

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

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

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS
9:00 a.m. Christian Education
10:30 a.m. Worship Service

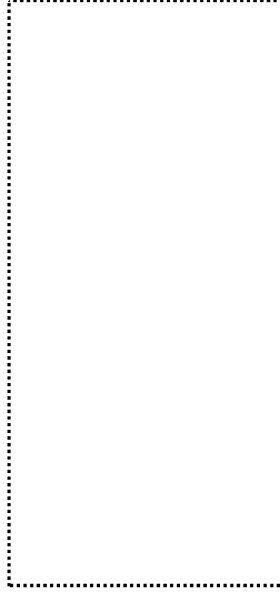
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez
Families In Action - Virginia McGill
Lutheran Volunteer Corp - Jessica Menary

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THE GRACE MESSENGER



2014

Grace Evangelical
Lutheran Church



1889 ~ 2014

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



2014 Council Members

Vicki Cox	Janet Hula
Andrew Edwards	Eva Martin
Sarah Emery	Loren Moyer
Arlone Farber	Charles Tuw
June Hilmer	Pastor Laaker

Officers Serving the Congregation:
 Financial: Janet Hula Treasurer: Ralph Fitle

The regular meeting of the Council was held on February 11th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for the continued recovery of those close to us: for Ken Hilmer as he goes in for more tests, for Vicki's grandson Shea as undergoes surgery to remove tonsils and adenoids. We pray for the 9 year old daughter of one of our Sudanese neighbors, as she was just diagnosed with diabetes. We pray for God's safety around all those participating and enjoying the Olympic ceremonies.

Devotions were shared from Psalm 36:9 and John 7:37. The first is uplifting, and reminds us to be hopeful. The second reminds us to feed the desire to learn & know new things. Everyone is welcomed by God!

Visions for Ministry: We looked at a document titled "Church Shouldn't Be This Hard." Lots of discussion about how that made people feel, both internally and externally and both positively and negatively. We are all aware that change is imminent...lots of reflection and conversation - let's think further! "The Future Starts Now" will be the book we begin to use when it arrives.

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

Christian Education: No new report.

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 222

2 Peter 2:1-10

S	T	E	H	P	O	R	P	Y	M	O	L	G	L	
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G	L	G	S	R	P	E	Y	R	X	F	S	S	A	D
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ASHES ANCIENT
 DEEDS ANGELS
 FALSE BURNING
 FILTHY CORRUPT
 FLOOD DENYING
 GLOOMY DESIRE
 GODLY DESPISE
 GREED EXAMPLE
 LORD EXPLOIT
 NOAH HANGING
 PETER HERESIES
 RESCUE JUDGMENT
 SINFUL LAWLESS
 SODOM PREACHER
 SPARE PROPHETS
 SWIFT SECRETLY
 TRIALS SHAMEFUL
 TRUTH STORIES
 TEACHERS

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

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2014 ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

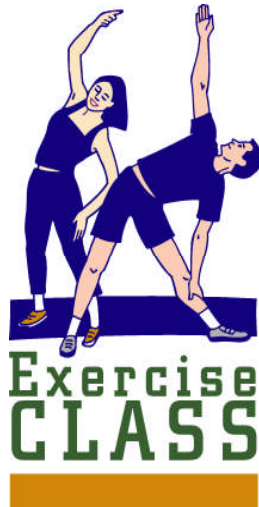
St. Patrick's Day prayer
May those that love us, love us
And those that don't love us
May God turn their hearts;
And if He doesn't turn their hearts.
May He turn their ankles
So we'll know them by their limping.
 —via Bobbe Lyon, Maitland, F

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15 exercises to avoid in 2014

- Jumping on the bandwagon.
- Wading through paperwork.
- Running around in circles.
- Pushing your luck.
- Spinning your wheels.
- Adding fuel to the fire.
- Beating your head against the wall.
- Climbing the walls.
- Beating your own drum.
- Dragging your heels.
- Jumping to conclusions.
- Grasping at straws.
- Fishing for compliments.
- Throwing your weight around.
- Passing the buck.

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INHERIT THE MIRTH

by Cuyler Black



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Evangelism/Outreach: Think about the opportunities regarding the request for 'crazy ideas' given at the Annual Meeting. Valentine cards were signed and sent to our shut-ins. All of our information was accepted for the next Lutheran Volunteer Corps round. Interviews for this August's placement will begin soon.

Finance: MIF - changing their interest schedule. ELCA annual congregational report was prepared and submitted by Pastor.

Property: Alma Lopez has signed on as our new custodian. Let's be sure and welcome her!

Service/Social Ministry: Habitat meeting at the end of the month. Build begins April 11 at 2451 S 17th Street. Give some thought to helping, make / serve food to these volunteers! OTOC Issues Conference to be held on Saturday February 22.

Support/Stewardship: No new report.

Worship: We will soon enter the Lenten season, please plan to join us each Wednesday evening. Our season will revolve around the theme "making change." This will include; season, habit, circumstance, heart, and plans.

Unfinished Business: No new report.

New Business: The Synod Assembly will be in Fremont this year, May 30-31. So far, Brenda and Pastor plan to attend.

Announcements: Pastor thanked everyone for the 30th year recognition. Plans continue for the 125th Anniversary celebration - Saturday May 17 at 5 p.m. will feature a catered dinner at the church. Vicki will bring treats for our March meeting, which will be held on March 18th.



Jeremiah 18:1-4 "The word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord: 'Come, go down to the potter's house, and there I will let you hear my words.' So I went down to the potter's house, and there he was working at his wheel. The vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter's hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as seemed good to him."

Grace Church has been planted on this location for 125 years. Indeed, God's hand was at work in shaping and re-shaping the ministry that has touched the lives of people over these years. In the early days, there was much hardship as the community struggled with the economics of the day. In its middle years, the need for space was a priority so decisions were made to expand the structure of the building. Ministry leaders came and went. God kept reworking the vessels that served. Today, the ministry shape and form is much different from 1889. No one from that day would have guessed that this community would have gone through several reworking's.

Today we often speak about the need for change. Change happens so fast. What change is good, what change is bad? Change is a part of God's reworking of us and God's ministry.

As we enter the season of Lent, beginning with Ash Wednesday, our mid-week emphasis will be "Making Change." Guests will speak to the work of God in making change.

- March 12, Change of Season, Tim Sully,
Sienna Francis House
- March 19, Change of Habit, Jessica Menary,
Lutheran Volunteer Corps
- March 26, Change of Circumstance, Laura
de Rosier, Lutheran Volunteer Corps
- April 2, Change of Heart, Kelli Joseph, Mosaic
- April 9, Change of Plans, Lacey Studnicka,
Lutheran Family Service



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

Special Pantry Needs for March:
Cake Mixes and Frosting

Items that clients cannot purchase with their food stamps are always appreciated: Dish Soap, Kleenex, Bar Soap, Deodorant, Toothbrush and toothpaste, Shaving Cream, Razors, Mouthwash (without alcohol), Feminine hygiene products, Hair products (combs, brushes, picks), Bathroom tissue, Shampoo, Dry Laundry Soap, Can Openers, Diaper wipes, and Diapers, especially sizes 4, 5, 6 and pull-ups.

We always need paper or plastic bags.

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



Blue Flamingo Fair Trade Boutique

Located within Hanscom Park United Methodist Church at 4444 Frances Street. This Non-profit Fair Trade Ministry boutique carries wide selections of Fair Trade coffees, chocolates, accessories, and gifts from Equal Exchange with new inventory arriving weekly. Your purchases support farmers and artisans worldwide by providing a living wage for their products while helping fund community gardens and work for justice within the community.

Hours of Operation:
Wednesdays 12-6

Last Saturday of each month 10-2

Or, by appointment at 402-898-9862, ext. 109
BlueFlamingo.org



**Carol Joy Holling Camp
April 25-26
Gathering Christian Men
For a Rustic Adventure**

This retreat will gather men for time to worship, serve, and learn. You'll take part in a variety of camp activities like archery, boating, fishing and fly fishing lessons. Pastor Jeremy Fuerst from St. Timothy's Lutheran Church in Omaha will be leading devotion/Bible study this year.

Cost is \$88 per person which includes lodging, meals, Bible study book, and all activities. Lodging will take place at the Holling House at Carol Joy Holling. You can register online at caroljoyholling.com or call Kelsey Rabel at 402-944-2544.



**Heaven is Ringing
Handbell Choir Concert
March 15, 2014, 7:00 p.m.**

Sinai Festival Sounds, Nebraska Synod ELCA, and Hastings College are sponsoring a "Heaven is Ringing" Handbell Concert. Byron W. Jensen, a distinguished Professor in Music, is in his eleventh year teaching music at the Hastings College, will be directing the bell choir for this awe inspiring musical event.

Sinai Lutheran Church
950 East 8th Street, Fremont, NE.

On Sundays, I will be preaching on these themes and passages:

Did God Really Say...? Romans 1:8-13
Enemies of the Cross Philippians 1:1-4
Passing the Test 1 Corinthians 10:1-13
A New Point of View 2 Corinthians 1:16-21
Running the Race Philippians 3:4-14
A Bloody Cheer! Philippians 2:5-11

I trust God continues to shape and reshape each of us and the ministry that is planted here at Grace Lutheran. May the Holy Spirit work mightily in each of us.

Pr. Laaker



THE WORLD MAP

A father wanted to read the paper, but was being bothered by his little daughter, Vanessa. Finally, he tore a sheet out of his magazine, on which was printed the map of the world. Tearing it into small pieces, he gave it to Vanessa, and said, "Go into the other room and see if you can put this together."

After a few minutes, Vanessa returned and handed him the map correctly fitted together.

The father was surprised and asked how she had finished so quickly. "Oh," she said, "on the other side of the paper was a picture of Jesus. When I got Jesus in His place, then the world came out all right."

Godisgroovy.com

Please
Pray
for...



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

1 Kings 8:28

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

✠ **Individuals listed below have ongoing health issues**

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| ✠ Andrew Edwards | ✠ Jim Harrahill |
| ✠ Ken Hilmer | ✠ David Hufford |
| ✠ Carolyn Matson | ✠ Ferne Matson |
| ✠ Gloria Moore | ✠ LaVonne Moss |
| ✠ Robert Moss | ✠ Don Olson |
| ✠ Lori Vasquez | ✠ Urbano Vasquez |
| ✠ Scott Moore (Gloria Moore's son.) | |
| ✠ Norma Courtney (Arlone Farber's Mom.) | |
| ✠ Bob Hargis (Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer's son-in-law.) | |
| ✠ Christian Barajas (Samantha Trejo, Angela & Alex Everitt's brother.) | |
| ✠ Sandy Fitzgerald (Gloria Moore's daughter.) | |

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

Pray for the Council Members. Ask God to bless their ministry among us. Pray for strength and spiritual wisdom for the leaders in the local church and the Nebraska Synod:

Pastor Damon Laaker, Grace Lutheran Church
Bishop Brian Maas, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Bishop

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

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



FAMILIES IN ACTION – OMAHA

Virginia McGill, MA
Executive Director

Gema C. Wolde
Community Health Worker
Se habla español.



Mobile Clinic to Visit St. Joseph Church March 2nd 2014

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm in the Social Hall

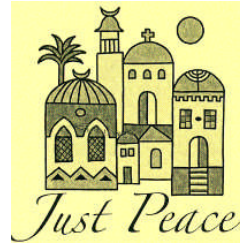
**The following will be offered for
FREE to adults and youth:**

**Cholesterol Check
Glucose Check
Blood Pressure
Height and Weight Measurements
Nutritional Education**

*Made possible by Children's Hospital & Medical Center's
Preventing Childhood Obesity Community Grant in
partnership with Families in Action and our
Methodist College partnership*

“The Stones Cry Out”

Friday, April 4, 2014
6:30 p.m.
Presbyterian Church of the Master
10710 Corby Circle, Omaha



“The Stones Cry Out” examines the plight of the Palestinian, indigenous Christian Arab population - the direct descendants of the first followers of Jesus, often called “the forgotten faithful” in the current Middle East situation. Media coverage generally portrays Palestinians as Muslims when, in fact, they include both Muslims and Christians. Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, is now hemmed in by the “wall,” cut off from Jerusalem and robbed of much of its agricultural land. This film is all the more important for understanding the issues currently being discussed in peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.

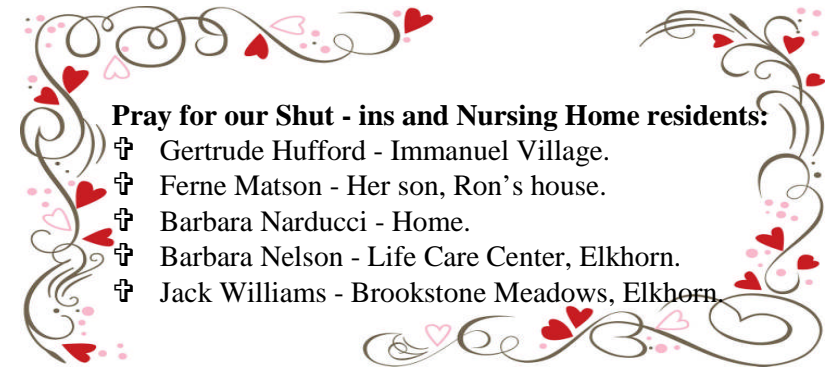
The film will be presented by Drs. Winifred and Lewis Pinch, members of Presbyterian Church of the Master in Omaha. Winnie and Lew are members of the PCUSA Israel/Palestine Mission Network (IPMN). Their personal interest in the Middle East began when they served as Presbyterian mission health care workers in Iran (1967-1970). They visited Iran again in October 2010 to update themselves on the current situation. In 2008 they visited the West Bank, Israel and Jordan and met with political, religious, and educational leaders as well as representative lay individuals in the Holy Land.

Sponsored by the Presbytery of the Missouri River Valley
Social Justice & Peacemaking Committee

“We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount.”

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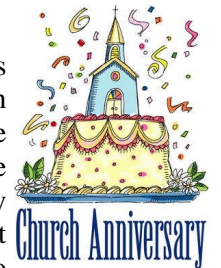
~ US General Omar Bradley
World War II Commander



Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

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

In recognition of Grace Lutheran Church's 125th Anniversary the planning committee is in the process of putting together some unique events in connection to this celebration. We need your help! If you missed the opportunity to share any photos for the booklet that was put together five years ago, or have new photos to share, now is your chance. Please submit your photos to Amanda Vazquez or e-mail your digital photos to her at amandajvazquez@gmail.com, please submit your photos by April 1st.



Mark your calendars! a dinner event is being planned for Saturday evening May 17th with a Meet and Greet at 4:00 p.m. and dinner served tentatively at 5:00 p.m. A special worship service is being planned for May 18th. Please watch next month's newsletter for additional information. If you would like to join in on this planning process, please attend the next scheduled meeting, next Sunday following worship service.





Christians have acknowledged Lent by praying and reading devotionals more than usual during this season. The following is a 2014 devotional from “too deep for words”, by David L. Miller, Joelle Colville-Hanson, and Mary Hinkle Shore.

“I long to be home. Home is the heart who welcomes and holds us all, the embracing heart of God who draws us into a common sharing of faith and life, love and hope. We all long for home. It is for this sharing in a common heart that God fashioned us.

Paul knows the beauty of such shared community in Christ. On his journeys, he has labored with faithful companions and been lifted by the prayers and gifts of others know only in stories heard and letters received. He longs to see them face-to-face, to touch their faces and bask in the fullness of the hart of love into which Christ has joined them. The ache of incomplection burns in his soul and in ours. We are not complete, not whole, until we are joined with one another, one in the heart of Christ.

The blessing Paul wants to share with the Romans, whom he has never met, is this sheer physical presence. The primary spiritual gift we bring to one another is the warmth of Christ’s love in our hearts. It lifts us above ourselves into joy and hope, even in troubling circumstances. It tells us we are home.”

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th with a Lenten Supper at 6:00 p.m. and an Ash Wednesday Service at 7:00 p.m. Come home to share in the faith, life, love, and hope that we all embrace through the heart and love of God.



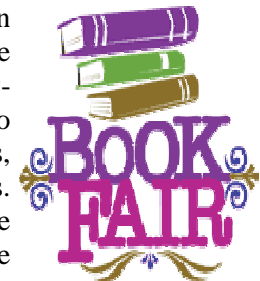
Lutheran Service Corp Lutheran Volunteer Corp

There are 10 Lutheran Service Corp Volunteers living in the Hillstrom House this year and as in years past a few items are showing up on a wish list. The top wish is knowledge of any notifications about FREE events in the Omaha Metro area. Some additional items are as follows:

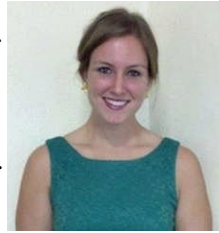
- ✚ Vacuum Cleaner
- ✚ Zoo/Museum day passes
- ✚ Bed linens (mostly twin)
- ✚ Taper and tea candles
- ✚ Laundry soap / Fabric softener
- ✚ Dishwasher detergent, dish soap, and other “green” cleaners
- ✚ Non-perishable food items
- ✚ Paper products, such as toilet paper
- ✚ Financial contributions
- ✚ PRAYERS!

Your continued support toward this inspiring organization provides the opportunity of service for young people like Jessica Menary, our LVC volunteer.

The Used Book Sale will begin on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. A table has been set up in the Upper Fellowship Hall for your easy access to browse through the books, puzzles, videos, DVD’s, CD’s and cassettes. A container for the proceeds will be placed on the table next to the sale merchandise. All proceeds will go toward new books, projects, or library supplies.



Last month I was involved in a variety of fun projects, presentations, preparations, discussions and more.



I enjoyed spending time with kids of various ages on Wednesday and Friday nights and Sunday afternoons. It is always fun to watch kids get excited about learning. It is a joy to do things with kids like teach them a new balancing table top game and watch them figure it out together and help each other build. I also had fun repeatedly writing division and multiplication problems on a chalkboard for a girl who kept saying, "Done! Can you make some harder ones?" I am always amazed at the drawing skills of a couple boys and had a blast teaching them to make paper airplanes.

Recently I have also enjoyed having discussions with my housemates about social movements, social change, people who are left out of or misrepresented in history, and different spiritual concepts. I always enjoy having open minded discussions and pondering.

I am impressed by a lot of people in my life who strive to make things different and better for others and for themselves. It is inspiring to work with the people I work with who are always looking for the next step to make our community and world a better place. I love surrounding myself with people who work hard and who can challenge me to think deeply and act with purpose.

Jessica Menary,
Lutheran Volunteer Community Outreach Associate,
(641-990-5324 outreach@graceluth.com)



There are still a couple of Wednesday dinners in need of volunteers. If you have been thinking of asking a friend or two to join you and create a meal to

share for a Lenten supper, now is the time to reserve a time to serve others. Dates that are currently available are March 26, April 9, and April 17, Maundy Thursday. Please look for the sign up sheet posted on the bulletin board.

**Lutheran World Relief
Quilting
Mondays at 9:00 a.m.**



Coffee Fellowship

Do you have Monday mornings free?

Coffee break and joke time at 10:00 a.m.

Drop by and help cut squares and tie quilt tops on to the backs. No experience is necessary! Join in the great fellowship and conversation.



A special thank you to all who sent cards and valentines; stopped by or called to chat for awhile. The over abundance of love and friendship is greatly appreciated. I hope and plan on being able to return to worship with everyone soon!

Thank You! ~ Gloria Moore

BASKETS OF PROMISE

On Easter, we celebrate the joy and hope of Christ's resurrection. Yet around the world "the least of these" — those Christ calls us to serve — continue to suffer.

Grace Lutheran can reach out to those in need by joining Lutheran World Relief's **Baskets of Promise** Lenten appeal. Throughout Lent, we will be collecting Personal Care Kits to send to families around the world.

Items that are needed to complete a Basket of Promise are:

- * Bars of Soap (4 to 5 oz., any brand, in original wrapping) March 9th.
- * Bath Towels (light-weight, maximum 52" x 27", dark color recommended) March 16th.
- * Toothbrushes (adult size, in original packaging) March 23rd.
- * Combs. March 30th.
- * Nail Clippers (metal, attached file optional) April 6th.
- * A Second Bar of Soap. April 13th.

Grace Lutheran will be collecting the above mentioned items to assemble 30 Personal Care Kits to faithfully bring a future of hope to families in need. You can be a part of this Lenten journey and bring an item or two and brighten the hope, faith, and future of an individual or a family through Lutheran World Relief.

Following worship service on Palm Sunday, April 13th, everyone is encouraged to stay and help assemble the care kits that have been collected during the 2014 Lenten season.

*Dear God,
Give us this day
Our daily bread
And help us not to eat
Tomorrow's bread
Today. —Marjorie Spalsbury
from her book, Gentle Hills*

Lenten prayer

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

2 Corinthians 9:8



- ◆ Thank you to Marilyn and Jerry Van Ormer for their dedication in tending to the plants in the entry way, they continue to look welcoming.
- ◆ Thank you to the ESL tutors; Vicki Cox, Arlone Farber, Mary Laaker, Jessica Menary, and Amanda Vazquez, for making that connection with the students willing to learn and form friendships.
- ◆ Thank you to the Quilters, Marilyn, LaVonne, Bob, June, and Eva. Your dedication to creating quilts for Lutheran World Relief is truly a reflection of God's love.
- ◆ Thank you to Bob Moss and Jerry Van Ormer for their continuing efforts to maintain the church with any projects that need to be completed.
- ◆ Thank you to Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer, Greg and Janet Hula, and Eva Martin; who pick up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
- ◆ Thank you to Ron and Donna Adrian, and Brenda Spahr who take care of the altar, set up and take down communion.
- ◆ Thank you to the Newsletter Assembly crew; Marilyn, Jerry, LaVonne, Bob, June, Gloria, and Eva. The dedication and great conversations during assembly is greatly appreciated!
- ◆ Thank you Larry for painting the upper fellowship hall, it has brightened the hall up and has inspired the feeling of spring!



March 2014 - Responsibility List

Worship Assistants

2 – Brenda Spahr
 5 – Mary Laaker
 9 – Arlone Farber
 16 – Lori Vasquez
 23 – Greg Hula
 30 – Brenda Spahr
 Apr. 6 – Mary Laaker

Birthdays

3 – Jadin Kora
 8 – Alejandra Granillo
 9 – Andrew Edwards
 12 – Mary Laaker
 Carolyn Matson
 13 – Ken Hilmer
 14 – Suata Lewa
 17 – Jaden Mabe
 19 – Craig Helm
 21 – Catlin Cuffe
 22 – Marsha Moyer
 Regina Lewa
 24 – Esahia Nyiwe
 27 – Abigail Hegarty



Did we miss your birthday?
 Please contact the church
 office and let us know!

March Ushers

Jerry Van Ormer
 Vicki Cox
 Ron Adrian
 Andrew Edwards



Ushers & Greeters



Greeters

2 – Bob and LaVonne Moss
 9 – Larry Foreman and Andrew Edwards
 16 – Andrea Spahr and Eva Martin
 23 – Sarah Emery and Mary Laaker
 30 – Lori Vasquez and Davena Garcia
 Apr. 6 – Greg and Janet Hula




Altar Flowers

2 – Sharon Irwin, in loving memory of her
 parents, Murph and Myra Watson. 
 9 – June Hilmer, in honor of her husband, Ken's
 birthday.
 16 – Pastor and Mary Laaker, in honor of their
 40th Wedding Anniversary.
 23 – Vicki Cox, in loving memory of her Mom,
 Eileen Morter. 
 30 – Ron and Donna Adrian, in honor of their
 granddaughter, Madelyn's birthday.
 Apr. 6 – Pastor and Mary Laaker, in honor of
 their grandchildren's birthday.

Flower Pick-Up for March - OPEN



Backpack Program

2 – Sharon Irwin, in honor of all family and
 friends. 
 9 – Sarah Emery and Amanda Vazquez, in
 honor of their Mom, Mary's birthday.
 16 – Vicki Cox, in honor of her nephew,
 Collin's birthday. 
 23 – Eva Martin, in honor of her great-
 granddaughter, Abigail's birthday.
 30 – Pastor and Mary Laaker, in honor of
 their daughter, Sarah's birthday.
 Apr. 6 – Vicki Cox, in honor of her
 grandson, Garrick's birthday. 

Coffee Servers

2 – Marilyn Van Ormer
 9 – Loren & Marsha Moyer
 16 – Vicki Cox
 23 – Sarah Emery
 30 – Brenda Spahr
 Apr. 6 – Arlone Farber



Coffee Fellowship

