

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
1326 South 26 Street
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

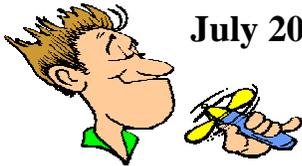
Return Service Requested
Dated Material

Email: graceluth@graceluth.com
Web Site: www.graceluth.com

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS
9:00 A.M. Christian Education
10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary – Pam Reents
Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Cody Talarico
Sexton - Ambros Lado/Brian Sutej
Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill
Faith in Action - Julie Chytil

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Omaha NE
Permit No. 39



July 2007

**Inspired By Christ, it is our mission
to share God's Word and Love in
care and in service to all.**

THE GRACE MESSENGER

2007 Council Members
 Ron Adrian Andrew Edwards Sarah Emery
 June Hilmer David Hufford Greg Hula
 Ernest Olson Brenda Spahr
 Pastor Laaker John Ivo Mouto



Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula Treasurer: Margie Sutej

COUNCIL NOTES:

The regular meeting of the Council was held June 12. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Kathryn Reichert, Kelly, Frank Favarra, Bernard Jacobs, Darlene Spahr, care for those within the Grace family that they continue to heal, direction in becoming a multi-racial congregation, where is God moving us in this issue, for all travelers this summer, all of the unrest and conflict in the world and for safety of all of our military personnel. Pastor led devotions from Psalm 25:10 and James 2:22; which spoke about our faith and that it shows through the work that we do.

Visions for Ministry: Council continued sharing in discussion of “One Body One Spirit”, which included the differences of multiracial, multicultural and multiethnic around us.

Reports were received from the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer. Please continue to give generously.

Christian Education: Vacation Bible School will be held during the week of July 16 - 20.

Evangelism/Outreach: All-American Prayer Picnic to be held July 1st on St. Luke’s front yard.

Finance: Ideas for memorials to be used were discussed.

Property: Currently receiving bids to replace air conditioning units.

Service/Social Ministry: Habitat for Humanity house will be built at 2817 Madison Street this year. Please volunteer.

Interfaith book ‘Religious Interests In Community Conflict’ passed around, Pastors Bob Johnson and Damon Laaker mentioned in Chapter 5.

Support/Stewardship: no new report.

Worship: New cloth banners for the sanctuary were discussed.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: None.

Announcements: The next joint meeting with St. Luke’s and Cristo Rey councils has been postponed and will be rescheduled in July.



Pastor Lee Griess, Assistant to the Bishop, Nebraska Synod and I submitted a resolution to the Nebraska Synod Assembly entitled, "Care for Creation." The resolution was adopted by the Synod Assembly. I would like to share with you the four resolves.

"Resolved, that the congregations of the Nebraska Synod be encouraged to help their members become more informed on the problem of global warming and on possible solutions by taking advantage of the available educational resources; and, be it further

"Resolved, that each congregation in the Nebraska Synod be encouraged to undertake an 'energy audit' to identify actions they can take to reduce and improve their use of energy through in creasingly efficient appliances, lighting fixtures and heating and

cooling systems, and that each congregation more aggressively engage in recycling and conservation of renewable and non-renewable resources; and, be it further

"Resolved, that this Assembly request each congregation to encourage its members to sign up for the ELCA's Advocacy program and advocate for energy policies at the State and National levels that will promote cleaner, renewable and more efficient energy use for all sectors of society; and, be it further

"Resolved, that the Nebraska Synod declare itself a 'Green Synod,' establishing a Creation-Care Task Force to investigate further ways to reduce the use of paper and energy at the Synod offices and at Synod Assemblies and Gatherings, and that this committee promote the stewardship of the care for creation within the Synod."

I am pleased that we as a congregation have been working toward our reduction of the use of energy resources. We completely retrofitted the entire building with the most energy efficient lighting two years ago. Last year, we replaced our 1957 boiler with a new energy efficient one. This year we are planning to replace our 1986 air conditioning equipment with the most efficient units on the market today.

You will notice in the upper fellowship hall that we have placed three recycling containers. One for aluminum cans, one for paper, and one for plastics (number 1 and number 2). Our hope is that we can be strong advocates for this responsible care of creation by recycling as much of our used products as possible. In the office, we have been recycling office paper and cardboard for a long time. This expands our efforts to the whole of the congregation.

I would encourage you, if you have computer access, to sign up for the ELCA's Advocacy program. You can access this site by going to www.elca.org/advocacy and clicking on the link to sign up. This past week, those of us who are already advocates, had the opportunity to contact our Senators and encourage a more responsible fuel-efficient policy for all automobiles. You may have noticed the article in the paper that indicated that the Senate approved a bill that set the standards for fuel efficiency at 35 mpg vs the current 25 mpg.

We are called to be stewards of God's good creation. We can all do more to promote the stewardship of the care for creation. I encourage you to consider how you can do more.

Pastor Laaker



Kids At Work is going strong with our third week now complete. Kids enrolled this year are:

Taylor Adams
Brianna Collett
Alexandria Jindra
Shedu Lado
Adam Mendoza
Danny Quandt
Julia Traynor

Bradley Collett
Donavan Halfhill
Shaban Lado
Patrick McPeck
Amber Morlan
Jake Quandt

Some of this summer's special volunteer team leaders are:

Linda Pafford
Urbano Vasquez
Carolyn Matson

Liz Singles
Ernie Olson

Eva Martin
Kathy Hayek

*Brenda Spahr,
Director of Kids At Work
(402) 341-7730*

It's not too late to volunteer and have some fun this summer!

This year Kids At Work is going to the following work sites:

Cristo Rey: The Kids stock the food pantry, clean where needed and have even worked outside in the yard taking care of weeds, etc.

Lutheran Home: The Kids will do crafts, decorate doorways for the residents and help out with folding the laundry.

Precious Memories: The Kids help with the younger kids whether providing a special friend for the morning, playing or reading with a group of kids, putting away donated food supplies and helping to set up for the lunch time meal.

Grace Lutheran: The Kids will be helping out with special projects such as flyer distribution for the Vacation Bible School, Newsletter Assembly and special projects around the church.

If you look in the August Newsletter for pictures of the kids, you just might see some familiar faces!

Our *Kids At Work* look like they are enjoying an awesome summer!

Keep up the good work!

Brenda Spahr, Director

A three-year old put his shoes on by himself. His mother noticed the left was on the right foot. "Son, your shoes are on the wrong feet."

He looked up at her with a raised brow and said, "Don't kid me, Mom. I KNOW they're my feet."

Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends



- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ◆ Rex Olson - for healing as he deals with cancer. (Don and Norma Olson)
- ◆ Rose Hamilton - Healing for her cancer. (Aunt of members, Andrew and Christi Edwards)
- ◆ Frances Campsey - Health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Linda Whitney - Struggling with on-going cancer. (Friend of LaVonne Moss)
- ◆ Ernie Olson - On-going therapy after his stroke. Pray for help as he is trying to find another job that will enable him to continue gaining strength (member)
- ◆ Alice Friedlander - For ongoing strength related to health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Darlene Spahr - COPD, Darlene has been re-hospitalized due to her difficulty breathing. (member, Brenda Spahr's mother-in-law.)
- ◆ Harlan Morter - For ongoing strength related to health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Betty Coniglio - Continued recovery from heart issues. (member)
- ◆ Mae Lane - Recovering at daughter's after being hospitalized. (member)
- ◆ Ana Lopez - Teen with long term medical needs. (Family involved in ESL food basket project)
- ◆ Ambros Lado - Pray for Ambros and his rehab team as they practice skills to enable him to go live at home with his family.
- ◆ Seth Goodman - Pray for courage and strength to overcome his addiction in rehab.
(Nephew of Pam Reents.)
- ◆ Moyer Family - Pray for the family as they continue the process of mourning and the life transitions.
- ◆ Costello Family - Pray for the family as they mourn the passing of Jim on June 20th.
- ◆ Kathryn Reichert - Healing for her cancer. (Granddaughter of Don and Norma Olson)

Pray for strength and spiritual wisdom for the leaders in the local church and the Nebraska Synod:

Pastor Laaker

Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod

Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

Pray for wisdom for your Church Council here at Grace Church.

Sudanese Church Requests

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Pray that the elders in the church community will have wisdom in their counsel. Titus Duli, David Nange and Silas Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.
- ◆ Pray for the organization of a women's organization forming to help meet the needs of our immigrant Sudanese women. The organization, SOTRU, will be working to help these women find funding for home based business opportunities.
- ◆ Pray for Titus and Tereza Duli's, newborn baby, she is going through additional testing due to a shoulder injury during birth. Pray that the Doctor would be able to find the correct course of action to relieve this child's pain.



Summer Vacation Bible School

Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26th Street
July 16th - July 20th

Kids, come for FREE supper at 5:30 p.m.
VBS activities - 6:15 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Children are invited to attend our VBS program. Kids will meet friends, explore Bible stories, do fun activities, sing great songs, make crafts, play games, eat snacks and more! Contact Grace Traynor through the church office at 341-7730 with any questions or if you would like to help!

Every child is welcome regardless of church affiliation!
There is no cost to attend.



Mark Your Calendars
Tuesday, August 21, 2007

Look for more details in upcoming bulletins and the August issue of the Grace Messenger.

Come as you are
Bring a blanket, lawn chair
or sit in on of our chairs.

Sunday, July 8th
10:30 a.m.
&
Sunday August 12th

Worship out on the front lawn under
the shade of our gorgeous old tree.



Outdoor Worship



"Helping Hands"

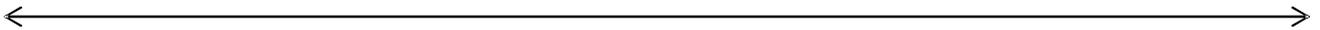
Working Together in God's service

Pantry Needs

Project Hope
4205 Boyd St
Omaha, NE 68111

Project Hope
The Theme for July is
Back to School items

Project Hope always needs boxes of zip lock bags in quart or gallon size, soup, peanut butter, macaroni and cheese dinners, pasta, rice, diapers, bathroom tissue and feminine hygiene items.



Each July and August, Project Hope and First Lutheran Church help needy children get a good start on the school year by providing backpacks and school supplies.

As you shop this summer, consider purchasing some school supplies to help with the enormous demand. Place your donations on the pantry shelf in the Upper Hall. **Thanks for your help!**



2nd Wednesday Night of Each month
Next Prayer Service
July 11, 2007
7:00 p.m.

Candle light Prayer Service for Confession,
Meditation, and Healing
at Grace Lutheran Church.

English is an odd language.
There is no egg in the eggplant,
no ham in the hamburger,
and neither pine nor apple in the pineapple.



Community News



Marriage or
Family Problems?
Depressed?
Unable to Cope with life?

Free Counseling is Available.

If you would like more information or to set up and appointment, please call Allyson Campbell at South High at 557-3675 or St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church at 733-0172.

Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

*Next Meeting
July 20, 2007 7:00 p.m.
Here at Grace Church.*



July 26 - William Clark Commemorative Cruise

The Douglas County Historical Society will host a William Clark Commemorative Cruise on July 26, 2007 to observe the 203rd anniversary of the Corps of Discovery and the time when William Clark came ashore near what is now Lewis and Clark Landing, Rick's Café Boatyard and downtown Omaha. This traditional dinner cruise by the Historical Society includes a commemorative certificate and gift, narratives by Captain Meriwether Lewis and other re-enactors, and guitar, keyboard and banjo music. Tickets are \$50 each for the 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. cruise. Reservations are required by July 20. For more information, consult the Historical Society's web site www.omahahistory.org or contact Executive Director Betty Davis at 455.9990.

August 12 & September 8-9: Second Sunday Talks & Garden Walk

On August 12, Linda Duckworth will portray Susan B. Anthony at the Douglas County Historical Society's Second Sunday Talk, beginning at 2:00 p.m. at the Historical Society's General Crook House. The talk commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment on August 26, 1920.

The Second Sunday Talk in September will be included with the Historical Society's annual Garden Walk weekend, which is scheduled extended hours on Saturday, September 8th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 9th from Noon until 4:00 p.m. Cost will be the usual admission/donation of \$5 adults, \$4 students and \$3 ages 6 through 11.

The Historical Society's General Crook House museum is located at Fort Omaha, 30th and Fort Streets, now the campus of Metropolitan Community College. Second Sunday Talks are free for Historical Society members and are included with the usual admission/donation for the public (\$5 adults, \$4 students, \$3 ages 6 through 11) to tour the Crook House, garden and exhibits.

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

Our sympathy to the family of Jim Costello. Jim passed away on June 20, just two months after his 80th birthday celebration. We are so thankful to have been blessed with Jim. A service was held at the church on June 23rd. Thank you to all the people who provided food, memorials, and their prayers, love and support to the family during this time of mourning.

Congratulations!

Sharon Irwin retired from teaching at the end of the 2006-2007 school year. She was presented with the prestigious "School Bell Award" by the Westside Education Association. God Bless You Sharon as you seek your next ministry position!



THE PRAYER
OF THE
RIGHTEOUS
IS POWERFUL
AND
EFFECTIVE.

J A M E S 5 : 1 6

Grace Lutheran Church Free Daily Devotion by email

Want to receive a free daily devotion by email?

- Go to www.edevotionals.org
- Click on the tab, "Join a group"
- Enter your email address
- Enter Grace Lutheran Church's code, "d65mv".
- Click the button, "subscribe"

Why should you subscribe?

1. You will receive a new devotion every day via email.
2. Each devotional has a verse and short lesson to meditate on for the day. It only takes about 3-5 minutes to read.
3. To stay informed about church activities. Grace Lutheran Church has space to add announcements about activities and events. To receive prayer requests from each other and from friends of Grace Lutheran Church. This is a good opportunity to bear one another up in prayer.

May you be blessed as you spend time with



Virginia McGill
Director, (402) 660-6689
Gema Wolde
Gabriela Ortiz
Douglas County Health Department
Se habla español .

Interfaith's Latinas in Action Group Welcomes the Summer!

The summer has been off to a very busy start for our Interfaith Latinas in Action Program. Our first kick-off to summer event as a group began on May 20th when over 65 Latinas in Action participants took part in ConAgra's Walk for a Heart in downtown Omaha.

Gaby, Gema and I were happy to take part in the walk with our women and honored to be the largest group taking part in the walk. Our group was also the largest Latina group enrolled in the event.

The walk was 3.5 miles and began at ConAgra. The walking trail went through the Old Market plaza, the Quest Center and downtown Omaha before ending up on the ConAgra campus. Every half mile or so, different water and fruit stations were set up so that walkers could rehydrate and energize before moving on.

After walking for nearly 2 hours, Gema and her 2 children, Gaby and her 3 children and I were filmed crossing the finish line by Channel 7 News. Gema, always up for making new friends, smiled and waved at the camera. Her pretty smile showed up well on film and Channel 7 showed the clip of us on both the evening and late night news broadcasts.

Many of our Latinas in Action participants brought their entire families to the event. It was nice meeting the husbands of our participants and the older children who have never taken part in any of our activities.

After we finished the walk, our group found a shady spot on the ConAgra lawn and lunched on the food and beverages provided. The Omaha Fire Department and Omaha Police Department provided educational materials and emergency contact information fliers to all present.

Participants commented that they enjoyed the day and enjoyed seeing each other on a Saturday outside of exercise classes. I hope that our future summer events enjoy as much success as the Walk for the Heart.

Virginia McGill
Interfaith



When my three-year-old son opened the birthday gift from his grandmother and found a water pistol. He squealed with delight and headed for the nearest sink. I was not so pleased. I turned to Mom and said, "I'm surprised at you. Don't you remember how we used to drive you crazy with water guns?" Mom smiled and then replied, "I remember."



FAITH
IN ACTION

Upcoming Fall Event

Faith in Action of Interfaith Health Service would like to share with you information about an upcoming conference on aging to be held at UNO this fall. "Aging with Passion and Purpose: A Conference on Aging" will be held October 21st and October 22nd, 2007.

The featured keynote speaker on Monday, October 22 will be Gene Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Center on Aging, Health and Humanities at George Washington University, where he holds the positions of Professor of Health Care Sciences and Professor of Psychiatry. He is the author of many books including *The Mature Mind* and *The Creative Age* and is founding director of the Washington, D.C., Center on Aging and past president of the Gerontological Society of America.

The featured keynote speaker on Sunday, October 21, will be Anne Basting, Ph.D., who in 1998, developed the *TimeSlips* Project which has generated hundreds of stories that are used to rekindle the hope for human connection among people struggling with Alzheimer's Disease and related dementia. *TimeSlips* marks a fundamental shift away from focusing on memory and reminiscence, toward encouraging people with memory loss to exercise their imaginations and creativity.

Pre Conference

October 21, 1:00pm - 5:00pm

Healthy Aging, Creativity and the Faith Community

A Focus on programs and practice.

Conference

October 22, 8:00am - 5:00pm

Aging with Passion and Purpose

A conference on aging.

Cost

General Public

Sunday, October 21, 2007 - \$25

Monday, October 22, 2007 - \$75

Both Days - \$90

Seniors 60+ and Enrolled Students

Sunday, October 21, 2007 - \$25

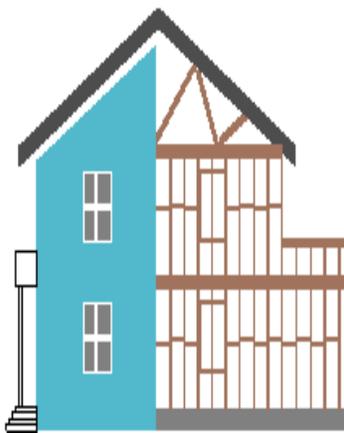
Monday, October 22, 2007 - \$50

Both Days - \$70

For more information, please call 895-2224.

Hope to see you there!

-Julie



**Neighbors South
Habitat for Humanity
Build Begins**

**Building Site:
2817 Madison St.
Omaha, NE**

Can You Help?

The summer build project for the Neighbors South Coalition began on June 29, 2007 with framing the exterior walls, interior walls and the trusses. There is still much to accomplish by the target completion date to be announced.

Volunteers are needed to help in all areas of construction, food preparation and service, and cleanup. There are two shifts per day. The morning shift is from 7:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. with a snack and lunch provided. The afternoon shift is from 12:30 - 5:30 p.m. with a snack provided.

Whether you are a skilled construction worker, a handy man type or just willing to learn, there is a job for you. On site volunteer coordinators are also needed to over see check-in, lunch and snack set up, cleanup or just being a “go fer.”

If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful and satisfying project, volunteer forms are available at the back of the sanctuary or through the church office by calling 341-7730.

3rd Annual Grace Lutheran Library Summer Reading Club
June 3 - September 2, 2007

“Climb to New Heights”

Each page you read from a book in the church library will move
you up the mountain!



Sign up to be a part of our Grace Lutheran “Climbing Team.”

Requirements: As you read, record the number of pages you have completed on the poster and add “elevation” to your climbing adventure.

Everyone completing the minimum required reading will receive a certificate, a small consolation prize and free admission to the celebration party at the end of the summer. The top readers in each category will receive an additional prize at the party.

Minimum requirements for free admission to the party:

50 pages for the “read to Me” crowd. (Non-readers and early beginners)

75 pages for the Primary Grades. (Grades 1-3)

125 pages for the Elementary Grades. (Grades 4-6)

175 pages for Jr. High and High School. (Grades 7-12)

225 pages for Adults.

July is...

National Baked Beans Month
National Ice Cream Month
National Tennis Month
Read A N A I m a n a c: Month
Anti-Boredom Month
H i t h i k i n g Month



Top Ten Caddy Comments

Golfer: "Think I'm going to drown myself in the lake."

Caddy: "Think you can keep your head down that long?"

Golfer: "I'd move heaven and earth to break 100 on this course."

Caddy: "Try heaven, you've already moved most of the earth."

Golfer: "Do you think my game is improving?"

Caddy: "Yes sir, you miss the ball much closer now."

Golfer: "You've got to be the worst caddy in the world."

Caddy: "I don't think so sir. That would be too much of a coincidence."

Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch all the time. It's too much of a distraction."

Caddy: "It's not a watch - it's a compass."

Golfer: "Do you think I can get there with a 5 iron?"

Caddy: "Eventually."

Golfer: "How do you like my game?"

Caddy: "Very good sir, but personally, I prefer golf."

Golfer: "Do you think it's a sin to play on Sunday?"

Caddy: "The way you play, sir, it's a sin on any day."

Golfer: "This is the worst course I've ever played on."

Caddy: "This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago."

Golfer: "That can't be my ball, it's too old."

Caddy: "It's been a long time since we teed off, sir."

A fellow computer programmer asked for my help in putting new software into operation. At first, he handled most of the work. Eventually, though, he asked me to help with the last phase of the training. When I sat down with one woman and told her I would be showing her how to make changes to the files, she sighed with relief. "I'm so glad you're teaching me instead of him." Surprised, I said that my colleague was far more experienced than I was. "Yes," she said, "but I feel much more comfortable with you. I get nervous around really smart people."



Time Gets Better With Age

I've learned that I like my teacher because she cries when we sing "Silent Night".
Age 5

I've learned that our dog doesn't want to eat my broccoli either.
Age 7

I've learned that when I wave to people in the country, they stop what they are doing and wave back. Age 9

I've learned that just when I get my room the way I like it, Mom makes me clean it up again. Age 12

I've learned that if you want to cheer yourself up, you should try cheering someone else up. Age 14

I've learned that although it's hard to admit it, I'm secretly glad my parents are strict with me. Age 15

I've learned that silent company is often more healing than words of advice.
Age 24

I've learned that brushing my child's hair is one of life's great pleasures.
Age 26

I've learned that wherever I go, the world's worst drivers have followed me there.
Age 29

I've learned that if someone says something unkind about me, I must live so that no one will believe it. Age 30

I've learned that there are people who love you dearly but just don't know how to show it. Age 42

I've learned that you can make someone's day by simply sending them a little note.
Age 44

I've learned that the greater a person's sense of guilt, the greater his or her need to cast blame on others. Age 46

I've learned that children and grandparents are natural allies. Age 47

I've learned that no matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow. Age 48

I've learned that singing "Amazing Grace" can lift my spirits for hours.
Age 49

I've learned that motel mattresses are better on the side away from the phone.
Age 50

I've learned that you can tell a lot about a man by the way he handles these three things: a rainy day, lost luggage, and tangled Christmas tree lights.
Age 51

Time Gets Better With Age

page 2

I've learned that keeping a vegetable garden is worth a medicine cabinet full of pills.
Age 52

I've learned that regardless of your relationship with your parents, you miss them terribly after they die. Age 53

I've learned that making a living is not the same thing as making a life.
Age 58

I've learned that if you want to do something positive for your children, work to improve your marriage. Age 61

I've learned that life sometimes gives you a second chance. Age 62

I've learned that you shouldn't go through life with a catchers mitt on both hands. You need to be able to throw something back. Age 64

I've learned that if you pursue happiness, it will elude you. But if you focus on your family, the needs of others, your work, meeting new people, and doing the very best you can, happiness will find you. Age 65

I've learned that whenever I decide something with kindness, I usually make the right decision. Age 66

I've learned that everyone can use a prayer. Age 72

I've learned that even when I have pains, I don't have to be one. Age 82

I've learned that every day you should reach out and touch someone. People love that human touch-holding hands, a warm hug, or just a friendly pat on the back.
Age 90

I've learned that I still have a lot to learn. Age 92

<http://home.att.net/>

