

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

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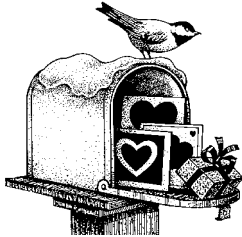
REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS
9:00 A.M. Christian Education
10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary – Benhi Khabebe
Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Lynda Laird
Sexton - Brian Sutej
Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

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

February 2010



THE GRACE MESSENGER



2010 Council Members

Ron Adrian	June Hilmer	Gloria Moore
Andrew Edwards	David Nange	Ernest Olson
Arlone Farber	Vicky Cox	Sarah Emery
	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 January 12th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for the family of Gloria Moore as they continue to struggle with family members' illness, Sandy with her cracked skull and viral infection, Rick as he moves into an Assisted Living facility, and Amy as she undergoes chemo. We pray for Ken Catlett as he continues his fight with cancer; for Ken Hilmer as he struggles with the loss of his brother. We pray for joy surrounding Vicki's son and daughter in law as they welcome their new son, and for health to surround Bobbi Jo & Arun Pankaj as they wait the final days for the birth of their own son. We continue to pray for Angelo Benaci as he battles pneumonia, for Dennis Olsen with his heart issues, for Bob Howard after his stroke, and for Alice Burns' family as they grieve her passing. We rejoice that Ron Adrian does not have to have heart surgery and we pray for continued strength to surround him. We pray for Dave & Kelly Jackson as they try to piece their lives back together after a fire, along with many others in our community facing the same situation. Devotions were led by Pastor reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts" from Ezra 3.11 and Ephesians 1.3. Both readings really remind us to take account of our blessings, and recognize all that we are given.

Visions for Ministry: The Council is reading "Radical Welcome" by Stephanie Spellers. We discussed fear in great length. We are reminded that in the bible, "Do not be afraid" is mentioned 365 times. Let's read the final chapter for next meeting.

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

Christian Education: No new report.

Evangelism/Outreach: Mission Interpreter to be found.

Finance: Motion to present budget for annual meeting carried. Motion to nominate Marsha Moyer for second term on the Disney Endowment Board carried.

Property: Thanks to all who helped move snow!

Service/Social Ministry: No new report.

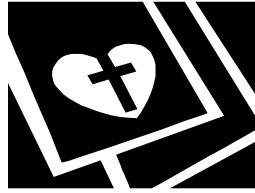
Support/Stewardship: No new report.

Worship: Numbers are low. Please attend regularly!

Unfinished Business: Continued discussion regarding handicapped parking.

New Business: Annual meeting scheduled for January 31st. Antonio Zaniga from El Salvador has requested the use of the sanctuary for Sunday afternoon worship services for his congregation, currently meeting in a home. Decision was tabled at this time.

Announcements: Pastor and Mary have invited the Council to dinner on Tuesday, January 19 at Malara's. Vicki will bring treats and lead prayer for our February meeting.



FROM THE PASTOR

Friends,

I share the following letter from Bishop Hanson. Please note the compassionate intentional work that is being carried on under the banner of Lutheran Disaster Relief. We have every reason to be proud of our church and its Christ-like service. Remember it is God's Work, Our Hands.

Pr. Laaker

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

"If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it." -1 Corinthians 12:26

Almost two weeks have passed since the devastating earthquake in Haiti. The outpouring of gifts from members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to ELCA Disaster Response has enabled a swift response on behalf of this church.

Thank you for your generous financial support which now totals more than \$1.6 million. Thousands of other gifts are still being counted. Our community-based partners are already providing:

Two **water** purification systems to bring clean water to 25,000 people.
Emergency **food** and **medical supplies** to thousands.
Blankets and tents to **shelter** 10,000 people who are homeless.
Funding, distributed through three partners, will increase as giving continues.

\$300,000 has been sent to The Lutheran World Federation (LWF), a key responder and member of Action by Churches Together (ACT). The funds support LWF efforts to provide shelter to people left homeless by the quake.
\$150,000 has been sent to Lutheran World Relief (LWR), Baltimore, for material aid.
\$150,000 has been sent to Church World Service (CWS) for construction of temporary water systems and distribution of water purification materials.
In addition, \$25,000 has been sent to Lutheran Services of Florida for initial support to refugees and Haitian Americans entering or returning to the United States.

We are pleased that Louis Dorvillier, director for International Development and Disaster Response in the ELCA Global Mission program unit, is part of a delegation to his country of origin with LWF and ACT.

Your generosity makes this life-saving work possible. As we celebrate this outpouring of gifts and prayers, we also know that we have a long road to travel together. There is so much more to be done. This church is committed to walking with our brothers and sisters in Haiti for years to come; your continued support is needed to provide ongoing care.

I encourage you to visit the [ELCA Disaster Response \(www.elca.org/disaster\)](http://www.elca.org/disaster) Web site for updated information, worship resources, bulletin inserts and details on how to offer financial support. General mission-support dollars and gifts to ELCA Vision for Mission make it possible for 100 percent of your gifts designated for Haiti Earthquake Relief to be used entirely for this response effort.

To give today, go [online \(www.elca.org/haitiearthquake\)](http://www.elca.org/haitiearthquake) or call 800-638-3522.

In God's grace,

The Rev. Mark S. Hanson

Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

P.S. View more photos of your gifts at [work \(www.elca.org/bishopstatement\)](http://www.elca.org/bishopstatement).

W/ELCA Board Meeting

February 15th 1:00 p.m.

Hostess: Barb Nelson

W/ELCA Circle Meeting

February 16th 1:00 p.m.

Bible Study Leader: LaVonne Moss

Hostess: LaVonne Moss



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*



Lutheran Women of Omaha Luncheon

February 9, 2010

Immanuel Lutheran Church

2725 North 60th

Luncheon at noon

Program "Dancing Grannies"

Project: Monetary - Heat Fund Salvation Army

Reservation Required by February 7

Call Mardelle Gorcek at 292-1328

Cost is \$6.00 per person

Mitten Tree Project Brings Winter Warmth to Needy

The Mitten Tree Project concluded in January, bringing in over 100 gloves, scarves, hats and other winter accessories. All the items collected have been donated to local shelters and agencies for distribution. Thank you to all the people of the congregation who donated items to help keep others warm. Many items were handmade.

Your Warm Hearts and Generous Hands Collected:

24 pairs of gloves
32 pairs of mittens
54 hats

16 scarves
9 ear warmers
10 pairs of slippers



"When I stand before God at the end of my life,
I would hope that I would have not a single bit of talent left, and could say,
'I used everything You gave me.'"

—Erma Bombeck



LENTEN CALENDAR

Ash Wednesday, February 17

6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper:

7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service: *The service will begin with a quiet time of music and reflection followed by the imposition of ashes and communion. Lent is a time of renewal. Renewal of our lives through the renewing of our baptismal identities individually and as a community.*

Each Wednesday during Lent:

Supper begins at 6:00 p.m. (Free-will offering only.)

The Midweek worship service will begin at 7:00 p.m. each evening following supper.

“Center on the Cross”

Cross Ways

Themes:

- ◆ *Way of Repentance*
- ◆ *Way of Forgiveness*
- ◆ *Way of Discipleship*
- ◆ *Way of Worship*
- ◆ *Way of Power*
- ◆ *Way of Hope*

Volunteers are Needed to Serve and Prepare Lenten Dinners

Hosts and Hostesses are needed to prepare and serve the Wednesday Night Lenten Supper. If you are willing to help, a sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board.

The person or group who prepares the meal may designate where the “free will gifts” will be used.

O Lord, who hast mercy upon all,
take away from me my sins,
and mercifully kindle in me
the fire of thy Holy Spirit.
Take away from me the heart of stone,
and give me a heart of flesh,
a heart to love and adore Thee,
a heart to delight in Thee,
to follow and enjoy Thee, for Christ's sake, Amen.

St. Ambrose of Milan (AD 339-397)





Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

*“The prayer of a person living right with God
is something powerful to be reckoned with.”*

James 5:16b

- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ◆ Mae Lane - Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ◆ Grace Traynor - Ongoing health issues. (daughter of Norma Olson)
- ◆ Ken Hilmer - As he struggles with heart issues. (member)
- ◆ La Vonne Moss -Ongoing health issues. (member)
- ◆ Fern Matson - Ongoing health issues. (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 past of their father and husband.
- ◆ Dennis Olson - as he is scheduled for an aorta surgery. (brother of Don Olson)

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 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 Worshiping Community.

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

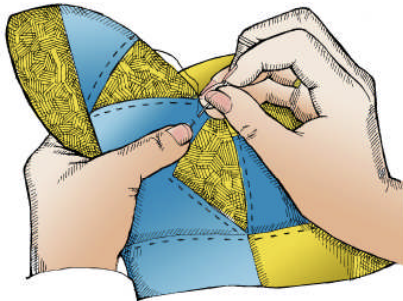
The value of consistent prayer is not that He will hear us,
but that we will hear Him.

~William McGill

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Monday thru Thursday

Games, Crafts, and Fun Geared for Elementary Kids!
Free!

Director, Brenda Spahr



QUILTING GROUP

Quilting on Mondays! at 9:00 a.m.

If you have the morning free, drop by and help cut squares and tie quilt tops on to the backs.

Coffee break is at 10:00 a.m.

*The 2010 Flower Chart has been posted
on the bulletin board
outside the church office.*

• FLOWER CHART •



We **still** need volunteers to sign up each month to pick up the flowers for the altar. Sign up on the Flower Chart if you are willing to help with this task. The flowers need to be picked up before 10:00 a.m. each Sunday morning at the Hy-Vee at 50th and Center. The church is billed so you will not need to pay for them at the time of pick up. Contact Marilyn Van Ormer or Barb Narducci for more details.

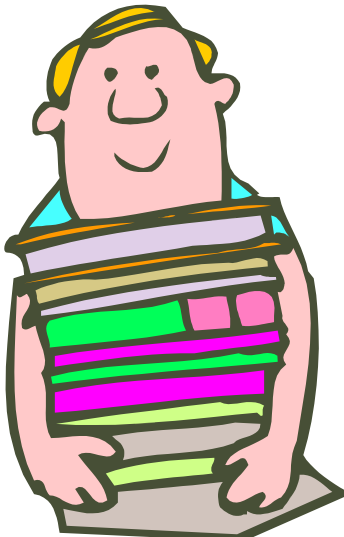
Happening in the Library!

Donate your used books

The Library Board is collecting used books, videos, CD's and cassettes in good condition as a fund-raiser for the Library during Lent.

A sale table will be set up in the Upper Fellowship Hall beginning on Ash Wednesday. Stop by the table and browse any time. This is a self-serve sale. A container for the proceeds will be placed on the table along with the merchandise for sale.

Why not use this opportunity to pass on materials collecting dust on your shelves at home to help provide money to buy new books for the library or stop by and pick up a good used book at a GREAT value!



Wednesday Night Faith Quest

Come Explore God's Word

Free Activities for All Ages!



Wednesday Faith Quest is reaching the youth in the surrounding neighborhood, right here near Grace Lutheran Church. In order to continue with this awesome program, Faith Quest needs your help. In more ways than one: help out with a group, lead an Art group, Drama, Games or the occasional Cooking class. We are looking for people to help every week. You could participate just one out of three, through six weeks: two out of three, three or all six weeks. We would welcome your help.

If you feel you are not the right person to lead the youth, there is still another way to help with Faith Quest. In lieu of serving a meal, Faith Quest provides a light snack and we are currently in need of non-perishable items such as Fruit, Pudding or Applesauce cups, Peanut Butter, Jelly, and types of drinks like Kool-Aid or Juice, no soda please.

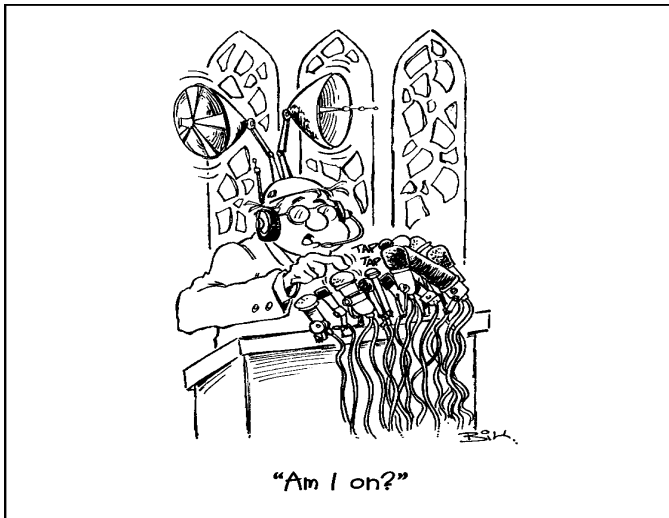
Faith Quest can also use help in prayer. The majority of the youth participating have not had the opportunity to attend church on a regular basis therefore; they have not heard many of the bible stories others are familiar with. Through this program we ARE reaching the youth, they are learning the stories and they are learning bible verses. Some of the youth remember bible verses from a year ago when Faith Quest first began. Let's keep that Spark within the youth growing! Your prayers of encouragement and participation in this program can help us reach all the youth in attendance and maybe more. Please pray about the way you might support this ministry and then act on that prayer.



Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

Next Meeting - February 17th at
Grace Lutheran Church.

*Brenda Spahr
Faith Quest Director*





"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Project Hope

The Theme for February is Can Openers/Soup or Stew.

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

Diapers	Dish soap	Bar soap
Deodorant	Toothbrush and toothpaste	
Mouthwash (without alcohol)	Feminine hygiene products	
Hair products (combs, brushes, picks)	Shaving Cream	
Razors	Dry Laundry Soap	Bathroom tissue
Kleenex		

We always need paper or plastic bags.

Can You Spare a Buck or Two or Ten?

Our youth will hold soup pots at church doors on
Souper Bowl Sunday
February 7, 2010



They will join young people in churches all across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. In 2009, 12,759 groups in all 50 states and outside the United States participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring generating \$4,260,941.

All of the money collected is donated to a charity selected by the participant. None of the money is sent to Souper Bowl headquarters. Organizers only ask that each participant report their collection so national totals can be determined and announced.

Our church will donate the Souper Bowl collection to the Lutheran Pantry.

Since the Souper Bowl of Caring became a national grassroots event in 1993, more than \$24 million has gone to help those in need.

Please support the youth of our church in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollar in the soup pot on February 7, 2010.



Do you have a heart for World Hunger?

Pick up a free desktop box bank to put on your dresser, desk or kitchen counter. Your spare change can make a difference in the lives of the millions who will go hungry without our help. When you have collected your change, put it in an envelope marked "World Hunger" and drop it in the offering plate.

The banks are located on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

Community News



Lutheran Marriage Encounter

Lincoln, NE February 12 - 14 Contact
Dayle & Terry Mautz (402) 540-
885083340 Wildbriar Lane
dmautz@yahoo.com

Sioux Falls, SD March 5-7 Vern & Karen
Harrington (712) 533-6221
170th Street LeMars IA
giblem@frontiernet.com

Dubuque, IA March 19-21 Bob & Mary
Bobsford (262) 547-6439 2751 Sandra
Lane, Waukesha, WI 53188
rmbots@earthlink.net

For further info please call 1800-265-1010
www.GodlovesMarriage.org

River City Renewal Lenten Prayer Challenge

*Are you feeling intimidated by your lack of experience in
praying?*

Do you stay away from prayer because it bores you?

Do you wish you had a better prayer life?

*Are you aware of a yearning inside to have a closer re-
lationship with God?*

An Experience in Prayer Workshop will held on February 6,
8:30 a.m. at

First Lutheran Church
542 South 31st Street, Omaha, NE
402-345-7506

For Registration and more info please call First Lutheran
402-345-7506: Morning Star 402-393-5553 or Luther
Memorial 402-551-4488

Community Dance

Benefit for
Omaha Habitat for Humanity

First United Methodist Church
7020 Cass in Cary Hall

Saturday, February 20, 2010
7:00 - 10:00 p.m.

Live Music by
Rivertown String Band
Squares, reels, waltzes

*No experience necessary
&
No partner necessary*

Eric Manley, Caller

Suggested Donation
\$7.00 per person

Refreshments served.

Give Kids A Smile.

Free Dental Examination, X-rays, Cleaning,
Fluoride and Dental Sealants for Children
ages 3 - 14.

This program is designed to provide dental
education and preventive care for uninsured
children who do not have access to regular
dental care. Saturday, February 6 from 8:00
am to noon at the at the Boyne Building 2802
Webster Street.

For more info or to schedule an appointment
call Creighton University School of Dentistry
at 402-280-2863

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

- ◆ Thanks to Barb Narducci, the very first person to turn in her annual report! Thanks to all of you who worked hard with the office to insure the Annual Report would be as accurate as possible and ready on time. Special thanks to Jack Williams for his dedicated effort and time to help Benhi and Pastor produce a clear and concise report.
- ◆ Thanks to all of you who participated in the Mitten Tree Project. Many people will be warmed both physically and emotionally by your gifts.
- ◆ A very special thanks to each and every one that volunteer their time and talents to continue our ministry here at Grace.

To the wonderful folks at Grace Lutheran,

Thanks so much for the donation of food, clothes and miscellaneous items to Project Hope. Your gifts are such a blessing to our ministry

Thanks for the privilege of serving God together with you,

Leigh Trumble, Project Hope



2010 Census Jobs Available

Hiring For The Spring

Work Near Your Home

Pay:\$14.00/hour and up

Mileage:\$0.55

Testing at Grace Evangelical Lutheran

1326 S.26th Street

For more info, contact

Toll free 1-866-861-2010

Saturdays at 11am

Feb.6, 2010

Feb.13, 2010

Feb.20, 2010

Feb.27, 2010

Omaha Census Office Recruiting:

402-682-3820 or John at 402-345-4276

between 9:00a.m.-5:00p.m



Do You have News?

We are looking for any item about the families of our church and special moments in their lives. If you have an item for these pages, please call the church office at 341-7730



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

Interfaith Health Service Spotlight on Family

One of the many unique aspects of Interfaith's Latinas in Action program is that it welcomes the entire family. Our young children have a nursery, art and games space while our older youth can take part in Amigos in Action, Artists in Action or exercise along with their mothers.

Our spotlight during the month of February is on Marita and her family and their experience within the Latinas in Action program. Marita and her three children (one girl and two boys) have been attending Latinas en Accion since our program began. Marita's sister and mother also take part in the program regularly. Marita's daughter began taking part in classes when she was 11 years old and is now 14 and exercising along with her mom. Marita's sons are 8 years old and 4 years old and enjoy playing with the other children in the nursery areas at Grace Lutheran Church and St. Francis Church.

Marita is an outstanding role model for her children regarding living healthy and exercising. She shares: "I go to these Latinas in Action classes for my well being (diabetic) and because when I'm home I don't feel like doing exercises by my self. I learn about food and nutrition from the classes. And I like doing exercise with the group of Latina women because I feel more active. For me, the exercise part of each class is just dancing to music I really like. Keeping fit also helps me at home because I have more energy to do my chores."

Even though Latinas in Action is designed by and for women, Marita notes that her husband also sees the benefits of the family's participation in the group. "My husband really likes that I'm going to classes because he can tell that I'm doing better physically and mentally. My mother, sister, daughter, and I have a really good time being together in Latinas in Accion."

At Interfaith, we are blessed in knowing Marita. We are proud to interact with her and her wonderful family and extended family through Latinas in Action.

Gema W. and Virginia M., Interfaith Health Service

Embarrassed

The lady eyed her date with great disapproval. "That's the fourth time you've gone back for more ice cream and cake, Albert," she said acidly. "Doesn't it embarrass you at all?"

"Why should it?" the hungry fellow said with a shrug. "I keep telling them it's for you."

FEBRUARY

- ◆ named after the Latin term “februum,” which means purification.
- ◆ The birthstone is amethyst.
- ◆ The flower is primrose or violet
- ◆ February begins on the same day of the week as March and November in a common year (non-leap year) and on the same day of the week as August in a leap year

Special Days in February

- 2 - Happy Groundhog Day!
- 7 - Souper Bowl of Caring Sunday
- 17- Ash Wednesday
- Every Wednesday (beginning February 17th)
Lenten dinners at 6:00 p.m.
Worship Service at 7:00 p.m.
- 14 - Happy Valentine’s Day!
- 18 - Presidents Day
- 19- Confirmation Classes at Cristo Rey Lutheran

"Black History Month is an annual observance, in February, of the past achievements and current status of African Americans. It coincides with the birthdays of the great black leader Frederick Douglass (February 14) and of Abraham Lincoln (February 12).



Happy Groundhog Day!

People often refer to the second day of February as Groundhog Day. According to many old stories, the groundhog, or woodchuck, comes out of its burrow on February 2 to look for its shadow. If the sun is shining and the groundhog can see its shadow, it goes back to sleep for a while, and winter is not over. If the groundhog cannot see its shadow, it begins its springtime activities



Presidents' Day

Two of America's greatest leaders, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, were born during February. Washington's birthday is celebrated as a federal holiday on the third Monday in February. Some states also honor Lincoln and other American Presidents on this day and call the holiday President's Day. President's Day is celebrated in the United States.

The Groundhog Carol

To the tune of
“It Came Upon A Midnight Clear”

It CAME upON a GROUND Hog Day,
That GLORious RiTual OOOOOLLLLLDDDDDDDD.
We WAIT to HEAR a MARmot SAY,
How LONG it's GONna stay COOOOLLLLLDDDDDD!
Peace ON the FARM, this GROUND Hog Day,
We eat soup and SIIINNGGG and DANCE....
For ONCE the GROUND Hog is UP for
GOOOODDDDDDD,
He'll EAT up ALL of your PLAAAANNNTTTTTTS!

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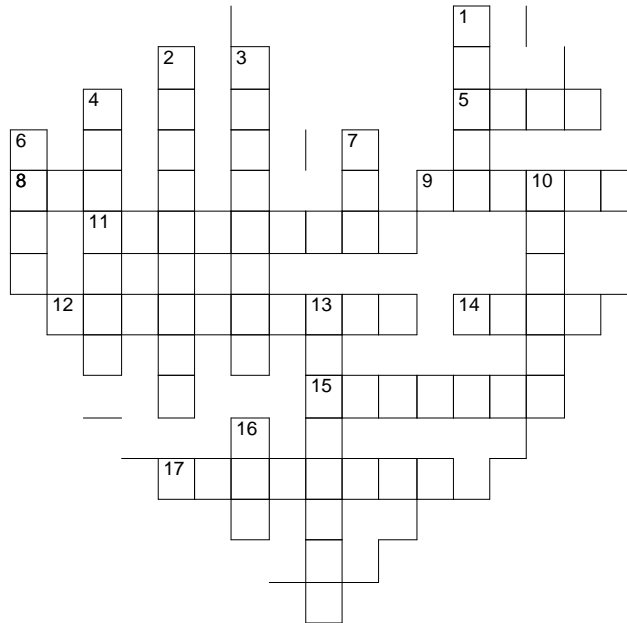


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Valentine's Day -- 1 Cor. 13

Across

- 5. affection
- 8. no
- 9. loud instrument
- 11. bad-tempered
- 12. comprehend
- 14. not here
- 15. express joy
- 17. ringing



Down

- 1. wholly
- 2. flawed
- 3. best
- 4. long-suffering
- 6. comprehend
- 7. everything
- 8. at present
- 10. grew to be
- 13. haughty
- 16. person

WORD LIST

all	became	fully	irritable	man	patient
arrogant	clanging	greatest	know	not	rejoice
away	cymbal	imperfect	love	now	understand

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Embarrassed

The lady eyed her date with great disapproval. "That's the fourth time you've gone back for more ice cream and cake, Albert," she said acidly. "Doesn't it embarrass you at all?"



"Why should it?" the hungry fellow said with a shrug. "I keep telling them it's for you."

Very Punny!

Did ya hear about the snake charmer who married an undertaker?

They had towels marked "Hiss" and "Hearse."

A Special Day

Over breakfast one morning, a woman said to her husband, "I bet you don't know what day this is."

"Of course I do," he indignantly answered, going out the door to the office.

At 10 AM, the doorbell rang, and when the woman opened the door, she was handed a box containing a dozen long stemmed red roses.

At 1 PM, a foil wrapped, two pound box of her favorite chocolates arrived.

Later, a boutique delivered a designer dress.

The woman couldn't wait for her husband to come home.

"First the flowers, then the chocolates, and then the dress!" she exclaimed. "I've never had a more wonderful Groundhog Day in my life!"