

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 – Brenda Spahr

Organist - Lynda Laird

Sexton - Brian Sutej/Titus Duli

Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

Lutheran Volunteer - Anna Ernst

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

July 2011



**THE
GRACE
MESSENGER**



2011 Council Members

Titus Duli	Andrew Edwards	Arlone Farber	Ralph Fitle
David Hufford	Greg Hula	Carolyn Matson	Ernie Olson
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 June 14. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: we sing praises of Thanksgiving for Pastor and Mary Laaker’s “new” grandson delivered earlier today, as well as praises for all newborn’s coming into the world; we pray for the Harold Fisher family, as Harold has died; we pray for the Lucy Monico family, as Lucy has died; we pray for Phil Minino, who is recovering from lung cancer and a fractured hip; we sing praises of Thanksgiving for Joe Fitle on his marriage; we pray for Becca Fitle, as she travels this summer; we sing praises of Thanksgiving for David Hufford’s neighbor’s son, as he is arriving home from his second tour of duty in Iraq; we pray for Sue Rose, who is undergoing radiation and chemotherapy for lung cancer; we pray for Norma Courtney, who is having blood clot issues and is hospitalized; we sing praises of Thanksgiving for Jim Horwath, as he is responding well to medication; we pray for Dottie Hula, who had successful carpal tunnel surgery and is recovering nicely; we pray for our shut-in’s, Barbara Nelson, Barb Narducci, and Mae Lane; we pray for the people across the nation that are unemployed, including our own fellow member, Titus Duli, as well as Tamara, and so many others that we personally know who are looking for work; we pray that advocacy groups will be able to challenge a restrictive law against undocumented immigrants in Alabama; we pray for St. Luke’s Church as they are facing budget concerns; we pray to have a successful Vacation Bible School this year and are so thankful to have wonderful leaders and helpers; we pray for the summer program, “Kids at Work”, and again, are so thankful for the wonderful leadership and volunteer help; we pray for the people in Ethiopia, who are in a deadly cycle of drought and famine; we pray for the countries that are going through tumultuous times, including Sudan, Libya, Egypt, and others; we pray for a resolution of ending violence in our own city; we pray for all people in the United States that have been faced with physical and emotional trauma caused from natural disasters, leaving a widespread trail of death and destruction; we pray for the safety and hope in the rebuilding efforts; we pray continually for tornado victims and for the people in Joplin, Missouri, who are now dealing with a terrible fungus that many workers and victims have contacted; we pray for Brenda Spahr’s family traveling from North Dakota to Omaha in the next couple weeks, as well as safety for all people traveling in flooded areas; we pray for flood victims in our own state of Nebraska and surrounding states as well, praying that the levees hold; we sing praises of Thanksgiving for the hundreds of volunteers who have helped in sand-bagging, as well as lending physical and emotional support; we pray for the fire fighters who are helping to contain the wildfires, and pray for the people leaving their homes; we pray for the needs of our Sudanese brothers and sisters, and pray for the people in Southern Sudan, who face the challenges of providing for needs, for hospitals and schools; we pray for the safety of armed service personnel, police and patrol officers; and as we count our many blessings, we pray for the poor, the hungry, the homeless, and the oppressed.

Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses of Psalm 73:24 and Revelation 15:30 from the “Daily Texts.” The Psalm reminds us to live faithfully with God’s direction. This verse in Revelation reminds us how great and marvelous God’s work is.

Continued....

Visions for Ministry: The Council continued their discussion on the book titled, "*Leadership in Congregations.*" Good leadership comes when congregations work together, not against each other. A "vision" is better shared by leadership, which promotes good communication and a feeling of belonging is sensed by all. When one becomes "controlling", it is easy to be cut off from God's work. Our discussion tied in with an article on "Missional Renaissance" from Pastor Laaker, which emphasizes redefining a Church's position in the community through service and sacrifice. A question that can be asked to anyone is, "How can we ask God to bless you?"

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

Christian Education: There will be one more planning meeting for VBS and anyone is invited to attend. The official dates and times for VBS are June 26-30 from 6:00-8:15 p.m. We are fortunate to have Janet Hula in charge of VBS and any help is much appreciated. Anna Ernst reported that the "Youth Serving Omaha" has approximately thirty kids involved and is going well.

Evangelism/Outreach: "Kids at Work" program is going well thus far, under the leadership of Brenda Spahr and several volunteers. Anna Ernst reported that at some time in the near future, another neighborhood walk will be planned. At this time, Anna is analyzing some different issues in the neighborhood.

Finance: The sale on the property to the north of the Church (Olson Property) was closed on May 31st. We will now seek a loan from the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of \$170,000.00.

Property: On Sunday, June 19th, there will be a "Special Congregational Meeting" held directly after the morning worship. The Council adopted the Resolution/Affidavit to Authorize Mortgage to be presented for congregational approval.

Service/Social Ministry: Neighbor's South Habitat for Humanity Coalition began building a house at 1519 South 27th Street on June 10th. A letter from Habitat for Humanity was read by David Hufford, thanking Grace for the gift of money that was allocated from the Disney Fund.

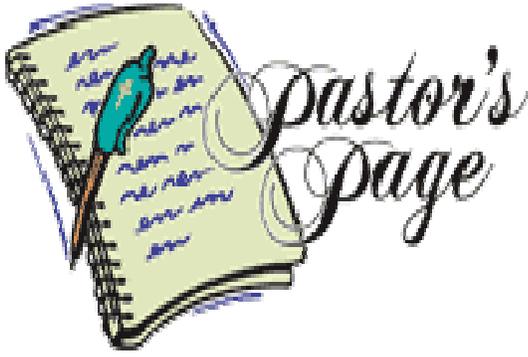
Support/Stewardship: Pastor Laaker talked with Paula Kitt from the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. She asked him to be a congregational advocate for MIF.

Worship: The Council voted to give Todd Laird a weekly stipend for the summer months, as he helps with the congregational music.

Unfinished Business: Anna Ernst reported that the Nebraska Synod meeting was a great learning experience. The meeting was titled, "Faith 2 Grow." Vickie Cox and Andrew Edwards attended the OTOC meeting, which was a good meeting with discussion on immigration issues, workforce development, refugee action team, youth education, and housing/neighborhood revitalization.

New Business: No new business.

Announcements: Ralph Fitle will bring treats and lead the closing pray for our July 2011 Council meeting. Pastor Laaker will be out of town July 1-7 and Pastor Bob Johnson will do the worship service on July 3rd.



I have been reading a book titled, *Missional Renaissance*, by Reggie McNeal. It has captured my imagination and my heart. On Sunday, June 19, I suggested that our understanding of Father, Son and Holy Spirit is a formula for life. It is none other than God, God's very self: the Creator/Giver, the Redeemer/Lover, the Sustainer/Presence. This is the One who creates life, blesses life, and graces life. This is a formula worth carrying with us on all our journeys, for it is our source of hope, confidence and joy for life. This means that you can "Go." You can go and bless others.

I then suggested that we could begin practicing this effort of blessing others by turning to the person next to us and saying, "How can I ask God to bless you today?" This is a question that McNeal suggested in his book. So, we did just that. I followed it up with a story about my experience earlier in the week with a young man seeking help. Dan (not his name) stopped me and asked if I could help him. (I am working on not being suspicious of everyone who asks for help.) So, I asked him how I could help him. He said he needed a ride to get to the courthouse for a court appointment. I agreed to take him. On the way, he told me a little about himself. He told me about how he had made a mess of his life. In turn, he asked me what I did, so I told him I was a pastor. We talked about that for a little bit. Then I thought to myself, I wonder if this question that I had read in the book would be a good question to ask. So, I took the risk and I asked him, "How can I ask God to bless you today?" Dan broke down in tears. He began by saying that he didn't deserve God's blessing because of the mess he had made of his life. I assured him that it was God's desire to bless him today. So he told me what would be a blessing. I asked if I could lift that up in prayer. He said, yes. I then dropped him off for his appointment.

I don't know what happened to Dan that afternoon. I know he has been on my heart and mind ever since. I trust God has found a way to bless him.

McNeal says in his book, people may ask you, "Why are you doing this?" He answers by saying, "Having your motives questioned is music to the ears of someone prepared for it. So, respond, I am a follower of Jesus, and I am blessing you because that's what he came to do." Absolutely! This makes sense to me. It fills my heart with joy and purpose. I trust the power of the Holy Spirit to move in the life of the other person and bring them closer to a personal relationship with Christ.

I wonder what would happen if we, each one of us, took this as an intentional way to live out our Christian life. Can we see our task as blessing others? Can we be bold enough to ask those that we meet, those that we encounter in conversation longer than, "Hi, how are you?", "How can I ask God to bless you today?" I suspect we need to practice it with one another for a short while until we build up the confidence that we can ask the question comfortably and naturally. It would also mean that we would need to practice the ability to pray with one another on the spot.

Now, more than likely, I have crossed the line. If you are saying, "he's crazy, I can't do that!", stop for a moment and ask yourself how you first learned to ride a bike. Did it take practice? Did it take a tumble or two? Yet, you kept at it until you learned. We can do the same with our faith practices. A stumble or a tumble, simply means that we will do better the next time. If, as McNeal suggests, "the central task is developing great followers of Jesus, believing that God has created people to demonstrate his redemptive intentions to the world in and through them," then we can surely be willing to learn how to bless others.

I'm willing to keep trying and learning. I invite you to practice with me. Let's see what God may do through us.

Pastor Laaker



Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

"We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. "

1 Thessalonians 1:2

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

- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found.
- ◆ Mae Lane - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Ken Hilmer - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ La Vonne Moss - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Ferne Matson - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Barbara Nelson - as she recovers from a stroke.
- ◆ Barbara Narducci - as she continues to recover from her fall.
- ◆ Margie Sutej - Ongoing health issues.
- ◆ Jack Williams - Recovery from a fall.
- ◆ Brian Sutej - Ongoing health issues. (Margie's husband)
- ◆ Rose Heesacker - as she receives chemotherapy for colon cancer treatment. (June Hilmer's sister.)

Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Mae Lane - St Joe Villa.

Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn.

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

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

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

Pastor 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.*

Prayer is a free gift.

We can pray to God anywhere, anytime.

Jesus does always hear us.

A gift no one can take away.

~ Crystal C.A. Spence





Wednesday Night

July 20, 2011

7:00 p.m.

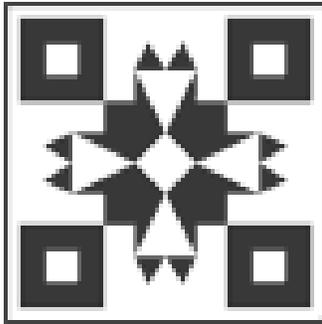
Candle light Prayer Service
for Confession,
Meditation and Healing
at Grace Lutheran Church.

People of all faiths are welcome!



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Lutheran Women of Omaha is in a partnership with Nebraska Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in creating 3,000 School Kit bags. To date, 301 bags have been completed, which is only 10% that is needed before September. If you or someone you know is interested in helping to make some bags, additional information is located in the church office. Included with that information is a pattern on how-to make the School Kit bags.



23rd Annual Quilt Auction

Saturday, July 30, 2011

Carol Joy Holling Camp, Conference & Retreat Center

Join in this exciting day at Carol Joy Holling Camp on July 30 for our 23rd Annual Quilt Auction! The day promises good food, great fun and lots of beautiful quilts donated by friends of Carol Joy Holling Camp. The auction and barbecue lunch will be held rain or shine. (We will use the Town Hall in case of rain.) Bring your friends and family!

Quilts will be on display by 9:00 a.m. The auction begins at 10:00 a.m. We will continue until all quilts are sold, which is usually around 5:00 p.m.

The quilts will have numbered cards attached indicating the order in which they will be auctioned. This way bidders can approximate when their favorite quilts will be up for auction. The cards also include information about the quilt donor and the size, type and design of the quilt.

Quilts in the past have auctioned for \$25 to \$20,000. Lance Larsen, a professional auctioneer from Cordova, NE, is volunteering his time to auction the quilts. He and his associates will do their best to encourage bidding and bring a fair price for each quilt. Depending on the number of quilts donated, a selected group will be sold through a silent auction. Bidding will open at the silent auction at 9:00 a.m. and close at 2:00 p.m. with winning bids for the day released at approximately 2:30 p.m.

You won't want to miss the barbecued turkey lunch with dessert and beverage served from 11:30 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Camp tours will be available throughout the day, and the swimming pool will be open at 12:30 p.m. with a certified lifeguard on duty.

Any questions, please call the camp office at 1-402-944-2544 or you can also check the website at www.nlom.org.

I've learned something very important this summer so far. Teamwork, while sometimes frustrating, complicated and hard, leads to results that are much more rewarding than what I can accomplish on my own. You'd think that I would have learned that already, but the examples of teamwork that I have been a part of recently have resulted in exceptional rewards.



With about 15 other Habitat for Humanity volunteers, I lifted up the frame for a wall on a home. With three other youth and Christian education directors, I planned a weeklong summer program that brought together 30 kids (ages 6 – 18) and about seven adult volunteers from three churches that allowed them to make new friends, have fun playing games and singing together, and got them out into the city of Omaha by serving in a different site every morning. By the time we ended the week with a pizza lunch at Table Grace, I was rewarded with an offering of more than \$200 to present to Head Chef Matt Weber and many smiles from both kids who had made new friends or grown closer with old ones and had fun, and adults (parents and grandparents) who were so happy with the week their kids had had.

Similarly, it is great to see the Kids at Work kids getting to know each other better and have a good time together as they work. They are doing a super job at the organizations where they have worked; their help has been very much appreciated and their positive attitudes are really great as well. As I write, Vacation Bible School is just a few days away, too, and I know it takes a lot of teamwork to make that happen.

Even though I have always felt wonderfully supported by both congregations this year, at times I have also felt very alone. I know that God is always with me, but when I have to make a tough decision or think about a tough situation and I'm on my own, I get scared. That is why it has been so great for me to see the results of teamwork recently...I've seen God working through other people and am reminded that other people want to work with me through those tough decisions and situations, too. I don't have to do it all on my own.

I think that's a good point to keep in mind for the future of the church – Grace, the Nebraska Synod, the ELCA, everybody. When it comes to being active in ministry, our individual motivation is important, but we do not have to do it all on our own, and we really CAN'T. We need God with us – in our individual spiritual time, and in work with each other. We need to work together to show God in ourselves to each other. Teamwork is sometimes frustrating, complicated and hard – showing up to meetings, figuring out how to deal with discomforts and disagreements, etc. – but being saved by grace is also about doing good works; even good works that aren't always fun. I can't say it enough or more emphatically – the rewards of doing good works together make life meaningful.

My year of service comes to an end the first week of August, but I think I'm out of space for this month, so I'll wait to tell you about that.

Anna Ernst, Volunteer
Community Outreach Associate



TEAM: Together Everyone Achieves More

"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service



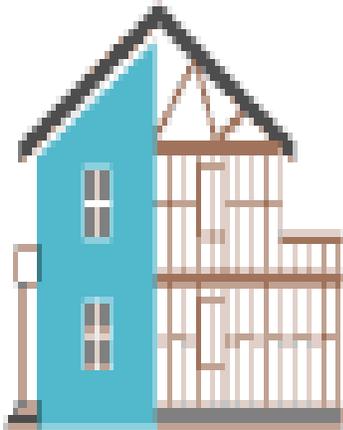
Project Hope

The Theme for July is:
Cereal & Crackers

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

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

We always need paper or plastic bags.



Can
You
Help?

**Neighbors South Coalition
Habitat for Humanity
Build Began
June 10th**

**Building Site:
1519 South 27th Street
Omaha, NE**

The summer build project for the Neighbors South Coalition has now started.

Volunteers are needed to help in all areas of construction, food preparation, service, and cleanup. There are two shifts per day. The morning shift is from 8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. with a snack and lunch provided. The afternoon shift is from 12:30 - 5:00 p.m. with a snack provided.

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."

If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful and satisfying project, volunteer forms are available at the back of the sanctuary or through the church office by calling 402-341-7730.



Celebrate Safely

Fireworks are fun, especially when used safely
and with a little bit of planning.
Here are 12 Fireworks Safety Tips for all ages!

1. Consider attending one of the many free public shows available.
2. If you hold your own show, choose fireworks that are legal. Anything you buy from a vendor in Nebraska will meet this requirement.
3. Choose fireworks that are age appropriate. Young kids should never handle any fireworks, including sparklers. Teens should be supervised.
4. Don't allow running or horseplay by anyone near fireworks.
5. Don't try to relight duds. Wait at least 20 minutes before handling; then soak in water before disposing of the dud.
6. Plan your show to avoid having fireworks come down on people, houses and cars. Remember, the winds often change direction.
7. Have at the least, a bucket of water available and a garden hose on and ready to go.
8. Have a first aid kit nearby - just in case.
9. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for lighting fireworks.
10. Wear close fitting clothes, and sturdy shoes or sneakers.
11. Use a "designated shooter" who is alcohol free and wearing safety glasses! Light one device at a time and keep a safe distance once a firework is lit.
12. Never light fireworks in containers.

Remember to clean up when finished. For more information, visit our website www.SafeNebraska.org! This has been a message from the Greater Omaha Chapter of the National Safety Council.

Did You Know?

Benjamin Franklin, John Adams & Thomas Jefferson served on the committee that picked the eagle for the national seal (Franklin wanted the turkey.)

Bald eagles have few natural enemies & live only in North America.

Bald eagles get their white head & tail feathers about 4-5 years of age.

The only other kind of eagle in North America is the golden eagle.

Bald eagles mate for life, but if one dies, the survivor will accept a new mate.

It is a felony to shoot an eagle.



Source - and for many, many more eagle facts, see: www.keokuktourism.com/New_Site/Eagle_Days_2004.htm

The first month of Kids At Work is almost complete! June brought a mix of weather that was ideal for picking up litter in the neighborhood, distributing flyers for Vacation Bible School, and helping Mr. Stephen Stout with a Good Neighbor Ministries project.

Kids At Work 2011



Thank you Gloria Moore for teaching some of the youth how to crochet! Some day they too will be able to use their new found talents to donate beautifully handcrafted items where needed. Pictured on the left is Mesha and Estrella working to learn this talent.

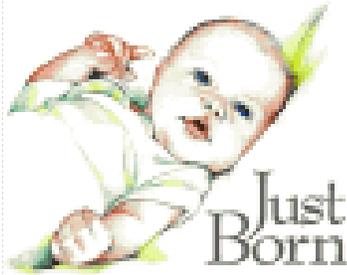
Following the strong wind storm on Monday, June 20th, Kids At Work youth picked up sticks and branches in the yard and along the street. Pictured to the right are; Edda, Estir, and Sunday. The next day, Ken Hilmer came by to haul away all the wood with help from Daniel, Esahia, and Solomon. Great Job to everyone who helped pick up any debris left from the storm.



Both Eva Martin led a group through the neighborhood distributing flyers for Vacation Bible School. Pictured to the left are Andrea, Eva, Solomon, and Monday. A second group (not pictured) led by the famous Samantha Trejo, the youth in her group were Victor, Daniel, and Tenyan. Awesome job done by all!

**KIDS AT WORK
ROCKS!**

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



Congratulations to Micah and Carrie Laaker on the birth of their son,
Benjamin Noah Laaker
June 14, 2011



- ◆ Thank you to Jack Williams for his dedication in tending to the plants in the entry way, they continue to look welcoming.
- ◆ Thank you to Donna Adrian, Mary Laaker, Tom and Sarah Emery, Arlone Farber and Vicki Cox for their ongoing care in the nursery during Sunday morning worship service.
- ◆ Thank you to Bob Moss, Jerry Van Ormer, and Ernie Olson for their continuing efforts to maintain the church with any projects that need to be completed.
- ◆ Thank you to all the lawn care personnel; Bob Moss, Jerry Van Ormer, and Ernie Olson who are tending the Church yard beautifully.
- ◆ Thank you to Ken Hilmer for taking away the sticks and branches that fell after the last wind storm.
- ◆ Thank you to Kids At Work for picking up and stacking sticks and branches that fell after the last wind storm on June 20, 2011.



3rd Annual Lutheran Service Corps Wine Tasting Fundraiser

Saturday, August 27, 2011 from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. at the Soaring Wings Vineyard, Springfield, NE. Tickets are \$30 per person or \$50 for two people. Ticket includes a tasting of five wines, souvenir wine glass, and light appetizers. The Lutheran Service Corps will receive 10% of wine sales that day. Interested in tickets please see Pastor Laaker.



Virginia McGill
Director

Gema C. Wolde
Community Health Worker
Se habla español.

Families in Action Celebrates Mother's Day with a Hawaiian Zumbathon.

For Mother's Day this year, our group from Families in Action celebrated at Grace Lutheran Church. Each participant and instructor (mother) designed a routine with her daughter or daughters for the day. It was so fun and exciting to see our children enjoy doing Zumba, knowing that we have been a model example for them. Each mother and daughter team designed a Hawaiian costume. We exercised for 2 hours and then shared a potluck dinner together. Everything our participants brought to eat was a healthy option, underscoring our education on nutrition and the whole person. The same day of our celebration, two of our participants had birthdays, so we sang happy birthday. According to Francis, one of our birthday celebrants, she "had never spent my birthday exercising and have so much fun!" We were grateful to celebrate Mother's Day in such a special way with our wonderful group of women and children.

Community News



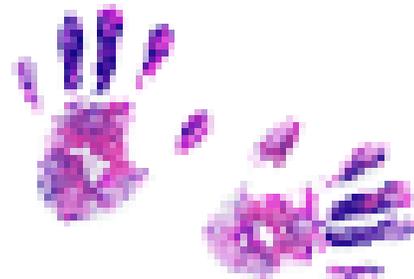
The Salvation Army is collecting school supplies! Since 1998, nearly 100,000 local youngsters have benefited from The Salvation Army KETV 7 Can Help Kids Back-To-School Backpack Program. These backpacks, stuffed with new supplies, insure that less fortunate children in our community go back to school with confidence. Now through August 10, 2011 collections are needed for new school supplies. Any questions, please call Patti at 402-898-5906, or send an e-mail at Patti_Camelia@USC.salvationarmy.org. Backpacks will be distributed in August.

A man carried his three-year-old granddaughter with him when he went up to receive communion at St. Patrick's Church in Baton Rouge, LA.

When he got up to the altar, a deacon raised his hand to extend a blessing on the little girl. Before he could place his palm on her head, she responded with a "high five."

—Columnist Smiley Anders
Baton Rouge (LA) Advocate

Printed with permission from JoyfulNoiseletter



Bishop grateful for ELCA as congregations prepare for North Dakota floods

CHICAGO (ELCA) -- As Minot, N.D. prepared for imminent widespread flooding, the bishop of the Western North Dakota Synod said he is grateful for the "gift" of being connected to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Many members have called or sent messages asking how they can help.

"We're getting emails and calls from other ELCA congregations across the country," said the Rev. Mark E. Narum. "This is the gift of the larger church. This is a devastating event, but we do not stand alone."

To help with flood response, ELCA Disaster Response provided a \$20,000 emergency grant last week to Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota, Fargo, and a \$5,000 grant to the ELCA Western North Dakota Synod, Bismarck, said the Rev. Kevin A. Massey, director, ELCA Disaster Response.

Government officials have ordered the evacuation of 11,000 residents of Minot. Some 4,000 homes and businesses are likely to flood, and it's possible the water will remain for weeks, they said. Four ELCA congregations in the Minot area are preparing for significant flooding. The water is from the Souris River, the result of heavy rains in western North Dakota and Canada.

Floods threaten Christ Lutheran Church, First Lutheran Church and Augustana Lutheran Church, all in Minot, and Peace Lutheran Church in Burlington, N.D., Narum said. If secondary levees hold, First Lutheran, Augustana Lutheran and Peace Lutheran may be spared significant flooding, he said. This is the second time this spring the congregations have been evacuated, Narum said.

"I'm extremely concerned about Christ Lutheran," Narum said. "There could be a couple of feet of water on their main sanctuary floor." Volunteers, some from as far as 60 miles away, responded to a call for help from the synod this week to move furniture and worship supplies out of the congregation's sanctuary, he said.

To help the congregations in the flood zone continue with worship, the synod has paired each one with another Minot-area ELCA congregation, Narum said. Synod staff will meet June 23 with Minot-area ELCA pastors at Zion Lutheran Church, followed by a worship service.

Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota will use some of the disaster funds for disaster coordination and case management staff to respond, said Bonnie Turner, disaster response program director.

The social service agency will work with local leaders to determine long-term flood recovery needs, she said. "We've got great partnerships," Turner said. "We work in tandem with our partners. This recovery will be successful. It will just be long and tedious."

Turner said next week Lutheran Social Services will host training for flood cleanup supervisors and volunteers in Bismarck, and sessions in other locations are being planned. Volunteers are now working in Williston to clean up flood homes, she added.

- - -
Information about North Dakota flooding is at <http://www.lssnd.org/> on the Web.



Really cool decorations throughout the church created such a fun place for youth to feel a part of PandaMania!

PandaMania Vacation Bible School

PandaMania met from Sunday, June 26th through Thursday, June 30th. Youth of all ages gathered to share in Bible Stories, making crafts, playing games, watching a video, singing tuneful songs, and enjoying a yummy snack! All of this under the awesome leadership of Janet Hula and a fantastic group of crew leaders and various site leaders, leading the youth through fun filled evenings!

Youth clapping, singing, and participating during the music opening and closing of each day during PandaMania!



Shown above are some strange flying creatures sighted during VBS!

Holden and Tommy enjoying 'Boomer' the mascot during Vacation Bible School!





Special Days in July at Grace Lutheran Church

July 4 - Independence Day.
July 9 - New South Sudan Independence!
July 12 - Church Council.
July 20 - Prayer Service.
Every Tuesday and Wednesday are
Kids At Work days.
Every Friday and Saturday is the Habitat
Build project at 1517 So. 27th Street.

August 7th is also an important day, that will be the Kids At Work Awards Ceremony during the Worship Service. This will be an opportunity to recognize the effort of the youth and team leaders who have participated during the summer program. After the service there will be a Neighborhood Picnic, please bring a side dish to share. Hamburgers, hot dogs, drinks, plates, forks, and cups will be provided.



From the book *Live and Learn and Pass It On*

I have learned that if you go to a garage sale, you'll almost always buy at least one item you don't need. ☺ Age 52

While waiting for his car to be serviced, an elderly gentleman and the other customers in the waiting room of a car dealership had to tolerate a woman who talked loudly non-stop on her cell-phone, revealing details of her personal life and problems. Finally, the senior man could not resist the temptation to tell the woman: "You know, Superman isn't the only one who misses the telephone booth." The woman finally stopped talking.

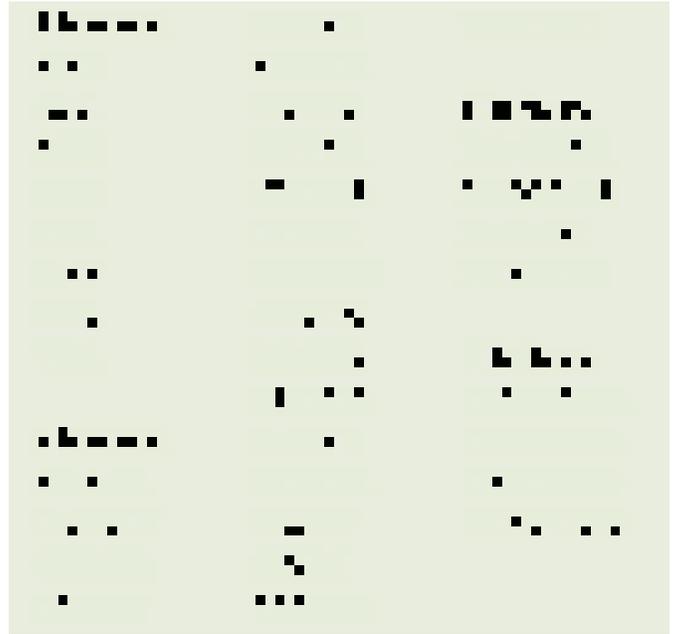
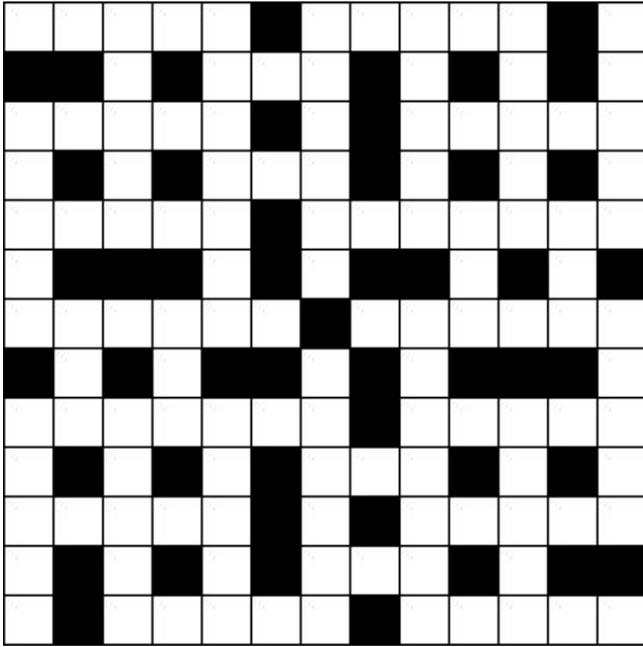
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"If someone were to pay you 10 cents for every kind word that you have spoken about people, and collect 5 cents for every unkind word, would you be rich or in debt?"

—Author unknown
Apple Seeds



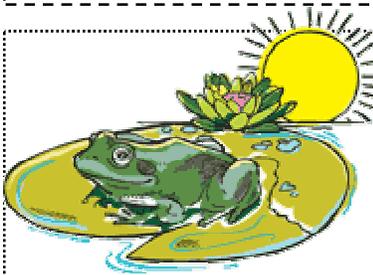
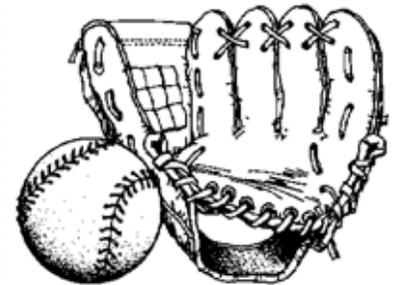
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A six-year-old boy told his father one day, "I'm going outdoors and play ball with God." "So how do you play ball with God?" the father asked.

"Oh, it's not hard at all," the boy replied. "I just throw the ball up, and God throws it back down to me."

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A hunter was crossing a road one day when a frog called out to him and said, "If you kiss me, I'll turn into a beautiful princess." He bent over, picked up the frog and put it in his pocket.

The frog spoke up again and said, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a beautiful Princess, I will stay with you for one week."

The hunter took the frog out of his pocket, smiled at it and returned it to the pocket. The frog then cried out, "If you kiss me and turn me back into a Princess, I'll stay with you and do anything you want."

Again the hunter took the frog out, smiled at it and put it back into his pocket.

Finally the frog asked, "What is it? I've told you I'm a beautiful Princess, that I'll stay with you for a week and do anything you want. Why won't you kiss me?"

The hunter said, "Look, I'm an avid hunter and when I'm not hunting, I'm fishing, so I don't have time for girlfriends, but a talking frog is really cool!"

What's the difference between a hunter and a fisherman?
A hunter lies in wait. A fisherman waits and lies.

