

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
1326 South 26 Street
Omaha, NE 68105-2380
402-341-7730



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Web Site: www.graceluth.com

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

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary – Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Nenchi Ilka
Families In Action - Virginia McGill
Lutheran Volunteer - Matt Kong



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



2013

THE
GRACE
MESSENGER



2013 Council Members

John Boato	Sarah Emery	David Hufford
Vicki Cox	Ralph Fittle	Janet Hula
Andrew Edwards	June Hilmer	Eva Martin
		Pastor Laaker

Officers Serving the Congregation:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula Treasurer: Ralph Fittle

The regular meeting of the Council was held on June 11th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for the continued recovery of those close to us; we pray for the healing of Ken Hilmer and David Hufford with their ongoing health issues. We pray for those affected by the devastation in Oklahoma. We pray for Sarah's friends, Julie Lentz and Andrea Ruffino, as they struggle through cancer treatments. We pray for the families of David's friends, Rusty Bailey and Al Frazear, both of whom have passed. We pray for Kathy Bressman after her lung transplant. We remember all those who will be heading out on Summer Vacations. We rejoice with Rebecca Fittle that her surgery was a success with positive results. We pray for all those celebrating birthdays soon. We keep Ralph in our prayers as he heads for vacation in Alaska.

Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts." Readings were from Daniel 7:14 and Hebrews 13:8. The first is uplifting, speaking of the unchanging Earth and responsible Dominion. The second reminds us that God is Everlasting. We see God in a human form, through human eyes, but God was and is always caring, forgiving, loving.

Visions for Ministry: We continued a discussion on the second chapter in our book. We discussed the idea of the difference between believing and belonging. We spoke about the difference in time, when stores weren't open on Sundays, the cultural changes - the current need to use Sunday as another day to 'get things done.' Do we intend to participate...or do we wish to simply be entertained? What are the values of our faith traditions? What's the perspective? Perhaps we ought to not dismiss the usual rituals, yet find other ways to connect. What are our stumbling blocks and hurdles? If the observers don't come into our doors, then we must find a way to get out and extend our care outward to others. Ponder the following three subjects: Identity, Purpose, Outreach. Please read through chapter three for next meeting.

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

Christian Education: VBS will be July 14-July 18. Sign up sheets will be coming soon for those that can help with items/ funds/ supplies...volunteers are always welcome! We discussed different thoughts for Adult Education Options in the place of Adult Sunday School for now. Pastor will lead a new discussion series over the summer.

Evangelism/Outreach: We discussed and approved a change to the KAW rule for a family that misunderstood the banking portion. Great news - We have been assigned a LVC Volunteer - Jessica Menary! She will be coming August 16, is from Iowa, is fluent in Spanish, and has ideas about new kids' programs.

Finance: No new report.

Property: Balcony leak seems to be fixed.

Continued.....

Service/Social Ministry: No new report.

Support/Stewardship: Will be utilizing a different fall program - Fulfilling God's Purpose.

Worship: Summer worship - we discussed the positive reaction to the singing celebration. No major complaints have been raised to the changing of the time, nor to the musical changes.

Unfinished Business: Synod Assembly Report given. No real controversy was raised this year. Biggest issue was the change in the Board composition for Midland University. Discussed religious vs spiritual. Religion = Building = Rules.

New Business: Brotherhood Mutual held a Barney Group presentation. Basically, encouraged the DLR (Doesn't look right) theory for safety.

Announcements: Pastor will bring treats for our July meeting.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

JULY 14 - 18, 2013

6:00 - 8:15 P.M.

The theme this year is Athens, Paul's Dangerous Journey to Share the Truth and is scheduled for Sunday, July 14th through Thursday, July 18 from 6:00 to 8:15 p.m. Vacation Bible School is an inspiring presence for all involved both young and old, with this annual summer activity. Want to volunteer, help out, or have fun, and grow together? The final planning meeting will be held on Thursday, July 11th at 7:00 p.m. We are still looking for a few more volunteers. Any additional questions, please see David Hufford. There are still a few items left on the food donation list, if you would like to donate any food items, please call the church office at 402-341-7730.



Games

Fun

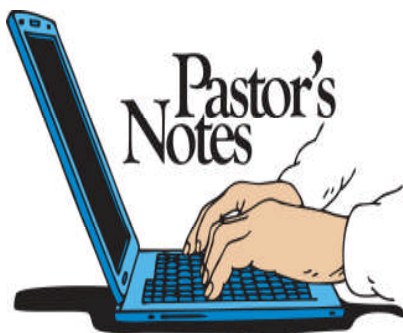
Singing

Snacks

Fun

Crafts

Storytime



Beginnings and Endings

It was only a short ten months ago that we learned that Matthew Kong had been assigned to partner with Grace and the Nebraska Synod Justice Committee for his Lutheran Volunteer Corps placement. Matthew arrived in Omaha in the latter half of August ready for work. This was his second visit to the heartland and he was ready to absorb, learn and lead.

In one short month, Matthew will be completing his year of service. He will be heading back to California and then on to other exciting opportunities. He is looking to teach English abroad. It doesn't seem possible that this time together will soon be over. Please remember Matthew in your prayers as he moves into this new adventure.

Matthew has been a wonderful partner in ministry. He has taken each task and performed it to the best of his ability. He has helped deepen ministry with our Sudanese brothers and sisters. His care and encouragement of the youth has been exciting to see. His devotion to the adults desiring help toward citizenship has been rewarding.

Matthew's last Sunday with us will be July 21. His last work day will be Thursday, July 25. We would like to celebrate Matthew's work among us with a picnic on Sunday, July 21. Please pass the word along and plan to come for worship, fun and fellowship around a meal. We will honor Matthew and his work and extend God's blessings as we say farewell.

Picnic details are as follows: Meat, drinks and table service will be provided. Please bring salads, vegetables, or deserts to share. We will begin cooking the meat at 11 am.

As we say goodbye to Matthew, we have learned that a new Lutheran Volunteer Corps member has been assigned to us for the next year. Jessica Menary will begin her work among us in middle-late August. A special welcome reception will be planned for her arrival.

I have learned that our first Lutheran Volunteer Corps person, Anna Ernst has enrolled at Lutheran School of Theology. She will be studying to become a pastor. Please hold Anna in your prayers as she begins this journey toward serving the church as an ordained pastor.

Beginnings and endings are an important part of our shared life together. Let's rejoice and celebrate these special times.

Pr. Laaker

**Due to the scheduling for
Vacation Bible School
The next Prayer Service will
Be held on Wednesday,
August 21**



Meditations

*Confessions
Healing*



Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

"Give attention to your servant's prayer and his plea for mercy, LORD my God. Hear the cry and the prayer that your servant is praying in your presence this day."

1 Kings 8:28

Those we pray for named below are members unless otherwise specified:

- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found.
- ◆ Pastor Henry Gittler - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Jim Harrahill - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Ken Hilmer - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Carolyn Matson - Recovery from knee surgery.
- ◆ Ferne Matson - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ LaVonne Moss - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Robert Moss - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Don Olson - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Lori Vasquez - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Urbano Vasquez - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Norma Courtney - Ongoing health issues. (Arlone Farber's Mom.)
- ◆ Bob Hargis - Ongoing health issues. (Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer's son-in-law.)
- ◆ Kevin Jorgensen - Ongoing health issues. (Cody Jorgensen's Dad.)



Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Gertrude Hufford - Immanuel Village.
Ferne Matson - Her son, Ron's house.
Barbara Narducci - Home.
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn.
Jack Williams - Brookstone Meadows, Elkhorn.

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

Pray for the 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 Damon Laaker, Grace Lutheran Church
Bishop Brian Maas, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. David Nange, John Boato and Charles Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.

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



And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8



- ◆ Thank you to Marilyn and Jerry Van Ormer for their dedication in tending to the plants in the entry way, they continue to look welcoming.
- ◆ Thank you to Bob Moss and Jerry Van Ormer for their continuing efforts to maintain the church with any projects that need to be completed.
- ◆ Thank you to Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer, Joe Narducci, Greg and Janet Hula, and Eva Martin who pick up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
- ◆ Thank you to Ron and Donna Adrian, and Brenda Spahr who take care of the altar, set up and take down communion.
- ◆ Thank you to all the volunteers who are donating time and energy to help plan this summer's Vacation Bible School.
- ◆ Thank you to Kids At Work for assisting with jobs around the church building.

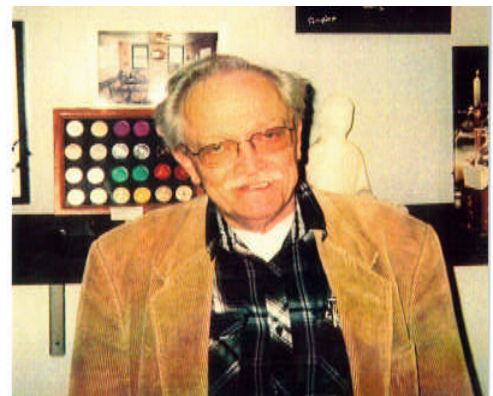
Rejoice;
Come Celebrate With Me

For all that did not
Destroy Me

I Am Alive at 75!
Come all I know and love, to

A Birthday Party
For
David Prinz Hufford
Sunday, July 7, 2013
1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

At the Fire Fighters Hall
6005 Grover Street
Omaha, NE 68106



Please RSVP by calling the church office at 402-341-7730. Thank you and hope to see you there!

**New
Worship Time
9:00 a.m.**

Hello all!

Well since last I wrote, Kids at Work has kicked off again this summer! We've visited a lot of locations for projects around Omaha and at Grace Lutheran. At the Josie Harper Hospice House, my housemate Abby has had our volunteers sand benches, create Father's Day cards, and assembled gardening pots. My housemate Kyle, over at Together, Inc. has had volunteers stock the food pantry and remove waste from the basement storage area. We've also had the pleasure of working at Precious Memories Childcare. Despite the number of children to watch, everyone enjoys going there (especially when the babies are involved).



We haven't yet made it to the Kountze Community Garden, or the Lutheran Home, but I expect we'll make it to both locations before the summer is out. In addition, there may be worksites in North Omaha that we will work at, followed by a field trip to my home nearby. A couple of my volunteers are curious about my house after talking to Abby about the 9 other volunteers we live with. Truth be told, our situation is a unique one, even by LVC standards. While buying groceries this past week, I realized that we are the only group in the program that has to purchase food for 11 people. The experience has been it's own version of *Cheaper by the Dozen* in some respects.

My time in Omaha is almost at an end, but I want you all to know that it's been a pleasure working and getting to know the congregational members of Grace Lutheran. Through the seasons with snow (into May!), and tornado warnings, it's been an interesting experience living in the Midwest that I'll always look back on and cherish.

Cheers!

Matt



Above Estrella helping with creating footprints at Precious Memories.



Gabriel having fun making flower pots at the Hospice House. ←



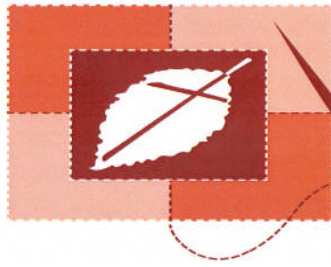
Melissa enjoying time with toddlers at Precious Memories. →



Below left Cristian assisting with the task of feeding a finicky child at Precious Memories.

Right, Matt energetically instructing a group how to spread new mulch around the parking lot.





Carol Joy Holling Camp, Conference & Retreat Center

Quilt Auction

JULY 27, 2013

More than 300 Quilts - All Styles and Varieties

Quilts will be on display by 9:00 a.m. and the auction will begin at 10:00 a.m. Silent auction bidding will take place between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.. A Barbecue lunch will be available from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The Service Project Quilt Blessing will be held at 2:00 p.m.

Additional activities like swimming, paddle boating and canoeing will be available from noon until 5:00 p.m. Hayrack rides and camp tours will be scheduled throughout the day. There is free parking and admission.

You can preview all quilts online at www.caroljoyholling.org

Grace Lutheran Church has had the opportunity to be a blessing in many ways. Posted on the bulletin boards are several thank you letters from various organizations expressing what a gift we have given to the community surrounding us. Those organizations are listed as follows:

- * Lutheran Metro Ministries
- * Foodbank for the Heartland
- * Habitat for Humanity - Neighbors South Coalition
- * Lutheran Service Corp
- * Interfaith Health Service - Families in Action
- * Project Hope
- * South Sudan Water Project
- * Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries - Carol Joy Holling Camp
- * Mission Support - through the Synod Office and Evangelical Lutheran Churches of America.

Thank you for being a blessing and reflecting God's love through the ongoing support to the numerous organizations listed above.

Adult Faith Conversations: After worship on Sundays, after coffee fellowship, Pastor will be leading an Adult Faith Conversation utilizing NOOMA short films that explore our world from a perspective of Jesus. Jesus lived with the awareness that God is doing something, right here, right now, and anybody can be a part of it. He encouraged his listeners to search, to question, to wrestle with the implications of what he was saying and doing. God is inviting us to join in the conversation.





"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Special Pantry Needs for July:
Cereal and Crackers



These are things our clients can not purchase with their food stamps and are always appreciated.

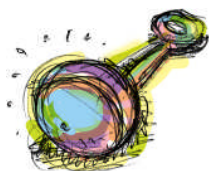
- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Deodorant | Dish soap |
| Can Openers | Toothbrush and toothpaste |
| Shaving Cream | Mouthwash (without alcohol) |
| Razors | Feminine hygiene products |
| Kleenex | Hair products (combs, brushes, picks) |
| Bar Soap | Dry Laundry Soap Bathroom tissue |
| Shampoo | |
| Diaper wipes | |
| Diapers, especially sizes 4, 5, 6 and pullups | |

Project Hope
4205 Boyd St
Omaha, NE 68111
402-453-7649

We always need paper or plastic bags.

Project Hope also has a Clothing Room and is in need of clothing, in all sizes.

Community Baby Shower
Saturday, August 3, 2013
Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26th Street
402-341-7730
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.



Enjoy games, fellowship, and refreshments!

All items collected (including any items listed above) this day will benefit Project Hope.

Many items that cannot be purchased with food stamps are in a constant need to families. These items include diapers of all sizes, baby wipes, baby shampoo, baby laundry detergents, and a variety of clothing items.

Any questions, please call Lori Vasquez at 402-575-5504, or call the church office at 402-341-7730.





FAMILIES IN ACTION – OMAHA



Virginia McGill, MA
Executive Director

Gema C. Wolde
Community Health Worker
Se habla español.

IHS/Families in Action Receives Grant from Lozier Foundation

Interfaith Health Service and Families in Action is pleased to share the wonderful news of receiving a \$25,000 grant from the Lozier Foundation!

Formed in 1986, The Lozier Foundation is a personal foundation funded by Allan and Dianne Lozier. The foundation's focus is education, social services and issues involving women and children with an emphasis on the inner city and under-represented populations.

This generous grant will be used by Families in Action to maintain and expand programming to families in areas of health and wellness, connection to resources, education, entrepreneurship, initiation of first employment, safe place for children, safe place for mentoring of youth and arts classes.

As a stand alone grass-roots non-profit organization, we are limited by our funding dollars in addressing the needs our participants, so we are extremely grateful to the Board of Directors of the Lozier Foundation , and for the site visit and additional input of Mr. Tre Brashear from the Lozier Foundation.

We are grateful not only to Mr. Brashear and the Lozier Foundation, but to all our Board members, participants, staff, congregation members, donors who so generously contribute their time, talents and support to Families in Action. We also welcome and appreciate you continued thoughts and prayers and look forward to the future in hope and healing in our community.

Virginia and Gema,
Interfaith Health Service

Hunger Free Heartland Summer Meals It's Summer! Kids Eat Free! Los Niños Comen Gratis

Across Nebraska, over 200 local sites offer summer meals through the SFSP. These include schools, faith-based organizations, and community centers. There is no registration or documentation required; children simply need to be present to have a nutritious meal with their peers. In addition to food, many sites provide educational enrichment and recreational activities that help children continue to learn and stay safe and active when school is not in session.

To find locations – Call 2-1-1, text: freefood 877-877
or visit www.hungerfreeheartland.org/summer-meals/
All kids 18 and under eat free!



One day a man went to an auction. There, he found an exotic parrot. He really wanted this bird, so he got caught up in the bidding. He kept bidding, but kept getting outbid, so he went higher and higher and higher.

Finally, after bidding much more than he had intended, he finally won. The bird was his! As he was paying for the parrot, he said to the auctioneer, "I sure hope it isn't defective. I'd hate to pay this much money only to find out that he can't talk!"

"Of course he can talk," said the auctioneer. "Who do you think kept bidding against you?"

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Have a Safe and Happy 4th of July!



Omaha Together One Community (OTOC)

A new administration in the city provides new opportunities for involvement of people in the public process. On Monday, July 8 at 7:00 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, OTOC will be sponsoring a opportunity for member organizations. The title of the evening (7-8:30 pm) is — Developing a leadership team in your congregation.

Are you interested in helping to create the best community in which to live? Plan now to attend. Speak to Pastor Laaker if you have questions.

Special Days in July at Grace Lutheran Church

- July 4 - 4th of July! - Office Closed.
- July 7 - Hufford Birthday Celebration.
- July 9 - Council Meeting.
- July 10 - Photographer's Club.
- July 14-18 - Vacation Bible School.
- July 18 - Neighborhood Meeting.
- July 21 - Church Picnic for Matt.
- July 24 - Photographer's Club.
- July 30 - Newsletter Assembly.
- Kids At Work every Tues and Wed.



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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"I'm gonna say my prayers, Daddy. Is there anything you want?"

*from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 214

Rev.14:11 - Rev.15:3

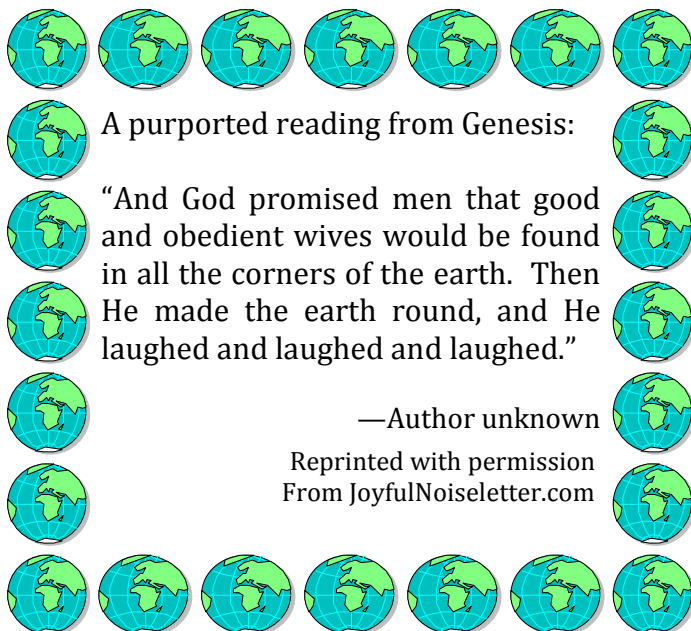
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Mark of the Beast

ALTAR	ANGELS
BEAST	BLESSED
BLOOD	BRIDLES
CLOUD	CLUSTERS
CROWN	FAITHFUL
DEEDS	GRAPES
GLASS	HARVEST
GOLD	HEAVEN
HARPS	MIXED
JESUS	PATIENT
LABOR	PLAGUES
LORD	SAINTS
MARK	SMOKE
OBEY	STADIA
SPIRIT	SWUNG
SICKLE	TEMPLE
REAP	TORMENT
WRATH	WORSHIP
MARVELOUS	
VICTORIOUS	
RECEIVES	

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2013 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED



A purported reading from Genesis:

“And God promised men that good and obedient wives would be found in all the corners of the earth. Then He made the earth round, and He laughed and laughed and laughed.”

—Author unknown

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Inherit the Mirth by Cuyler Black



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