

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

# THE GRACE MESSENGER



Back to School

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

1326 South 26th Street  
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

Return Service Requested

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Web Site: [www.graceluth.com](http://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 – Benhi !Kabeb

Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr

Organist - Lynda Laird

Sexton - Brian Sutej

Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

September 2009

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## 2009 Council Members

Ron Adrian                      Sarah Emery (Sec)      June Hilmer      David Nange  
Andrew Edwards              Arlone Farber              Vicky Cox      Ernest Olson  
Gloria Moore                  Vicar Angela Khabeb      Pastor Laaker

\* \*\*\*\*\*

Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula Treasurer: Margie Sutej

The regular meeting of the Council was held August 11<sup>th</sup>. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for the family of Bob Harris (Ken's nephew) as they struggle with Bob's recent death; we pray for Ken Hilmer with his hernia surgery scheduled on 8/19; we pray for the Etzell family as they mourn the loss of their son; we pray for Ernie's cousin, George Black, in Portland OR as he struggles with the loss of 4 friends. We give thanks to God for Vicki's son as he and his wife expect their first baby, and that Sandy's CAT scan came back cancer-free. We pray for all of the students heading back to class and for civility to surround all those attending budget and healthcare meetings. Pastor led devotions from Deuteronomy 7.9 and 1 Timothy 2.5. The first encourages us to review the Ten Commandments. The second reminds us to look at how Jesus lived his life, and how he was accessible to all.

Visions for Ministry: The Council is reading "Radical Welcome" by Stephanie Spellers. This week's discussion revolved around practicing engaging, inviting, & relating to others. Please read pages 75-94 in the book by the next meeting.

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

Christian Education: VBS was a huge success. THANKS to Janet Hula for a wonderful effort. Faith Quest to begin again soon.

Evangelism/Outreach: Kids At Work will be honoring participants at Sunday's worship.

Finance: No new report.

Property: Larry has offered to repaint sills on approx 10 windows on the South side, once the contractors finish glazing them. Ken Hilmer reset sign.

Service/Social Ministry: Picnic on Sunday with clown ministry! CROP walk will be in October. Habitat House is almost complete!

Support/Stewardship: No new report.

Worship: Clowns here on August 16!

Unfinished Business: Church was 120 years old in April. Meet at noon, at church, on Saturday 8/22 to discuss suggestions for celebration.

New Business: What can we, as a congregation, share with others? What do we need that can be found in partnership with others?

Announcements: Pastor will be at the dedication of the Lakota Center in Scottsbluff on August 26-28. He'll be in CA with family in October. Pastor will bring treats and lead prayer for our September meeting.



As we left off the story last month, the newly forming worshipping community made plans for its future. Sunday, November 25, 1888, the Sunday School was organized with 26 scholars. Nine of the young people were from the families who were prospective members of the new congregation.

Sunday, December 2, 1888, the chapel was dedicated. The chapel was a frame structure with a vestibule and a room for the use of the sexton. The auditorium was 22x36 feet. The chapel cost \$637.75 the furnishings cost \$265.00 for a total cost of \$902.75. The first regular services were held in the chapel on December 9, 1888, with 36 present in the morning.

The congregation officially organized on Sunday morning April 7, 1889, as Shull Memorial Lutheran Church with 25 charter members. (Prior to this time records indicate that the congregation was referred to as Southwestern Lutheran Church of Omaha.) All surrounded the altar and were addressed by the pastor, Rev. Luther M. Kuhns, and his father, Rev. Henry W. Kuhns, D.D., the first missionary to the Nebraska Territory and adjacent parts. There were 85 present. In the evening there were 88 present. The next Sunday was Palm Sunday. Easter Sunday was celebrated on April 21, 1889 the offering was \$13.18.

The first congregational meeting was held on Wednesday, April 17, 1889, when Articles of Incorporation were adopted.

At the meeting of the Nebraska Synod, September 3-10, 1889, held at Grand Island, Nebraska, the congregation filed its constitution and articles of incorporation with the Synod. On September 5, 1889, the congregation was duly received into membership within the Synod.

From September 1889 to 1896 the Church was self-supporting. The drought of 1894 and the financial depression at this time caused the congregation to again seek the aid of the Board of Home Missions. The flattening of the real estate boom in Omaha, together with the subsequent financial depression throughout the country and the drought in Nebraska during the 1890's made church work extremely difficult. The constant removal of members and the stringent financial conditions were a sore perplexity to the congregation. Notwithstanding the discouragements and hindrances, the Church continued to grow.

The choir had its ups and downs during this time, occasionally, disbanding and then later reorganizing.

The Sunday School began under the care of Rev. Luther Kuhns. In 1894, Mr. J. Fred Smith was elected as superintendent. He served in that position more than twenty-five years. Under his leadership, the Sunday School grew and prospered.

This year of 1890 was a busy one. Many things took place. The first written Treasurer's report was made March 4, 1890. The report showed the following: Building Fund Balance, \$13.60 General Fund Balance, \$52.63. Disbursements were made by warrant and the following warrants were approved: Janitor, \$5.00 Organist, \$5.00 Kindling, \$1.00 Pastor, \$62.50.

In addition, much correspondence took place between the congregation and the Shull heirs, and between the congregation and the Board of Church Extension. Finally in December of 1890, the council made application to the Board of Church Extension to build a church building. In February of 1891 they received word back that the Board would aid in building with \$3,000.00.

So as we can see, life continues to provide challenges. Ministry had its struggles in those early days. Ministry has its struggles today. God has been faithful in providing the resources necessary and I trust God will continue to provide the resources for ministry today and into the future.

*Pr. Damon Laaker*



# Stations of Hope

Interfaith Health Services, a South Omaha coalition, is pleased to sponsor “Stations of Hope.” This unique gathering will be the third in a series intended to promote healing and hope in our community.

**You are invited to a program telling the story of inCommon Community Development.**

*inCommon Community Development exists to affront poverty through the cultivation of supportive community networks that participate in the holistic development of vulnerable populations and neighborhoods. (inCommon’s Mission)*

**Date:** Thursday, September 17, 2009

**Time:** 7:00 PM

**Place:** inCommon Community Development  
**1258 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street**

*Light refreshments will be served.*

Contact Kim Roberts at 551-1604 or [bkeroberts@msn.com](mailto:bkeroberts@msn.com)



## Grace Church Member, Family and Friend Requests

- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ◆ Sandy Fitzgerald - Cancer treatments continues. (member)
- ◆ David Nange's son, Paul as he recovers from surgery on his knee. (Council member)
- ◆ Ken Hilmer - As he struggles with dizziness and breathing problems. (member)
- ◆ La Vonne Moss -Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ◆ Fern Matson - Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ◆ Elna Burns - Suffered a stroke sister of Don Olson (member)
- ◆ Kristine (Nelson) Mauler- Treatment for her cancer. (daughter of Barbara Nelson))
- ◆ Wendy Henexson- Recovery from transplant surgery. (daughter of Pastor Liz Conner)
- ◆ Lado family - as they grieve the loss of their father and husband.

### Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Mae Lane

Richard Moore

Thelma Harrahill - (In Kansas with her children)

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

Pray for the new Council Members. Ask God to bless their ministry among us.

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

Pastor Laaker

Vicar Angela and family

Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod

Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Titus Duli, David Nange and Charles Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshipping Community.

Let's encourage each other as we see God's hand in answering our prayers



Virginia McGill  
Director, (402) 660-6689  
Gema Wolde  
(402) 616 4721  
Se habla español .

Our Latinas in Action Program is pleased to be part of a new partnership with the Pixan group in South Omaha. Pixan has been in existence for about two years and is a ministry dedicated to educational programming and building bridges between immigrants and Church members from all denominations across Omaha.

After many meetings with Pixan's leadership teams, program director, and community members, our participants and staff decided that our ministries fit together in a complimentary fashion. Pixan currently runs GED programs for recent immigrants, as well as hosting leadership trainings and driver's education classes. Pixan expressed a genuine interest in providing education and prevention opportunities to its community members, and is excited to work with us in planning ways to best promote hope and healing. Juana, Santiago and Gaspar, three of the primary Leadership Team members of Pixan, voiced their personal and professional enthusiasm for welcoming programming in areas of health and activity, especially for women and children who have little access to such programming.

Several of our current Latinas in Action participants are community members of Pixan and will be serving as leaders of the new Zumba aerobics and education classes that IHS will be offering on the Pixan campus. Isabel, a Pixan leader who has been training for 6 months to become an aerobics instructor, will assist Ilda in leading our new classes each Wednesday evening beginning at 6 pm. Pixan is located on 32<sup>nd</sup> and I streets and occupies the St. Francis school and convent.

Thanks to all the congregation members, community members and Latinas in Action participants who so generously donated children's books for the nursery space at Pixan. Gema and I hope that this new location and partnership will serve the community well. Please keep us in your prayers as we begin this expansion and continue to explore ways to grow with others in mission and in ministry.

*Virginia McGill Interfaith*

Free

Afterschool Program  
Monday - Thursday  
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Starts Monday, September 8th

Fun

Crafts

Snack

Safe place to hang out

Ages Kindergarten through 6th grade welcome!

*Brenda Spahr, Director of Youth and Fun*



**JOIN US**  
**AFTER**  
**SCHOOL**

# Kids At Work 2009



Above photo was taken following the awards ceremony recognizing Kids At Work 2009; from left to right first row are; Daniel, Victor, Brisa, Samantha, Bianca, Bradley, Danaka, Sonia, Thomas, Benhi, Brittney, and Pastor Laaker. Second row are; Angela, Patrick, Ernie, Andrea, Konami, Shedu, Brenda, and Nick.



Festivities on the last workday included lunch and a special game of water balloon toss. Some top champions were Patrick, D'Ondrae, Andrea, Samantha and Vicar Angela! Way to have fun on a summer day!



# "Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

## Pantry Needs

Project Hope  
4205 Boyd St  
Omaha, NE 68111

Project Hope  
The Theme for September is  
Toilet Paper, Paper Towels and Diapers

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

*We Need Empty Ice Cream Buckets!*

*Project Hope puts baby items in them when they fill pantry orders.*

"Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread; and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. Amen."

*Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

## 27th Annual Crop Walk 2009



**October 11, 2009**

Starting from First Christian Church  
6630 Dodge Street  
Omaha, NE

As a walker - The CROP walk is for the entire family from baby to grandparents. There are routes of 1, 2, and 5 miles. You choose how far to walk. Parents can push strollers or pull wagons. There are rest and water stops along the way and transportation back to the start if you need it.

As a Sponsor - Even if you cannot walk you can participate by sponsoring someone who can. Offer to sponsor a walker with a pledge per mile of a donation and make a real difference in meeting hunger needs at home and abroad. Crop Walk Sponsor Sheets will be available in the church office and at the back table in the sanctuary the week of September 8th.

Pastor Laaker is Grace Lutheran Church's Crop Walk Coordinator. If you would like to help or walk, please contact him.



## News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

*Got an item to share?*

*Let the church office know about it!*

### Welcome Back

Fall Start-Up  
W/ELCA Board/Circle  
Meeting  
September 15, 2009

1:00 p.m.

### Ladies Outing

*The Ladies of Grace will be attending the Broadway musical drama "Quilters" on Sunday September 27, at 2:00 p.m. at the Omaha Community Playhouse. Tickets are \$29 each. Please let Vicar Angela know if you want to attend.*

### Welcome Back!



Quilting will resume on Monday, September 14th 9:00 a.m.  
Coffee and Jokes at 10:00 a.m.

### "Ministry Need: Nursery Attendants"

Grace has been blessed with little ones attending worship with parents. Occasionally, the need is there for someone to be available to staff the nursery. Can you help? A sign up sheet is posted across from the church office. "Please consider offering your help with this special need"



*Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

A memory book is being planned in celebration of Grace's 120th anniversary. We are asking people to share photos or written memories of events throughout the history of Grace. Please include the dates and descriptions of the events with your photos, and enclose them in an envelope with your name so they can be returned to you. If you happen to have any digital photos, please email them to [amandajvazquez@gmail.com](mailto:amandajvazquez@gmail.com). We ask that all items be submitted to Amanda Vazquez or the church office by September 15, 2009. Thanks in advance for helping to make this a special event!



### ***Grace Lutheran Church 120th Anniversary***

*October 11, Pastor Dennis Hahle will be preaching  
October 18 pastor Paul Konig will be preaching. In honor of the people of Grace and their ministry for serving in Omaha, we are going to have a Potluck.*

*PS. Watch the Sunday Bulletin for further info.*

*Gods Blessings and Happy Anniversary Grace.*



## *Grace Did It Again.*

*Wow, what a day with great fun .*

*Thanks to the Life in Christ Clown Ministry, members of Cristo Rey under the leadership of Pastor Liz Connor, The Sudanese Fellowship and members of the neighborhood. We had approximately 170 attendance. Thanks once again for the food and helping in many ways to make this possible.*





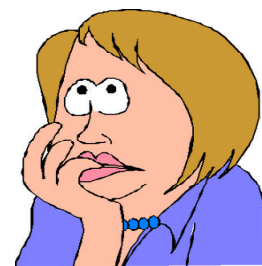
## September Trivia

- ☼ has 30 days.
- ☼ 9th month of the year.
- ☼ named after the Latin word “Septi” or “Septem” which means “seven” because originally the calendar year started in March making September the 7th month. This was changed in the Roman calendar in 153 BC.
- ☼ Flower - Aster or Morning Glory.

From the pulpit the pastor declared, “Lord, without you, we are but dust.”

A four-year-old girl leaned over and asked her mother in a loud voice, “Mommy, what is butt dust?”

*Joyful Noise Newsletter October 2007*



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### What's Up, Doc?

Doctor: "Take the green pill with a glass of water when you get up. Take the blue pill with a glass of water after lunch. Then just before going to bed, take the red pill with another glass of water."

Man: "Exactly what's my problem, doc?"

Doctor: "You're not drinking enough water."



A duck walks into a bar and asks, "Got any grapes?"

The bartender, confused, tells the ducks that no, his bar doesn't serve grapes. The duck thanks him and leaves.

The next day, the duck returns and says, "Got any

grapes?"

Again, the bartender tells him that, “no, the bar does not serve grapes, has never served grapes, and, furthermore, will never serve grapes.” The duck, a little ruffled, thanks him and leaves.

The next day, the duck returns, but before he can say anything, the bartender begins to yell: "Listen, duck! This is a bar! We do not serve grapes and if you ever ask for grapes again, I will nail your little duck beak to the bar!"

The duck is silent for a moment, and then asks, "Got any nails?"

Confused, the bartender says “no”!

"Good!" says the duck. "Got any grapes?"

# Luke, Chapter 12, Puzzle 1

## WORD LIST

adversary	many
allowance	moth
banquet	parable
baptism	penny
barn	punishment
crop	rain
dark	ravens
demanded	ready
distressed	reap
ear	reconcile
eat	rich
entrusted	roof
fear	say
food	servant
grass	sow
head	spin
hell	unbeliever
hour	wear
interpret	word
kill	
kindled	
lilies	
magistrate	
manager	

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r n i p s b i c q m a n y k w
h w t r e g a n a m d y d i p
t o p k i l l p t r v n e n s
o s u d l k a a t e e n t d e
m u n r i c h e p i r e s l r
a d b r l s v r t b s p u e v
y l e t a r t s i g a m r d a
h e l l q v t r v r r r t e n
b r i o r a e w e a y h n d t
k e e u w p u n i s h m e n t
o f v t p a q n s s s k r a d
g o e l i c n o c e r e e m d
p o r c s c a c u a a z d e r
t r p a r a b l e d o o f d o
x k y d t j x f y b q x e c w
    
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A computer beat me at chess once.  
But, it was no match for me at kick boxing.

3 friends die in a car accident and they go to an orientation in heaven. They are all asked, "When you are in your casket and friends and family are talking about you, what would you like them to say?"

The first guy says, "I would like to hear them say that I was a great doctor of my time, and a great family man."

The second guy says, "I would like to hear that I was a wonderful husband and school teacher which made a huge difference in our children of tomorrow."

The last guy replies, "I would like to hear them say ... Look, He's Moving!"



<http://www.cleanjoke.com>