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

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

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

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker Secretary - Benhi Khabeb Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr Organist - Lynda Laird Sexton - Brian Sutej Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill Lutheran Volunteer - Anna Ernst Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Omaha NE Permit No. 39





2010 Council Members

Greg Hula Andrew Edwards Arlone Farber

Gloria Moore Vicky Cox Ernest Olson David Nange Carolyn Matson Samantha Trejo 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 on October 5. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: we pray for Sandy Fitzgerald, who is battling brain cancer; we pray for Mickey Andersen, who is struggling with health concerns; we pray for Rick Moore as he is struggling with health concerns; we pray for Kent Cattlett's family, as they mourn the loss of their loved one; we pray for Kevin Courtney, as he continues treatments for colon cancer; we pray for Gwen Grady as she is battling pancreatic cancer; we rejoice with Nick Fotopols, who is feeling better after battling an infection in his body; we pray for Mark Balaban, who has spine and brain cancer; we pray for Jimmy Wyman's recovery, who had a bad motorcycle accident; we pray for our fellow Grace member, Amanda Vasquez, during her final months of pregnancy; we pray for the Khabeb family, as Angela waits for a call; we pray for a resolution of social unrest and prejudices that affect so many countries; we pray for the people suffering from damages caused by natural disasters, such as toxic mudslides and weather related storms; we pray for the needs of all our Sudanese brothers and sisters, with a special prayer for our "local" Sudanese families, who have faced job losses, no insurance coverage, and language barriers; we pray for the safety of armed service personnel, as well as our police and patrol officers, who protect each one of us; and we pray for the understanding of why some people in our society discriminate against others that are "different" or stand for something that is different than their beliefs, causing hurt and harm, such as the recent suicides among college students.

Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses of Deuteronomy 32:10 and 1 John 4:16 from the "Daily Texts." These verses remind us that Moses proclaimed to the people that God is righteous, upright, and just and that they are being guarded and loved with a "special" eve. God has so much unconditional love for all of God's "children", that God's steadfast love and care will be with us at all times.

Visions for Ministry: The Council continued their conversation on "Radical Welcome." We run into stumbling blocks when we want to be an inviting congregation, but still put up boundaries. We cannot be saying things like, "As long as you can be like me", or "I'm not going to fit here", because we have to work together on differences. We have to be willing to accept changes and recognize that excluding someone is not the right thing to do.

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

Christian Education: For the months of November and December, the Confirmation Class will be moved from Sunday to Saturday.

Evangelism/Outreach: The Council felt that the "House Meeting" with the Congregation and the Sudanese was a great fellowship experience. Just being able to listen and share feelings about the different barriers that are faced is a step in the right direction.

Council Minutes Continued

Anna Ernst is now in charge of the "After School" Program at Grace. She is trying to structure it a bit differently than last year.

<u>Finance</u>: Pastor Laaker informed the Council that the properties directly north and south of the church might be for sale within the next few months. We need to be thinking about the future of Grace and consider many different facets before a conversation can take place about future development.

<u>Property</u>: The exterior painting project is underway. Unfortunately, a ladder was stolen from the company doing the painting last week at Grace, but the project is on schedule.

<u>Service/Social Ministry</u>: A reminder that 15th Anniversary of Omaha Together One Community is scheduled at Benson High School on October 31, from 2:30-4:00, with plans to have the Mayor and the Police Chief in attendance. OTOC and leaders from across the city are sponsoring this meeting and anyone interested in community affairs is welcome to attend.

<u>Support/Stewardship</u>: The "Fall Doings" will be on Sunday, October 10th at 6:00 P.M. at Kountze Memorial. Pastor Laaker, Vicki Cox, Arlone Farber, Brenda and Andrea Spahr, and Andrew Edwards will attend. Tie blankets for the needy will be assembled.

<u>Worship</u>: Joint worship services for Thanksgiving Eve and Christmas Eve are being planned with St. Luke's Lutheran Church hosting. Conversation was held regarding the Christmas Eve service. The question was asked, is there a need to hold two services that night? Would one service at 6 pm make more sense? The numbers have steadily declined over the past few years.

Unfinished Business: No unfinished business.

<u>New Business</u>: The Council Meeting for November is moved to November 16th. Anna Ernst and Pastor Laaker will be attending some out of town meetings coming up in the next couple weeks. <u>Announcements</u>: The Halloween Party at the Church will be on Friday, October 29th. Anna Ernst and Janet Hula are in charge of the party. Volunteers are needed. Gloria Moore will bring treats and lead prayer for our November Council meeting.



Davey and Goliath's Devotions for Families on the Go The Winter 2010-2011 Edition is Here!

Each week has four fun-filled pages of Bible-based activities. Set aside 10-15 minutes at the beginning of the week to read the Bible story and say the prayer on the first page. Some weeks that may be all you can do! If you have more time, try the rest of the faith-filled activities during the week.

Grace Lutheran Church offers this magazine on a first come, first serve basis to 10 families. Pick up your copy next Sunday from the table at the back of the sanctuary and begin sharing a little time with your children or grandchildren and telling them about the wonderful gift of God's son, Jesus Christ.



Fall is in full swing. The beauty of the colors has tantalized our sight. We have enjoyed warm days and cool evenings. The joy of God's fall is precious.

Soon the cold of winter will be upon us and we will huddle inside longing for these days. We often long for days of memory gone. Many people have told me stories of the days in the past. It is fun to listen to these stories and imagine what it must have been like to be there.

Fortunately, we only have the present in which to participate. God has blessed us with wonderful opportunities to be Christ's body in this time. I wonder if persons living in the times past, of which stories are told, could have imagined our worship service on the first Sunday in October when thirteen African Sudanese children were baptized. Could they have imagined that together we would praise God and then sit down across tables and share stories of the concerns of our lives? I doubt that thought would have ever been possible.

I wonder sometimes at what God is up to. You have heard me say that the vision God has given to me is that Grace is to be a place, a church for all peoples. I firmly believe this is what God wants for this place. I simply don't know how God is going to do this. I only know that in the present I rejoice in the small signs that God is serious about this vision.

I marvel at God's ability to make the impossible possible. Some will recall that when we took the leap of faith to add staff with Sandra Templeton, we expressed the improbability of this venture. Yet, somehow God made it possible. Then two years ago, we took the leap of faith and added the experience of an Intern with Angela Khabeb. We questioned the wisdom of taking this action. Yet, somehow God made it possible. This year, we took the leap of faith and added the experience of a Lutheran Volunteer Corps person in Anna Ernst. I don't know what God will bring about through her work among us but I suspect we will be blest and God will be served.

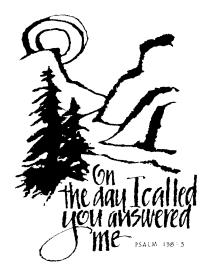
Soon you will receive a letter in the mail inviting you to consider your support of ministry at Grace for 2011. I believe that God desires that first of all you give God your self. When you do this, you will find a certain satisfaction but more than that you will find God will bless you in ways that may not be in your experience at this time. God can make this possible.

God wants you to use your time, talent and treasure for God's purposes. This means total commitment of what you have to God. That's a hard step to take, but God can make it possible. In taking that leap of faith, God can bring a joy and satisfaction that defies logic and common wisdom.

So, as you remember and give thanks during this Thanksgiving season remember, also, God is a God of possibility and promise. I don't know how God will fulfill the vision for this place. I only know that I must respond to God's grace and mercy with my commitments of time, talent and treasure. I trust you will respond in like manner.



Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends



- 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 Don & Norma Olson)
- Ken Hilmer As he struggles with health issues. (member)
- La Vonne Moss Ongoing health issues. (member)
- Ferne Matson Ongoing health issues. (member)
- Barbara Nelson as she recovers from a stroke. (member)
- Barbara Narducci as she continues to recover. (member)
- Martina Botho As she recovers from burns and skin grafting surgery.(member)
- Carolyn Matson as she recovers from surgery. (member)
- Brian Sutej as he recovers from a broken leg. (member)

Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Mae Lane - St Joe Villa. Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn. 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 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.

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

Women of the ELCA Board & Circle Meeting

Tuesday, November 16, 2010 1:00 p.m. Hostess/Bible Study Leader: LaVonne Moss





Join us on Monday Mornings for Quilting! 9:00 a.m.

Quilts and lap robes are given to Lutheran World Relief, Hurricane Disaster Relief, the Open Door Mission and local nursing homes.

Drop by and help cut squares and tie quilt tops on to the backs. Coffee break is at 10:00 a.m. No special skills are needed except the ability to laugh and have fun!

4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday

Games, Crafts, and Fun Geared for Elementary Kids!



Free! If OPS is not in session, the After-School program does not meet! After-School Program



Thanksgiving Blessing God of goodness, bless our food! Keep us in a pleasant mood! Bless the cook and those who serve us. With good digestion, Lord, preserve us."

Rev. James M.T. Connolly quoted from the Joyful Noise NL Dec 2007



November 2010

Dear friend in Christ,

This is a special time of the year, a time when the world around us has just been transformed into beautiful shades of orange, yellow and red. And yet those colors — as beautiful as they are — are the shades of dying. Another season of the year is drawing to a close. Another chapter in the memory book of life is concluding.

What we are about here at Grace Lutheran Church is just the opposite. We are about living, specifically, about living eternally. That's why we do what we do. Through the proclamation of the good news of the Gospel, this ministry offers eternal life to a dying world. We offer the water of grace to thirsty souls as God brings forgiveness, cleansing, peace and a whole new perspective to life.

Notice the process: We offer . . . God brings. We are God's messengers of hope to those who are what the Apostle Paul calls "aliens" and "strangers." Through this ministry, we are fulfilling our role as ambassadors of the King of Kings in proclaiming the Gospel message. And God — who really needs no help from anyone — allows us to have this privilege and makes us part of the process of bringing eternal life to needy people through faith in Jesus Christ.

At this special time of the year, when the world around us is dying, I'd like to ask you to consider a special Thanksgiving offering to help us continue to serve as spiritual sentinels here and elsewhere. As we come to the final days of the year, there are many needs. Please ask God what you should do in response to this opportunity, and then give as He leads in your life.

Thanks for being part of this fellowship and for your faithfulness in the past months of this year. And thanks for being sensitive to the Lord's leading concerning your special Thanksgiving offering.

Yours in Christ,

Grace Stewardship Committee



Grace Lutheran's Stewardship Theme for 2011 "Faithful Stewards of God's Infinite Grace" 2011 Stewardship Drive begins on November 7th.

Begin now and ask God what He wants to do through you in 2011.

More Community News



The Theme for Project Hope for November is Turkey Dinner Trimmings:

- Canned Veggies like corn, carrots, beans, yams, peas.
- Gravy Mixes
- Marshmallows, brown sugar, spices
- ♥ Canned Pumpkin
- Canned Cranberry sauce
- Pickles and olives
- Fresh potatoes or instant mashed potatoes
- Stuffing mix or pie crust mix
- ♥ Paper Napkins

Put gifts on the pantry shelves in the upper fellowship hall.

2011 God's Creation Calendar Fundraiser for the Grace Lutheran Church Library

Only \$5.00!

The calendar shipment has arrived.

If you pre-ordered a calendar or wish to purchase one, contact Brenda Spahr

These are great gifts for Christmas! High Quality, Comparable to Calendars at the mall selling for \$12.00!

> Hurry! When they're gone... They're GONE!



A Christmas tree will stand in the upper fellowship hall in December. The tree is called the Mitten Tree. As the season of Christmas progresses, the tree becomes gaily decorated with warm winter accessories.

Each year, people from Grace Lutheran Church bring donations of mittens, gloves, scarves, and other warm items and place them on the tree. These gifts of warmth are donated to area shelters.

During the special sales in the month of November and December, consider adding a pair of mittens or a scarf or two to your shopping basket.

A man and his wife were sitting in the living room when the man remarked," Just for the record, I never want to live in a vegetative state dependent on some machine. If that ever happens, just pull the plug." His wife got up and unplugged the TV set.



Norma Sims quoted from the Joyful Noise Newsletter Dec 2007

Carler and Carles and

POINSETTIAS Cost: \$9.00 each

A Sign Up sheet has been posted on the Bulletin Board

The Deadline for Ordering is December 10.

Be sure to designate whether you would like to take your flowers home after the holiday or donate them to the church for shut-ins or staff.



Give Glory to God through decorating God's House for the Christmas Celebration!





"Faithful Stewards of God's Infinite Grace." Grace Lutheran Church Stewardship Campaign for 2011

Grace Lutheran Church will begin sending information about the 2011 stewardship campaign during November. You will have an opportunity to review your giving from 2011.

Begin now prayerfully asking God about what He would have you do in His service in the coming year. Perhaps circumstances have changed and you have time to be a part of a ministry new to you. You also will receive the Time and Talent form mentioned above where you can indicate what ministries you want to be involved in.

This is a time of planning and great excitement as Grace Lutheran Church explores what God will lead his bride, the church, to do in 2011.



"The Lord Jesus Christ is not as interested in your money or time or activity level as He is in your heart. He wants your wholehearted devotion that is not diminished by time or circumstances."

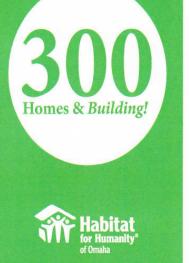
Charles Stanley, Enter His Gates, Nelson, 1998

let's celebrate

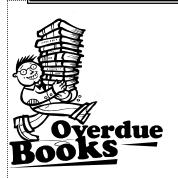
Can you believe Habitat for Humanity of Omaha has built 300 homes right here in Omaha! That's more than 1,400 family members currently living in Habitat Omaha homes and more than 936,000 volunteer hours invested in building. WOW! Now that's impact.

Your efforts have helped Habitat Omaha transform the community. Come celebrate this amazing work with other volunteers, donors and Habitat Omaha Partner Families during a multi-house dedication.

300 Homes & Building! Celebration Sunday, Nov. 21, 2010 • 2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. Salem Baptist Church, 3131 Lake Street, Omaha





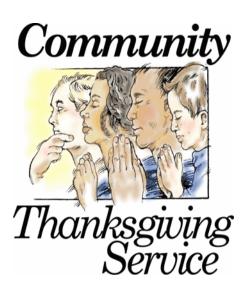


Please... Please... Pretty Please! If you have an overdue library book, Won't you bring it back so that others may enjoy it?

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



Prayer Meeting 3rdWednesday Night of Each month Next Prayer Service November 17, 2010 7:00 p.m. Candle light Prayer Service for Confession, Meditation, and Healing at Grace Lutheran Church.



Thanksgiving Eve Wednesday, November 24, 2010 St. Luke's Lutheran Church 2315 I Street 7:00 p.m.

St. Luke's Lutheran Church is hosting a Community Thanksgiving Eve Service on November 24. Many churches have been invited to join in a service of Thanksgiving and Fellowship. The friends and family of Grace Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend this service.

Mark your calendar and join in this wonderful opportunity to praise God for His <u>bountiful</u> blessings!

Younkers Community Day Saturday, November 13, 2010

Buy a \$5.00 Booklet and get a \$10.00 Coupon! Your \$5.00 will go to the Lutheran Pantry.

Each booklet contains a \$10 coupon good on almost any merchandise item priced at \$10 or more (customers spend \$5 for the booklet and get \$10 back on their first purchase!), plus eight 20% off coupons and offers for three great bonus items, available on Community Day only. All coupons are valid on top of our already low One Day Sale prices.

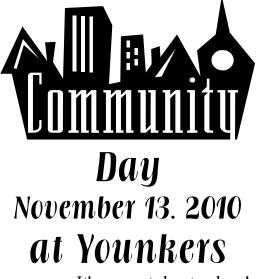
Contact the Church office or Pastor Laaker for Coupon Booklets!

Lutheran Service Corps Spaghetti Supper Benefit

Sunday, November 14, 2010 St. Timothy Lutheran Church 510 N 93rd St (93rd and Dodge) 5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

Adults \$7.00; Children 5 - 12: \$4.00; under 2: \$2.00 Max - \$20.00 per family.

For more information, call 457-5890 See You There!



It's a great day to shop!



All proceeds help support the social ministry of Lutheran Service Corps!

Community News



Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

Call 345-1700 for more information.

National Donor Sabbath November 12-14, 2010

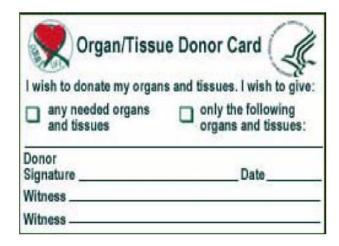
Thousands of Americans are in need of vital organ and tissues. For many, the chance to live a full life won't come unless many more of us consider organ and tissue donation. Discuss organ donation with your family and friends (after worship, work etc.). Help others find a chance to live a full life.

What can be donated?

- Organs
- ♦ Tissue
- ♦ Stem Cells
- ♦ Blood

How do I become a donor?

- Designate your decision on your driver's license. Do this when you obtain or renew your license.
- Sign a donor card now. Carry the donor card with you until you can designate your donation decision on your driver's license or join a donor registry.
- Tell your family about your decision.



Crop Walk 2010

Grace Lutheran Raised \$630.00 for Hunger Relief and the Lutheran Pantry at the Crop Walk! *Thanks!*



Got the Holiday Blues? Free Counseling is Available.



Victor Schuerman, CMSW, LMHP is available to offer confidential counseling to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. His office is at St Luke's Lutheran Church, 2315 I Street. His hours at St. Luke are Tuesdays and Thursdays for 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Call 733-0172 to set up an appointment.



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

Interfaith's Latinas in Action Participants and Staff Host First Ever Zumba-thon

At the end of September, our Latinas in Action staff and participants worked together to host a community-wide event benefiting Interfaith Health Service programs. Planning was on-going over the course of several months. Our event, a Zumba-thon, was open to all women, ages 6 to 80 and was held at Christie Heights Neighborhood center. Sometimes with events such as these, a percentage of the profits go to the benefiting organization. In our case, 100% of the every dollar given to the event will be donated to Interfaith. This includes outside instructors who donated their time, childcare workers time, our staff and instructors, college students who volunteered to register folks at the door and our participants and spouses worked together to assemble and donate a dancing stage for the day.

Our Zumba-thon was a two hour festivity. The community center was full of 60 women, a few dozen children and the many different instructors who stopped in to add new energy, styles and dance moves to the day. The atmosphere was electric and exciting. Ilda, our lead instructor of 6 years, started the day off. She was joined a few songs later on stage by her daughter, Maria, a first year student at South High School and a Latinas in Action instructor in training. Jennifer, an instructor from 24 Hour Fitness followed Maria adding great energy and animation to the group. Maria, our instructor for our domestic violence group was next, followed by Norma and Maria, two of our Wednesday evening instructors. Nicole, a Kroc Center instructor, helped all of us in attendance learn to line dance Zumba style. Aurora, one of our first instructors from the morning groups Interfaith sponsored followed Nicole. Gema brought the day to a close with some wonderful stretch's and warm down activities, accompanied by Iz's version of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow".

The best summaries of the day were from various participants themselves. Numerous high school students were in attendance and noted : "even though we usually sleep in on Saturdays, this was totally worth it!". Jennifer, the guest instructor who works full-time as a corporate fitness coordinator said, "I had no idea that this type of group existed for Latina women. It is amazing. I already put the information on my face book page so my friends and family know what a great group this is." Martha, who attended with her 1st grade daughter commented " there was so much enthusiasm here. I really liked the different instructors. Can we have another event like this soon?"

We were pleased to be part of such a unique event and hope to plan more such events in the future.

Virginia and Gema Interfaith Health Service



Lutheran Volunteer Corps

BUILDING COMMUNITY, WORKING FOR JUSTICE, LIVING SIMPLY AND SUSTAINABLY

Anna Ernst Community Outreach Associate Grace Lutheran/ St. Lukes Lutheran Church Lutheran Volunteer Corps (LVC) Volunteer

When I graduated from college in May, I did not really think that I was going to have a job that was going to make me so excited to go to work every day. Well, I could not have been more wrong.

For example, on most Monday mornings, I come to Grace at 9 am for a staff meeting with Pastor and Benhi. We have devotions and compare our schedules for the coming week. It is wonderful to have that focusing time with them. Then, right after staff meeting, at 10 am, the three of us get to have coffee and a snack with the lovely ladies of Grace's quilting group (you should see the beautiful quilts they are making!), the hard-working yard workers/handymen associated with the quilting group, and anyone else that happens to be at church that morning. How's that for a great start to the week??? It's been good to get to know everyone and learn about Grace's history, especially from people who have lived through a lot of it.

At their September meeting, Council agreed that it would be a good idea for me to take over the after-school program, since that has been a valuable community outreach program provided over the years for the kids in Grace's neighborhood. So, I started running the program, which I have sort of renamed "Good Times After School" (we'll see if that name sticks), on Monday, October 4th, and am running it on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 4 pm – 5:30 pm. I have kept Wednesdays open for work at St. Luke's – I have been helping out with their confirmation class on Wednesday evenings and will hopefully be starting some exciting programming there in the afternoons as well. (Stay tuned!)

I have loved getting to know the kids, who really enjoy coming to Grace for the after-school program. They like to color, do arts and crafts (so far we have made big nametags and bracelets), and run around a LOT.

My work with OTOC has also been extremely rewarding. I think, so far, I am most proud and pleased to have been even slightly involved in the planning of a workshop on immigration for Omaha clergy that was held on Thursday, October 14th at First United Methodist Church. Speakers from Creighton, UNO, Nebraska Appleseed, and Nebraska Catholic Conference discussed the history of immigration in the United States, myths and facts about immigrants, and the current-day political situation regarding immigration law and policy. It was also good to have time for dialogue about the challenges of talking about (and for the clergy, preaching about) immigration. I know that there can be controversy over this and other issues, and any time I can be a part of an event where honest and open conversation about subjects that are hard to discuss is a part of the agenda, I am very glad.

Finally, as I write this, I am eagerly anticipating the Halloween party this coming Friday, October 29th, and the OTOC 15th Anniversary Convention this Sunday, October 31st. I especially want to thank all of you for your generous donations for the party, and I am sure it will be a great event for the community, as I have learned it has been in the past!



• The Anglo-Saxons referred to November as the "wind month."

• One of four months that has 30 days.

Named for Tiberus Caesar.

- November begins on the same day of the week as March every year.
- November's Birthstone is the Topaz or Citrine.
- November's Flower is the Chrysanthemum.

November is the 11th month of the year.

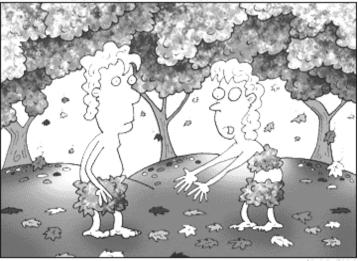
Special Days at Grace Lutheran Church In November.

- 1 Shipment for LWR . Have your donations to the church.
- 7 Daylight Savings Time! .
- 15 Church Council Meeting.
- 17*- Monthly Prayer Service.
- 23- Grace Messenger Assembled.
- 24 Community Thanksgiving Service at St. Luke's Church.
- 25- Thanksgiving Day



November 11, 2010 Pray for all soldiers everywhere.

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WILL YOU PLEASE PICK UP ALL YOUR CLOTHES?



Seriously, friends, Because of all the problems with staph infections in the news, let's encourage each other to wash our hands and stay HEALTHY!

10+06-2006

Be Thankful

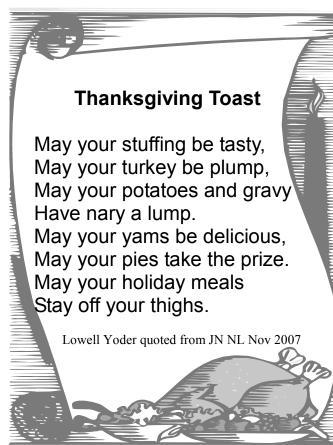
Find each word from Colossians 3:15 in the word search puzzle.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.



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November woods are bare and still; November days are clear and bright; Each noon burns up the morning's chill, The morning's snow is gone by night.

> Helen Hunt Jackson -Taken from World Book Millennium 2000

