.) IT: Amy Camarata

Closing Prayer: The meeting concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Council Meeting: Tentatively August 24 (skipping July unless urgent need arises)

Secretary-Abby Brekke 07.03.2025 *Note compiled from an audio recording of the meeting.



Worship Readings, Prayers, & Introductions from SundayandSeasons.com

Sunday, August 3 - VBS Sunday

Green

Almighty God, we praise you that your blessed apostles Peter and Paul glorified you by their martyrdoms. Grant that your church throughout the world may always be instructed by their teaching and example, be knit together in unity by your Spirit, and ever stand firm upon the one foundation who is Jesus Christ our Lord, for he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

- **Genesis 12:1-9** - Abraham and Sarah Follow God
- **Luke 1:39-56** - Mary and Elizabeth's Family Reunion
- **Luke 19:1-10** - Jesus visits Zacchaeus

Sunday, August 10 - Watermelon Days Community Worship

Green

Jesus says, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." It is God's promise from the beginning—to Abraham, to the early church, and to the "little flock" of which we are a part in today's assembly. Faith, God's baptismal gift, trusts the promises of God. Have no fear.

Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, you sent your Holy Spirit to be the life and light of your church. Open our hearts to the riches of your grace, that we may be ready to receive you wherever you appear, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

- **Genesis 15:1-6** - God's promise of a child for Abram and Sarai
- **Psalms 8** - How majestic is your name in all the earth! (Ps. 8:1)
- **Hebrews** - A model for us: Abraham's faith in a new home given by God



Sunday, August 17 - Tenth Sunday After Pentecost

Green

The word of God is a refining fire. Jesus is the great divide in human history. He invites our undivided attention and devotion. Today in worship we are surrounded by a great “cloud of witnesses.” In the word and in holy communion we are invited yet again to look to Jesus, “the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.”

Prayer of the Day

O God, judge eternal, you love justice and hate oppression, you call us to share your zeal for truth. Give us courage to take our stand with all victims of bloodshed and greed, and, following your servants and prophets, to look to the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

- **Jeremiah 23:23-29** - God’s word is like fire, like a hammer that breaks rocks
- **Psalms 82** - Arise, O God, and rule the earth. (Ps. 82:8)
- **Hebrews 11:29--12:2** - The faith of the Hebrew people, a great cloud of witnesses
- **Luke 12:49-56** - Jesus brings fire on earth and has a baptism with which to be baptized

Sunday, August 24 - Eleventh Sunday After Pentecost

Green

Remember the sabbath day. Call the sabbath a delight. This is the Lord’s day, and the Lord will do for us what the Lord does: feed us, forgive us, help and heal us. Rejoice at all the wonderful things God is doing.

Prayer of the Day

O God, mighty and immortal, you know that as fragile creatures surrounded by great dangers, we cannot by ourselves stand upright. Give us strength of mind and body, so that even when we suffer because of human sin, we may rise victorious through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

- **Jeremiah 1:4-10** - Jeremiah is called to be a prophet
- **Psalms 103:1-8** - The Lord crowns you with mercy and steadfast love. (Ps. 103:4)
- **Hebrews 12:18-29** - You have come to the city of the living God and to Jesus
- **Luke 13:10-17** - Jesus heals a crippled woman on the sabbath and is condemned

Sunday, August 31 - Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost

Green

Invited and inviting—that is the nature of the church. By God’s grace in holy baptism we have a place at Christ’s banquet table. When, by the power of that same Spirit, humility and mutual love continue among us, the church can be more inviting still.

Prayer of the Day

O God, you resist those who are proud and give grace to those who are humble. Give us the humility of your Son, that we may embody the generosity of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

- **Proverbs 25:6-7a** - Do not put yourself forward
- **Psalms 112** - The righteous are merciful and full of compassion. (Ps. 112:4)
- **Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16** - God is with us: let acts of mutual love continue
- **Luke 14:1, 7-14** - An image of God’s reign: invite the poor, crippled to your banquet

Sunday, September 7 - Thirteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Green

Called to contemplate the cost of discipleship, we might be helped by translating Paul’s request to Philemon into our prayer of the day: Refresh my heart in Christ. Strengthened by the company and forgiveness of Christ in holy communion and recalling God’s grace in remembrance of baptism, we can be strengthened in this hour to “choose life”—to choose life in God as our own.

Prayer of the Day

Direct us, O Lord God, in all our doings with your continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy name; and finally, by your mercy, bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

- **Deuteronomy 30:15-20** - Walk in the way of life and hold fast to God
- **Psalms 1** - They are like trees planted by streams of water. (Ps. 1:3)
- **Philemon 1-21** - Paul says: Receive Onesimus as a coworker
- **Luke 14:25-33** - Jesus says: Disciples, give up your possessions and carry the cross

Thank You Notes

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your Endowment gift of \$2000.00 of June 4, 2025. We are working on our plans, and searching for materials and volunteers for an outdoor labyrinth which will be installed and available to the community for a long time! We look forward to staying in communication with you and sending photos as the project progresses. We are appreciating and enjoying our growing relationship with your congregation and look forward to finding more ways in which to serve together. Thank you again for providing resources to help us be able to share God's love with the ThreeHouse and campus communities.

-David Glenn-Burns

Dear Friends at the Fredsville Lutheran Church:

As divisional commander for the Western Division, which encompasses Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota, I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you for your donation of \$1,400 to The Salvation Army. Your support will enable us to help some of the most vulnerable men, women, and children in your community by providing food, material assistance, youth development and other vital programs. You are helping us fulfill our mission to meet human needs in Jesus' name without discrimination, and we are so grateful for you. We, and the people we serve, are greatly blessed by your continued support of The Salvation Army. Thank you for being a difference-maker in the lives of those in most need.

-Scott A. Shelbourn

Dear Friends at the Fredsville Lutheran Church:

As divisional commander for the Western Division, which encompasses Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota, I wanted to say a heartfelt thank you for your donation of \$1,200 to The Salvation Army. Your support will enable us to help some of the most vulnerable men, women, and children in your community by providing food, material assistance, youth development and other vital programs. You are helping us fulfill our mission to meet human needs in Jesus' name without discrimination, and we are so grateful for you. We, and the people we serve, are greatly blessed by your continued support of The Salvation Army. Thank you for being a difference-maker in the lives of those in most need.

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-Scott A. Shelbourn

Fredsville Lutheran Church,

Thank you so much for your generous donation to the Panther Pantry. Your kindness and support mean the world to us and our students in need. Due to your contribution, we're able to provide pantry staples and essential items to our students. Your gift isn't just food - it's comfort, nourishment, and hope. It reminds our students that they are not forgotten and that caring neighbors stand with them.

-The Panther Pantry

Dear Pastor and members,

Thank you for your recent grant of \$2,000 in support of Lutheran Services in Iowa (LSI)'s Early Childhood programming. This is a significant investment to help prevent child abuse and neglect and enhance positive outcomes for children and their families. More than 25 years ago, LSI recognized the critical importance of providing early childhood services to at-risk families to prevent child abuse and create strong and stable families. Today, LSI serves families in 31 counties with Early Childhood Home Visitation services and parent education classes, including Healthy Families America (HFA)-HOPES, New Parent Programs, Parents as Teachers (PAT), NEST, and Parent Cafes. Each program focuses on supporting the entire family and provides parent education to support optimal child development, improve coping skills and foster both nurturing family relationships and parenting skills. According to the Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES), only \$1 out of every \$50 spent to treat child abuse goes toward prevention. Investing in prevention, that is, parental support and education, is less expensive and more effective than trying to treat the posttraumatic effects of child abuse. And LSI's work is making a difference. In 2024, 97% of participating families remained free from abuse while in the program. Because of your generous support, LSI can ensure that these services remain available to Iowans in need. LSI is thankful for your partnership in support of our mission and those we are privileged to serve.

-Jennifer Monroe-Koopman

Dear Fredsville Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your gift of \$1,000.00 to Lutheran Disaster Response.

"From [Christ's] fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." -John 1:16

As a church, we are empowered to love and serve our neighbors as Christ first loved us. Your gifts to the ministries of the ELCA help people around the world feel the power and hope that flow from God's full, boundless love. Drawn together and guided by the Holy Spirit, we accomplish together what none of us could do alone, grace upon grace. Your Spirit-filled generosity helps families and communities reeling from disasters, in the immediate aftermath and far into the future. No matter the disaster, no matter the need, your gifts to Lutheran Disaster Response enable people to rebuild their lives and livelihoods. Thank you for your gracious gifts. You make God's love real.

-Daniel Rift



Dear Pastor Lee Gable & Fredsville Lutheran,

Thank you for your generous gift of \$3,000.00 on 6/4/2025! You are supporting programs that give single mothers and women who age out of foster care the tools they need to thrive in our community. Last fiscal year, 93% of our participants left the program with housing, transportation, childcare, employment, and a sustainable financial plan! Even more women are graduating from House of Hope as homeowners, creating generational wealth that can break cycles of poverty. Haley (pictured below) has spent the last four months working with House of Hope and has already achieved so much! She now has her own home, has completed both Wellness and Financial Mentoring Scholarship programs, paid off thousands of dollars in debt, created emergency savings, and more! Your gift helps women like Haley rise up. House of Hope is completely funded by the community with local grants, individual financial contributions, in-kind donations, volunteers, and fundraising events (no state or federal government funding!). Your gift will have a generational impact, as cycles of poverty and homelessness are broken for good! Thank you for investing in our community and House of Hope women and families. Please let me know if you want to learn more about House of Hope or schedule a tour of our building. Find us on Facebook @HoHCedarValley, Instagram @houseofhopecv, Twitter@HOHCedarValley, Venmo @HouseofHope-CedarValley, and www.houseofhopeccd.org.

-Dusky Steele

Dear Fredsville Lutheran,

We appreciate you all so very much! You all have shown up in so many aspects in loving and supporting the families we serve! Thank you for the grant! This went a long way in serving an ever-increasing number of families! From 39 families 5 years ago to 162 this year, your support goes a long way in our quest to serve people at the first sign of struggle instead of waiting until they have lost everything. Thank you again for being part of our mission and for loving people so well!

-Karin Rowe

Dear Fredsville Lutheran Church Members,

On behalf of NewAldaya Lifescapes, I want to express our sincere gratitude for your generous donation of \$2,000 in June of 2025. As a facility that cares for a large population of residents receiving Medicaid, every little bit helps us to bridge the gap between what it costs to care for our residents vs. what Medicaid reimburses. Your kindness and generosity directly support our mission of enhancing lives through a commitment to individualized care in a home empowered by God's love. Please keep this letter as a receipt for your tax records. We have not provided you with any direct goods or services in exchange for your contribution. We would love to keep you updated on how your support of NewAldaya Lifescapes is making a difference. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you'd like to learn more about our impact of your gift or to discuss how you might like to stay involved with our mission in the future. Again, we thank you for your support of NewAldaya and look forward to working with you in the future. We also invite you to stay up to date with current and future events at NewAldaya Lifescapes by liking and following our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/NewAldayaLifescapes>. Once again, thank you for your generosity and for being a valued partner in our mission.

-Dawna Scheff, CPA

Fredsville Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your generous support. Because of you, someone in our community is going to bed tonight with a full stomach and renewed hope.

-Joshua Stevens, Donation Relations Manager at the Northeast Iowa Food Bank

On behalf of the breast cancer survivors who have benefited from the Beyond Pink Fund, we would like to thank you for your contribution of \$1,000.00. As cancer rates continue to increase in Iowa, your generosity and the donations of others made 2024 a record year for grants from Beyond Pink TEAM. We awarded \$198,395 to 146 northeast Iowans receiving treatment for breast cancer. Your contribution means so much to the recipients; here's what one of them told us: "Thank you so much for your gracious grant gift. This is a blessing to our family and we truly couldn't be more grateful. The work your team does is invaluable. Thank you again." As an all-volunteer local nonprofit with no office or government assistance, every dollar contributed allows Beyond Pink TEAM to:

- provide financial support to needy individuals in our community going through breast cancer treatment;
- host two support groups;
- present educational programs, a quarterly newsletter, and an informative website; plus
- advocate for ending breast cancer when research and public policy decisions are being made and serving on the board of the National Breast Cancer Coalition

We invite you to visit beyondpinkteam.org to find out more ways you can get involved with this important work.

-Kara Howard

Dear Friend of Northeast Iowa Food Bank,

On behalf of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank and our board, staff, and volunteers, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for your generous contribution of \$5000. Your support is vital to our mission to combat food insecurity and bring hope to those facing challenging times. Your generosity directly impacts lives in our community. One recipient shared: "Being a single mom to three boys is tough, especially after losing my job. The Northeast Iowa Food Bank provided fresh food and essentials, helping me feed my kids without sacrificing other bills. I'm so grateful for their support." Testimonies like this remind us all just how meaningful your generosity truly is. We would be honored to welcome you to our facility for a guided tour. Seeing the Food Bank in action provides a unique look into the daily operations and impact of your support. If you are interested in scheduling a tour, please feel free to reach out to us directly or visit our website at www.neifb.org for more information. Thank you once again for your incredible generosity. Together, we are building a stronger, healthier community. Thank you for your commitment to building a stronger, healthier community.

-Barb Prather





LSI proudly serves Iowans in all 99 counties through our services of Mental Health, Early Childhood, Foster Care & Adoption, Global Greens, People with Disabilities, and Immigrant & Refugee Community Services. We serve individuals of all ages, from families with newborns navigating the early stages of parenthood, to Refugee and Immigrant elders, as well as children at every stage of development. Our heart beats for the people we serve. We empower families and communities by recognizing and honoring the strengths and gifts of every individual.

Your Support makes this Testimony possible...
A New Beginning: Carmen's Journey to Safety and Self-Reliance

Carmen Ortiz was born in Charco, Nariño, Colombia. At 11, her family relocated to Buenaventura, where she finished high school and watched her father build a small business. Violence in the region forced the family to move again – this time to Bogotá, in search of safety and stability.

In Bogotá, Carmen reconnected with a childhood friend who would become her life partner. Together, they launched Frutería, a fruit-selling business Carmen successfully operated for 17 years. During that time, she also became a mother to her son, Adiel Jesús.

In 2023, violence once again disrupted their lives. Fearing for their safety, Carmen and Adiel fled to Ecuador and applied for asylum through the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Life in Ecuador was grueling.

“We were homeless. I had to sleep with my son under a bridge,” she recalls. “He got sick and had to be hospitalized.”

After more than a year, IOM helped process their immigration status and arranged travel to the U.S. In July 2024, they arrived in Houston – exhausted, hungry, and unsure of what came next. The guide assigned to help them was rarely available. Desperate for help and food, Carmen approached airline staff to ask about a delayed flight.

“We were so hungry. I just wanted to know when our flight would leave and instead, three employees brought us full meals. I started to cry. I had just arrived, and people were already helping me.”

Their flight to Des Moines departed at midnight and landed at 2 a.m., where they were welcomed by Chuck, a caseworker from LSI (Lutheran Services in Iowa). He brought them to a hotel, where Carmen remembers feeling overwhelmed.

“I was scared and confused. I remember thinking: Are we safe? Are we okay?”

Sixteen days later, LSI helped Carmen and Adiel move into their first apartment. From that point, life began to change. Carmen enrolled in English classes, received assistance with legal paperwork, healthcare, and food – and soon found two jobs: one with Des Moines Public Schools, and another at Sam's Club.

“I'm incredibly grateful. LSI helped me with everything.”

But life without a car in a Midwestern winter was difficult. Carmen walked long distances through the snow, waited for buses, or spent \$60 a week on rideshares, just to get to work and get her son to school. During a routine check-in, Carmen's caseworker Shaima heard about these challenges and referred her to Duaa, an IDA Specialist at LSI. Duaa introduced her to the matched savings program, which helps participants purchase essential assets — like a car — through financial education and support.

"I'd wake up my son very early so we could catch the school bus from our old address. Then I'd rush to work and still be late."

Carmen had already saved \$2,000 on her own, knowing a car would be vital for her family's stability. Through LSI's Individual Development Accounts program, she opened an account at Veridian Credit Union, completed budgeting and asset-specific classes, and received one-on-one coaching from Juan Lourido, Business Development Specialist at LSI. Juan helped her understand financing, credit, and how to identify reliable used cars online. With his help, Carmen purchased a safe, fuel-efficient 2015 Toyota Prius that fits her family's needs and budget. "I never thought I could buy a car especially one that was safe and good quality. Now I take my son to school and go to work. That means everything to me."

She also opened a secured \$500 credit card to begin building her credit history.

"These classes helped me prepare for when income slows down in the summer. I feel independent now, especially with the car."

Today, Carmen is preparing for her driving test, building a new life, and planning for the future.

"When we left Colombia, we were running from threats and violence. Now I'm getting used to a new life, looking for opportunities to grow, maybe buy a house, and support my son's education."

When asked to describe her journey in one word, she answers without hesitation:

"Apoyo" — Support.

Your gift changes the lives of thousands of people across Iowa.

Give By Mail

Lutheran Services in Iowa
3125 Cottage Grove Ave
Des Moines, IA 50311

Donate Online

For more information, please contact Deb Whitford, LSI's Director of Philanthropy and Church Relations, at Deborah.Whitford@LSIowa.org or 563-676-2065.

LSI is an affiliated social ministry partner of the Iowa congregations of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America) and a member of LSA (Lutheran Services in America). We proudly serve people of all ages, abilities, religions, sexes, gender identities, national origins, ethnicities, races, and sexual orientations. Learn more at LSIowa.org and facebook.com/LSI.iowa.

August 2025

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
27	28	29	30	31	1 Pastor's Day Off	2
3 Worship 9:30 am ----- VBS 6:00-8:15 pm	4  VBS 6:00-8:15 pm	5 Bible Study 9:00 am ----- VBS 6:00-8:15 pm	6 ----- VBS 6:00-8:15 pm	7 Quilters 9:00-11:30 am	8 Pastor's Day Off	9
10  Community Worship in Dike 10:00 am	11	12 Bible Study 9:00 am Sew Pillowcase Dresses 12:00-4:00 pm	13	14 Quilters 9:00-11:30 am	15 Pastor's Day Off	16
17 Worship 9:30 am	18	19 Bible Study 9:00 am	20	21 Quilters 9:00-11:30 am	22 Pastor's Day Off	23
24  Worship 9:30 am Backpack Blessing Council Meeting Following Worship	25	26 Bible Study 9:00 am	27	28 Quilters 9:00-11:30 am	29 Fancy Fingers 9:00-4:00 pm Pastor's Day Off	30
31 Worship 9:30 am	1 	2	3	4	5	6

Allow yourself *joy*