

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Omaha, NE 68105-2380

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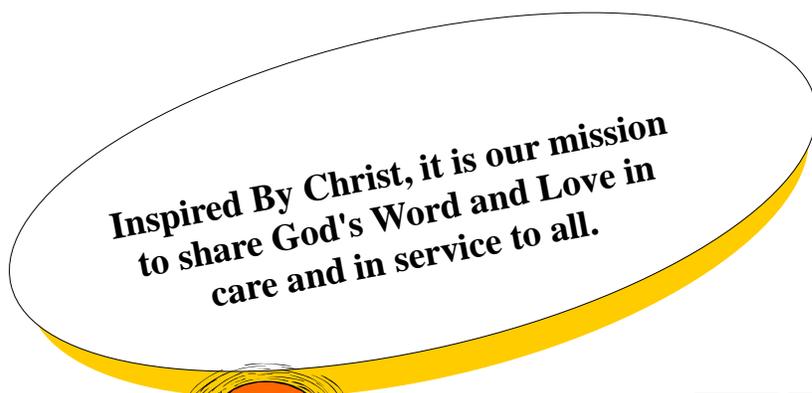
REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

9:00 A.M. Christian Education

10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Vicar/Intern—Angela Khabeb
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

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August
2008

THE
GRACE
MESSENGER



July Council Minutes

Council Reports

The regular meeting of the Council was held July 8th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing John Williams, Bobby Heesacker, Ron Andersen, Jr., Jake Siedschlag, Ryan Schomers, Tanny Akerson, baby boy with heart health issues; care for those within the Grace family that they continue to heal; we pray for Ivo's safety; we pray for speedy clean-up from all the recent natural disasters; we pray for all who have lost loved ones and that they remain both hopeful and faithful; we pray for an end to all of the unrest and conflict in the world; we pray for safe travel for all the Lutheran Men in Mission national gathering in Omaha. Pastor led devotions from Isaiah 41:16 where Isaiah spoke to the exiles encouraging them to see God's glorious work of restoration and from Romans 5:11 where Paul reminds us that we have all been reconciled with God's glorious love.

Visions for Ministry: The Council is reading "*Effective Small Churches in the Twenty-first Century*" by Carl S. Dudley. Please read Chapter 6 "Places of Ministry" and work on the exercises in the book by the next meeting.

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

Christian Education: Wednesday Faith Quest will begin on August 20th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The next planning meeting is scheduled on July 29th at 7:00 p.m.; please plan to attend if interested. Vacation Bible School was a fun experience for all involved, thank you Janet Hula for a job well done! Angela and Alexandra Everitt and Patrick McPeck will attend confirmation camp during the week of July 7 – 11th.

Evangelism/Outreach: Kids At Work is in full swing for the summer; the Awards Ceremony will be held during the August 10th worship service.

Finance: No new report.

Property: The recent wind/hailstorm left some broken windows and the west side of the shed has some damage. No roof damage; however the rain fell so fast and hard that there was water in the basement play room. Thanks to several people in attendance for Vacation Bible School all was mopped up quickly. The Parking lot has been serviced and sealed.

Service/Social Ministry: A letter from Bishop Hanson to the Presidential Candidates was passed around for council to review.

Support/Stewardship: The congregation heard the first monthly reading from the year round stewardship program on July 6th and people expressed positive responses.

Worship: Council reflected on the World Refugee Day Service and all agreed the music was beautiful. Pastor passed on appreciation expressed from Titus Duli, David Nange and John Boato.

Unfinished Business: A Lay Internship Committee will need to be formed and meet once a month. Their responsibility will be to assist Angela's internship here at Grace.

New Business: 2009 will mark the 120th year of Grace Lutheran Church, let's put on our creative thinking caps to help celebrate this joyous occasion.

Announcements: Angela will share her first sermon with us on Sunday, July 13th and will conduct worship on August 3rd, while Pastor will be assisting in the Lutheran Men in Mission National Gathering worship. Brenda will bring treats for our August meeting.

I wrote the following article for the Bishop's newsletter: Fill, Spill, Thrill. I would like to share it with you, as well.

The headline read: "After the storm: A flood of people needing food aid." The article went on to detail the overwhelming number of people who showed up to apply for the emergency food stamp distribution following the storm that hit Omaha on Friday, June 27. Follow-up stories have run in print and on air for the past week.



My question is, "Why are we so surprised by the numbers of people who need assistance?" Our "emergency food pantries" have seen thousands each year with the numbers increasing not decreasing. We know that once we hit the 15th of the month the number of people seeking assistance grows significantly throughout the remainder of the month. So, when the storm hit at the end of the month, it only makes sense that those who have little by that time would be eligible to apply for emergency assistance.

I am aware that there are many church groups that have started an "in-house" pantry to help those who come to their doors in need. This is especially true in the inner city but not limited to the inner city.

I have heard from pastors and lay leaders their surprise at learning that their suburban or rural school nearby has more than 30 or 40 percent of the students on free or reduced school lunch assistance. This would indicate pretty clearly that there are many in our midst who are struggling to meet the nutritional food needs for themselves and their families.

While we may be surprised to learn about those in need around us, we ought to be aware of the extreme poverty that exists within our global world. Organizations like Bread for the World and ONE are but two who have brought the need and the desire to end extreme poverty to the forefront. Another organization has formed called The Counting Prayer (www.countingprayers.org). The Counting Prayer is this: "The world now has the means to end extreme poverty, we pray we will have the will".

I would invite you to consider joining this spiritual exercise of praying and then acting, politically by writing your elected leaders, socially by joining a network that provides you regular information about the work and need to end extreme poverty, and spiritually by generously giving of your resources for those in need.

An Anonymous author wrote the following prayer:

O God – when I have food,
Help me to remember the hungry;
When I have work,
Help me to remember the jobless;
When I have a warm home,
Help me to remember the homeless;
When I am without pain,
Help me to remember those who suffer;
And remembering,
Help me to destroy my complacency,
And bestir my compassion.
Make me concerned enough to help,
By word and deed, those who cry out –
For what we take for granted. Amen.

Pastor Laaker



The Vicar's Voice

How I Got from There to Here
By Angela Khabeb

People often ask me, “How did you become Lutheran?” Or, “How did you end up in a Lutheran seminary?” Well, it is kind of a long story but I think that sharing it provides an opportunity for deeper relationships. Perhaps the best place to begin is my freshmen year in high school. One of my classmates invited me to her church youth group at an Assembly of God congregation. The best way I can describe it is that I had an encounter with Jesus the Christ. After this spiritual renewal, I was immediately drawn to ministry. I answered the call of evangelism and service with sincere dedication. I participated in youth leadership, taught Sunday school, helped clean the church, and assisted wherever needed.

As I prayed and sought God, I began to discover my spiritual gifts. Soon, I realized that God's mighty hand was upon my young life. I knew that my place was in ministry. I began to examine God's call on my life. Jeremiah says, “His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones.” Just like Jeremiah, I have that fire. I felt deep in my spirit that God was calling me to fulltime ministry, even at the age of fifteen. I knew that I needed to be a pastor. Unlike my other youthful career quests, my dream of fulltime ministry superseded every other ambition. The only question was...how?

I continued to attend the suburban congregation throughout my high school years even though it was nearly twenty miles from my home. Consequently, during that entire time, my heart was turned towards ministry in my own community. After my high school graduation in 1989, I attended an Assembly of God liberal arts college in Missouri. Although I appreciated the intense biblical studies, somehow, other aspects didn't quite fit. After two semesters, I returned to Omaha and began worshipping at a Four Square Gospel congregation near my home. There I met my favorite Pastor, Helen King. We shared an intense desire for ministry to the ‘unchurched’ and launched several adventurous programs. For example, we began a ministry on Saturday nights between 12am- 2am, called Fire by Night. We literally went out on the streets talking to people, sometimes praying with them, but always inviting them to worship. The Bible challenges us, in the Gospel of Luke, “to go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.” Let's be honest, some people are not just going to walk into a church uninvited. So we thought if they were not going to have a Sunday morning encounter with Jesus, then they could meet Him at midnight. I know this may sound crazy... and that's because it was! But fortunately for me, I was raised with the mindset that if the pastor asks you to do something, you do it. And you do it “as unto the Lord!” Although that concept may seem extreme, in retrospect, I'm so glad that I cooperated with my pastor. In being obedient to her, not only did I honor God, but I also grew personally and spiritually. It's funny, the whole time I worked with her, I thought I was giving—giving of my time, talent, and treasure. But now I see that I was actually receiving—receiving education, experience, and enrichment. We continued this ministry to the ‘unchurched’ until April of 1999, when in a twist of fate so strange, it had to be God, I found myself in the ELCA.

My Pastor was offered the position of Mission Developer at Fontenelle Lutheran Ministry Center in hopes that she could help revive the congregation. She asked me to join her in this new endeavor and I agreed. This was my introduction to the ELCA. Even though God was directing my steps down an unexpected path, I was immediately touched and even empowered when I learned of the ELCA's commitment to women and multicultural ministry. Although worshipping in an ELCA congregation was a major change from my more charismatic background, I quickly learned that there was room for me in the ELCA. At last I found a place where I could belong.

Continued

I became involved with our new congregation right away. I worked for Project Embrace, volunteered in outreach ministry, and attended a Global Mission Event. During the months leading to the GME, I felt like God was directing my path again but this time in a way which I never imagined. Occasionally, God awakens me with an urge to pray. On one such night at about three o'clock in the morning, I felt a strong need to pray for Africa. However, since I covet sleep, I really only expected to mutter a few short sentences and then return to my waiting slumber. But this time, something happened. I prayed and prayed for nearly three hours. By daybreak, I knew I had to get to Africa. God was calling. I just needed a door.

Not knowing exactly what a GME was, I went to the event without any real knowledge of what to expect. But, while at the GME, I quickly learned about opportunities to serve all around the world. I learned about the possibility of serving in Namibia as an ELCA missionary. Here was the door I had prayed for. The decision changed my life. I lived and worked in Africa for two and a half years. Not only did I fall in love with Africa, but I also fell in love while in Africa. I met and married Benhi Khabeb and we returned to the USA. Benhi is a constant source of encouragement and he has supported me throughout my Seminary career.

As you can imagine, my experience overseas has reshaped and redefined my life. It was there, in Africa that the fire that had been burning in my spirit for more than a decade, ignited. But this time, the fire burned differently. In Africa, I met people who faced major obstacles when pursuing higher education. Yet many persevered and triumphed even under extremely harsh circumstances. Although I was deeply touched by their inner strength, I felt personally convicted. I met individuals who walked fifteen miles to attend college classes and then walked another fifteen miles to return to houses that lacked indoor plumbing and sometimes even electricity. At first I was embarrassed by my dependence upon such luxuries and I was ashamed that I had not yet completed my studies even though I lived in a wealthy country with abounding opportunities, for most. But my shame and embarrassment quickly gave way to inspiration and strength as I embraced a new outlook.

Equipped with spiritual eyes I was able to view my African sisters and brothers as a source of motivation and encouragement. I realized that when I do not take advantage of every educational opportunity afforded to me that I do a global disservice to each individual who desires to be educated yet, for what ever reason, the hope of education remains beyond reach. I was reminded of my ancestors who were forbidden to even learn how to read, much less attend college. Given this sobering revelation, I determined then and there that upon my return to the United States I would continue my education. I promised God that if He would open a door for me that I would be faithful to walk through it, regardless the sacrifice.

Upon my return from Africa, God began to open those doors right away. I was awarded the Bridges Scholarship, which is a collaboration between Carthage College in Kenosha and the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. I graduated from Carthage in May of 2005 and I plan to finish seminary in May of 2009. Now that I am in my internship year and I have the opportunity to be in a congregation setting, it is all starting to feel "real". Finally, after a humbling uphill journey marked with unusual twists and turns, my dream is beginning to materialize. Thank you, Grace, for welcoming me and my family into your hearts!

Vicar Angela

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

Please know that we would like to thank Pastor and Mrs. Laaker and the entire Grace congregation for their generosity. The microwave is perfect and we are putting it to good use. In fact, we've never had such a nice microwave before! Thank you again for thinking of us. You all are such a blessing!

Sincerely, Benhi, Angela, and Konami



Stewardship Minute

*Monthly reflections on our role
as managers of God's blessing.*

When he was president of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Gordon MacDonald said, "One of the greatest teachings missing in the American church today is the reminder to men and women that nothing we have belongs to us."

We own nothing. We have been given material means to use, not to own. All that we have belongs to God. He is our Source according to Psalm 62:5. We are only managers and stewards of what He has entrusted to us.

Because all that we have belongs to God, and because He gives us the ability to obtain wealth, every spending decision is in reality a spiritual decision. According to 1 Corinthians 10:31, our constant goal must be to glorify God in all of life, including how we use His resources.

Stephen Olford wrote this: "...man's chief end is 'to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.' We are to glorify God by our worshipful praise (Psalm 50:23). We are to glorify Him by our consistent fruitbearing (John 15:8). We are to glorify Him by our spiritual unity (Rom 15:6). We are to glorify Him by our entire dedication (1Cor 6:20). And we are to glorify Him by our good works (Matt 5:16). In this last category is included the matter of giving. Only in this way can we provide for 'honest things in the sight of the Lord.' The glory of God should motivate us to give and to give our best."

If our goals and ambitions are truly set on spiritual things, if our emphasis in life is to glorify God, we will use the funds He has "loaned" to us on a temporary basis to glorify Him. We will put His money and possessions to good use by giving to His work and by storing up "treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6:19-21)

There are two key questions to be asked concerning money and possessions: First, are you glorifying God in how you are using the money and possessions He has entrusted to you? And, second, are you viewing these things as yours or as His?

"Effective Stewardship" by Kenneth L. Williams.

August 2008 Stewardship Principle

Because all that we have belongs to God, our goal is using that which belongs to Him is to glorify Him.

"So, whatever you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31).

Each month a new Stewardship Principle and Bible verse will be printed in the church bulletin. Try memorizing the stewardship verse each month.. Cut out the principle and put it on your fridge or mirror so that you can meditate on it each day as you go about your daily routine.

Welcome Back
Fall Start-Up
W/ELCA Board/Circle Meeting
September 16, 2008

1:00 p.m.
Hostess and Bible Study Leader:
LaVonne Moss



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*



**Welcome
Back!**

Quilting will resume
on Monday,
September 8th
9:00 a.m.
Coffee and Jokes at
10:00 a.m.



Save the Date!
Sunday, August 10

Worship at 10:30 a.m.
Last Sunday of Kids at Work
Attendance, Participation and Super Saver
Awards given

Guest Ministry Team:

The Life In Christ Circus Clown Ministry

Traditional circus clowns, at their best, serve up generous portions of the foibles of our own human nature for our amusement. Christ Clowns add a new dimension to the circus clown. They are “fools for Christ: in the best sense of those words of St. Paul (1 Cor. 4: 8-13). With their colorful antics they reveal our human frailties and allow us to laugh at ourselves.

Christ Clowns explode into the humdrum of daily routine with colorful costumes and makeup. They play and laugh with children of all ages. They are tricked and trampled, but never defeated because they stand in the cross of Christ and in the glory of the resurrection

All Church Picnic at 12:30 p.m.

The Clown Ministry will be with us for the meal!



The church will provide hot dogs, hamburgers, drinks and the paper products.

Please bring salads, chips and desserts to complete the meal.
If you are willing to provide buns or condiments, a sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board.

August "Hot Shots!"
Good Looking Kids!



Kids At Work 2008



Kids At Work in Action!

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

Danaka, Jake and Taylor play a friendly game of Bingo with some of the residents at the Lutheran Home.

Sonia, Daniel and Nick cleaning the sanctuary here at Grace Lutheran and manage to have fun while working.



Thank you Angela for participating with Kids At Work, you are a hit with the youth! Thank you to Eva for helping out with snacks, it's always great having pop-sicles on a hot day!

Thank you to the Kids, their families, the Team leaders and everyone in the congregation who made this a great summer together!

Come Back and See Us Soon!

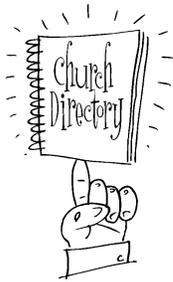


Lutheran Men in Mission Gathering

August 1-3, 2008

There is Still Time to Register!

Registration forms are available at the church.



Let's do it again!

It's time to create a new church directory!

If the information listed in the current church directory is incorrect,
PLEASE contact the church office.

We will shoot for producing the directory in late September.

Prayer Meeting

2nd Wednesday Night of Each month
Next Prayer Service
August 13, 2008
7:00 p.m.



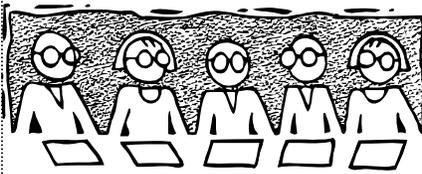
Wednesday Faith Quest

August 20th

5:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.



We will begin with a light meal, followed by some singing and then breaking up into group centers. We will be using a model called "rotation." This model allows us the opportunity to spend four weeks on each story. Each week there will be opportunities to explore story in different ways: art, drama, music, bible study, etc.



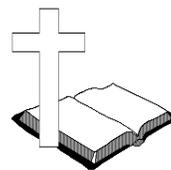
NEW! Ministry and Lay Internship Committee

Six members of Grace Lutheran Church have agreed to serve on the Internship Committee which will meet once a month during the year. The internship committee will work together with Pastor to help Vicar Angela as she learns and grows in her ministry. The members of the committee will support, evaluate, interpret, challenge and teach the vicar/intern here in this congregation and in this unique community in which you live and work.

The committee members are:

Arlone Farber
David Hufford
Greg Hula
Marsha Moyer
Ernie Olson
Amanda Vazquez

Please remember these six people as well as Vicar Angela and Pastor in your prayers as they serve together in this important ministry.



Discipleship/Membership Classes

August 10 and August 17
9:00 a.m.

Jesus invites us to become disciples. If you would like to know more about the way we live out our discipleship here at Grace Lutheran Church, you are invited to conversation with Pastor Laaker on Sunday's August 10 and August 17, 9 am in the church library. Bring your questions. Together let us explore our discipleship.



Ask and it will be given you...

Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

- ◆ Megan Sperling - Pray for emotional and physical healing. (Friend of Member, Lori Vasquez)
- ◆ Elna Burns - Suffered a stroke. (Sister of Don Olson, member)
- ◆ 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. (relative of members, Don and Norma Olson)
- ◆ 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)
- ◆ Teri Briley - Cancer treatments. (daughter of Gloria and Richard Moore)
- ◆ The family of John Williams: John passed away on July 10th. John is the son of member, Jack Williams.
- ◆ London Colstan - tiny infant struggling with liver problems. (Friend of Morlan/Olson family)
- David Nange - Healing for regulation of blood pressure and headaches. (Council Member)
- Claudia Rohm - Hospitalized at UNMC. (Member)

Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Harlan Morter
Richard Moore

Mae Lane
Thelma Harrahill - (In Kansas with her children)

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

Pray for our new Vicar, Angela and her family, husband, Benhi and son, Konami, as they settle in here at Grace. Pray for strength and spiritual wisdom for the leaders in the local church and the Nebraska Synod:

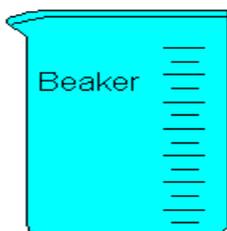
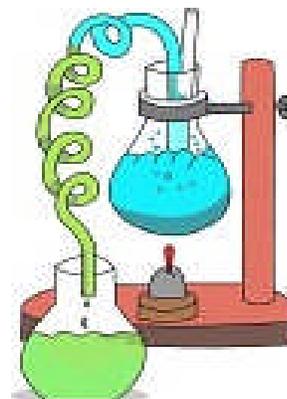
Pastor Laaker
Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Titus Duli, David Nange and Charles Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.
- ◆ Remember John Ivo Mounto. John is working several very dangerous locations in Africa.
- ◆ Grace has received a newsletter from "Servant's Heart." This is the organization that helped us find Bibles for the Mabaan Sudanese Church worshipping here at Grace Church. Ivo has become the commissioner for Mabaan County. Servant's Heart is asking for us to pray that the weather will clear. Crops were damaged due to flooding so food supplies are slim. Food has been donated through the UN World Food Program but because of poor infrastructure, the food was delivered 50 miles from the schools and villages that need it most. In addition, a swamp must be traversed to get to the food. Since there are no passable roads at this time, Servants Heart is trying to find the money and the means to retrieve the supplies.
- ◆ Another need listed by Servants Heart is knitted or crocheted white bandages for the people in the area being treated for leprosy. It is an easy item to make as they are to be 3 inches wide and 4 feet long. Detailed instructions are posted on the bulletin board.

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

Happenin' in the Church Library

4th Annual Grace Lutheran Library
Summer Reading Club
"Formula for Fun!"
"Discovering New Adventures"
Last Day is August 31!



Get your reading Done!
The Summer Reading Club will end
on Sunday August 31.

Celebration Party will be in September.
Details in the next Newsletter

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)

There is no contest for best reader in the adult category this year but adults are still encouraged to sign a beaker and read. We will acknowledge the adults at the summer end party.

"Healthwise for Life: Medical Self-Care for People"

Two copies of a reference book titled "Healthwise for Life: Medical Self-Care for People" have been donated to the church library. This large print reference offers basic guideline about how to recognize and cope with health issues facing older adults. The book is not intended to replace professional medical advice but to better inform the reader on symptoms and possible treatments.

Chapter Titles:

Making Wise Health Decisions
Aging with Vitality
Injury prevention and First Aid
Digestive and Urinary Problems
Back and Neck Pain
Bone, Muscle, and Joint Pain
Chest, Lung and Respiratory
Heart and Circulation Problems
Diabetes and Thyroid Problems

Headaches
Nervous System
Eye and Vision Problems
Ear and Hearing Problems
Mouth and Dental Problems
Skin, Hair and Nail Problems
Women's' Health
Men's' Health
Sexual Health

Fitness
Nutrition
Mental Health
Mid-Body Wellness
Complementary medicine
Staying Independent
Caregiver Secrets
Your Home Health Center



"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Pantry Needs

Project Hope
4205 Boyd St
Omaha, NE 68111

Project Hope
The Theme for August is
Personal Care Items

Shampoo, Deodorant, Tooth Paste, Toothbrushes, Hand Soap and Body Wash, Brushes, Combs, Nail Clippers, Hand Lotion, etc.

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

Place your donations on the pantry shelf in the Upper Fellowship Hall at the church.

The Book Bank at Project Hope is approaching its second year of service this fall. Thank you to those who have provided books, inspirational material and Christian devotions. All items are greatly appreciated! Right now we are stacked up on adult books, both hard-bound and paperback. What are really needed are children's books for toddlers, preschoolers and early elementary age student. These are extremely popular and benefit many children in need. The devotional material and Christian books are always utilized as well.



Thank you again for your continued support of the Book Bank at Project hope.
Cindy Sadowski,
Book Bank coordinator.

If you have children's books to donate, bring them to the Upper Fellowship Hall and put them on the pantry shelves

2008 Crop Walk October 12, 2008

Look for more
information in the next
newsletter.



Please gather items for the backpacks First Lutheran will be giving. They are asking for backpacks, notebooks, pens, crayons, folders, colored pencils, washable markers, glue, glue sticks, rulers, pencil boxes, and one subject spiral notebooks.



You can bring these items to Grace Lutheran Church whenever you catch a good bargain !



Back to School

First Lutheran Church
542 South 31 Street
Annual Back to School Carnival

Saturday, August 9, 2007 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Free games, free food and, while supplies last, free back packs and school supplies.



News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

*Got an item to share?
Let the church office know about it!*

OUR
CHURCH
COOKBOOK



We Need Your
Favorite Recipes!

**Deadline is
August 31, 2008**
Look for the
“Stove Box” in the
Upper Fellowship Hall!



- ◆ Our love and prayers go to Grace member, Jack Williams and his family at the death of his son, John.. John was diagnosed with heart disease and a brain tumor three months ago. Death occurred at home of his son Bradford, where he was receiving professional hospice care and the loving care of wife and family after brief stays in the hospital and the nursing home. A memorial service was held at John’s church in Bellevue on June 19th.
- ◆ Special welcome to Vicar Angela Khabeb, her husband, Benhi and their son, Konami. The family will be with us for a year. **NOTE:** Angela still has a few needs to outfit her household. If you have some good used furniture, household items, etc., talk to Angela. Since it was so expensive to move, many items had to be left behind in Chicago.
- ◆ Thanks to all the families, kids and volunteers that participated in the Kids At Work Program this summer. Your help and faithfulness was appreciated by Brenda Spahr.

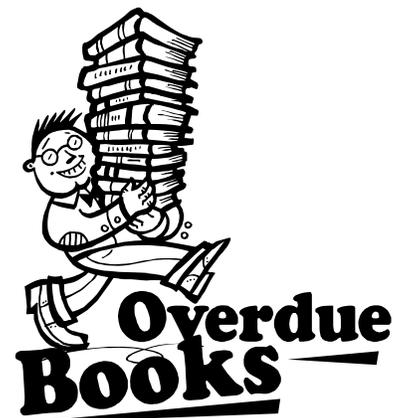
Please...

Please...

Pretty Please!

If you have an overdue library book,
Won't you bring it back so that
others may enjoy it?

If you aren't sure if you have a book out that the librarian is
waiting for , check with Eva Martin. Thanks!



**Please let the office know in plenty of time
if you are planning a meeting at church
so that appropriate arrangements
can be made with the space and the staff.**

Thanks!

From the Editor

This morning in my quiet time, I turned to the book of Jonah. Since it is a short book of only four chapters, I read the whole book.

The Lord had a message for Nineveh. “You guys are toast! Your way of life is just plain smelly. I am going to take you out.” I began to wonder what kind of city Nineveh was that God was so angry at them. I did a little research about the town. I had always thought of Nineveh as a small village so when I looked up some historical information about the city, I was surprised by what I learned. Nineveh was located on the eastern bank of the Tigris in ancient Assyria near the modern-day major city of Mosul, Iraq which is just across the river. It was described as an “exceeding great city” stretching for more than 30 miles and being an average of 10 miles wide. The town was an important crossroads for trade routes, uniting the East and the West.

God chose Jonah to go and deliver the message. The Bible says that he was a afraid to go. It would be like going to New York City, standing up in front the media and saying, “God’s going to destroy this town.” Jonah would look like a nut case. Imagine the mockery. No wonder he didn’t want to go. So, Jonah did what I might have done. He ran the other way. But, adversity came to Jonah because of his disobedience. The ship he was traveling on encountered a bad storm. The sailors, being superstitious, decided it was a punishment from one of the gods they worshipped. Once it was determined that Jonah was the cause, Jonah instructed them to throw him over the side. The storm stopped at once! The Bible says the sailors were awestruck and vowed to serve Jehovah. Some good came out of Jonah’s disobedience but what a price!

What happened to Jonah? Did God allow him to drown? No. The Bible says that God arranged for a big fish to swallow Jonah. What a horrible situation...sitting inside a big smelly fish! But, Jonah finds a place of confession there. Isn’t it true that most often our confessions come at times when there is no way out of the bad situation we find ourselves in? As I read Jonah’s prayer, I saw his repentance. Jonah acknowledged his willful disobedience and began to praise God. Maybe Jonah thought it was a last chance to get right with God before his death. Jonah had no way out of this situation. The logical result would still be death. But God wasn’t finished with Jonah yet. Brrrrraap! God orders the fish to spit Jonah up on the beach. Yooooew! That had to be disgusting! But, off Jonah goes to deliver God’s message. God gave Jonah a second chance for obedience.

I was struck by the fact that God did not say that if the people of the city repented, He would spare them. His message was one of pure judgment and Jonah was only too happy to deliver it. But, an unexpected thing happened. The people and the ruler of Nineveh repented. The Ninevehites, from the king on down, declared a fast. They dressed in coarse sackcloth and prayed. Maybe if they turned back to Him, God would spare them...and He did!

I can just imagine what Jonah must have felt. “I suffered all that stuff, being thrown overboard and almost drowning, sitting inside of a big fish, getting spit up and delivering your message and now you aren’t going to do what you said? You made me suffer AND look like a fool?” The book of Jonah goes on to tell how God had to teach Jonah another lesson. God may send you to do something that seems challenging with a “logical” outcome but YOU don’t get to say how it ends. The whole mission to Nineveh was about God. It was His agenda. Jonah got a second chance after his disobedience but he didn’t want the Ninevehites to have the same opportunity. There was a sense of entitlement on Jonah’s part. He did what he was supposed to. God didn’t follow through. Such judgment and pride on Jonah’s part.

I have read and heard this story many times . Sadly, I have had many “Jonah moments” in my life where I knew God wanted something of me and I didn’t want to do it for a variety of reasons. Then when I obeyed, the outcome wasn’t what I thought it would be. For most of us, the issue of absolute submission to God is uncomfortable to talk about. We say we want to do His will but we have our own agenda. We ignore what Scripture says and find a way to justify what we are doing. Judgment and pride try to have the last say.

Maybe God is speaking to you right now about a situation of service in your life. What will you do?

Pam Reents, Editor



**FAITH
IN ACTION**

Faith in Action of Interfaith Health Service has some brand new materials just for you! Hot off the press we have a new brochure which is printed in both English and Spanish. A new poster is also on the way. We also have created a CD ROM which contains many of the forms needed to help make the program run smoothly. If you would like to receive a copy or copies of the brochure and a CD ROM to share with your church or other community group, please give us a call! Please note too that there is a new website for the program.

As always, thanks for continuing to support and pray for the needs of the many isolated seniors in our community.

Remember, A neighbor's independence depends on you!!

Julie Chytil

Phone: 660-2652

e-mail: faithinaction2005@hotmail.com

www.fianationalnetwork.org or www.faithia.org



Interfaith Health Service Programming Continues for Neighborhood Youth

The Super Kids Club Program, the youth program that runs concurrently with Latinas in Action, is continuing throughout the summer months. We have a morning and an evening group of very enthusiastic and energetic participants from ages 5 -15 involved in the group.

We have been blessed in finding a volunteer with the Nebraska Extension Office who is helping with nutritional education and games for our group each Wednesday evening. Katie, our volunteer, brings with her a wealth of experience and a real passion for working with youth. A recent college graduate, Katie has a gift for getting our participants excited about learning. She has received amazing reviews from our participants. So far, Katie and I have worked together with games such as Nutritional Charades (I know, sounds odd, but the kids loved it!), food pyramid bingo, vegetable word search, taste testing various foods and beverages, building string cheese caterpillars and making gummy worm "dirt" snacks with our participants.

Katie's schedule only allows her to be part of our program for a few short weeks. But her time with Interfaith has allowed me to learn a lot and incorporate new themes into our programming. She has been a valuable team member and she will be missed. Gema and I hope to see her again next year for a longer time frame.

I hope to continue expanding on some of Katie's themes with a new volunteer group of Creighton Nursing students who will be joining Interfaith this Fall for several community health rotations. Katie has agreed to meet with me and the students to fill us in on her nutritional resources and provide additional support for the program. Please keep our Summer Program in your prayers as we continue to reach youth in the neighborhood.

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

Virginia McGill, Interfaith

**Those who wish to sing
always find a song.**



Let's Build Something!
Neighbors South Coalition
Habitat For Humanity House
1902 South 11 Street

Volunteers are needed to help in all areas of construction, food preparation and service, and cleanup most Fridays and Saturdays during the summer. The goal is to complete the home in late August.

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." A schedule of construction goals by date is posted on the bulletin board.

If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful and satisfying project, forms are available through the church office or at the back table in the sanctuary. Contact Pastor Laaker with questions.

Home is where you can be silent and still be heard
Where you can ask and find out who you are...
Where people laugh with you about yourself...
Where sorrow is divided and joy multiplied...
Where we share and love and grow.

"Humor is Tremendous" by Charlie "Tremendous" Jones



Habitat for Humanity of Omaha Friends
Presents
Second Annual Micro Brew Ha Ha

Bring your friends to sample delicious beer and food from local microbreweries and restaurants.

Thursday, September 18, 2008

5:00 - 9:00 pm at

Lewis and Clark Landing
on the Riverfront

\$25.00 in advance per person
(\$30.00 day of event)

All proceeds to benefit Habitat for Humanity

For more information or ticket information contact Tim Pendrell at
tpendrell@habitatomaha.org

Must be 21 year of age or older to participate

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 an 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

August 21, 2008

7:00 p.m.

Here at Grace Church.



United Way of the Midlands is looking for a college student to volunteer to help with computer work

If you are interested, please call
Raeanna Kuzma,
Youth Services Director
(402) 522-7933
or email at
rkuzma@uwmidlands.org



Omaha Royals Present

Faith and Family Night

Saturday, August 2nd

at 7:05 p.m.

Gates open at 5:00 p.m.

Jared Bayless in Concert

at 5:30 p.m.

More information on the bulletin board.

River City Roundup needs Volunteers September 25-28 to help with

- ♥ Kids Area
- ♥ Setup/Tear Down
- ♥ Merchandise Booth
- ♥ County Fair
- ♥ BBQ Contest
- ♥ and Many Other Areas!



Volunteers receive free t-shirts, grab bags and special ticket offers. Call 402-554-9600 for more info.

Have you lost a loved one?

**Bereavement and Grief Assistance
is available**

John A Gentlemen Mortuaries'
6 weeks sessions for adults

Wednesdays
2:00 p.m. at 72nd Street Chapel

Thursdays
7:00 p.m. at the Pacific Street Chapel

For more info go to
www.johngentleman.com
Or call (402) 391-1664

**Is the glass half empty, half full, or
twice as large as it needs to be?**

*You revive my drooping head;
my cup brims with blessing*

Psalm 23:5
The Message



August Trivia

- ☼ has 31 days
- ☼ 8th month of the year.
- ☼ Named in honor of Augustus, known as Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, one of the most important Roman Emperors. (Octavian)
- ☼ Flower - gladiolus or poppy.
- ☼ Birthstone - peridot, sardonyx, or sapphire.

You Might be a Lousy Cook If...

Your family automatically heads for the table every time they hear a fire alarm.

Anyone has ever broken a tooth eating your homemade yogurt.

Your kids know what "peas porridge in a pot nine days old" tastes like.

Your son goes outside to make mud pies, and the rest of the family grabs forks and follows him.

Your kids' favorite drink is Alka-Seltzer.

You have to buy 25 pounds of dog food twice a week for your toy poodle.

Your kids got even with the neighborhood bully by inviting him over for dinner.

Your husband refers to the smoke detector as the oven timer.

No matter what you do to it, the gravy still turns bright purple.



<http://www.gcfl.net/>



Little Known Laws

(These are real laws. Some are off the books. Most are not enforced.)

Nebraska Laws:

- ◆ In Omaha, Nebraska, more than one person cannot use the same finger bowl.
- ◆ In Nebraska, it is illegal for a woman to wave her daughter's hair without a state license.
- ◆ There must be a hitching post in front of every home in Omaha, Nebraska.
- ◆ In Nebraska, public sneezing is prohibited by law.

Other States:

- ◆ A Louisiana law upholds your right to grow as tall as you like.
- ◆ In Wyoming, it is illegal to take a picture of a rabbit during January, February, March or April...unless you have a license.
- ◆ According to a health ordinance in Riverdale, California, kissing on the lips is against the law unless both parties first wipe their lips with carbolized rose water.

"You Can't Eat Peanuts in Church and other Little-Known Laws, Barbara Seuling, Random House 1975

Luke, Chapter 13, Puzzle 1

WORD LIST

away	Jerusalem
bent	kill
chicks	last
crippled	narrow
cut	pleading
delighted	praised
desolate	Sabbath
died	saved
dig	seed
door	six
dough	soil
eighteen	stall
evildoer	tell
feast	told
fell	tomorrow
few	water
fig	weep
flour	west
fox	wings
free	year
goal	
hen	
humiliated	
hypocrite	

h w v c a i x i s v d q q o i
 f o x u w e g o r l e j v f o
 a r r e c r i p p l e d i v g
 k d e v i l d o e r s g n i w
 e p w e h r c i u y a j o e h
 v r e t a l o s e d v e s i h
 h u m i l i a t e d e t y x v
 r o o d l l p l e a d i n g r
 g l l l e t i r c o p y h e l
 f f z m f g d k i n p g t l b
 n e e t h g i e a g u a a u p
 k w a t o m o r r o w t b n c
 a d e s i a r p d a s d b p n
 v d j a t o l d y l n p a h f
 c u q l w k a c h i c k s l n

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Whaaaat?

An elderly gent realized he needed to purchase a hearing aid, but he felt unwilling to spend much money.

"How much do they cost?" he asked the salesperson.

"That depends," he said. "They run from \$2.00 to \$2,000."

"Let's see the \$2.00 model," said the miserly man.

The salesperson put the device around his neck. "You just stick this button in your ear and run this little string down to your pocket," he instructed.

"How does it work?" asked the man.

"For \$2.00, it doesn't work," the salesperson replied. "But when people see it on you, they'll talk louder!"