

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

9:30 a.m. Christian Education

11:00 a.m. Worship Service

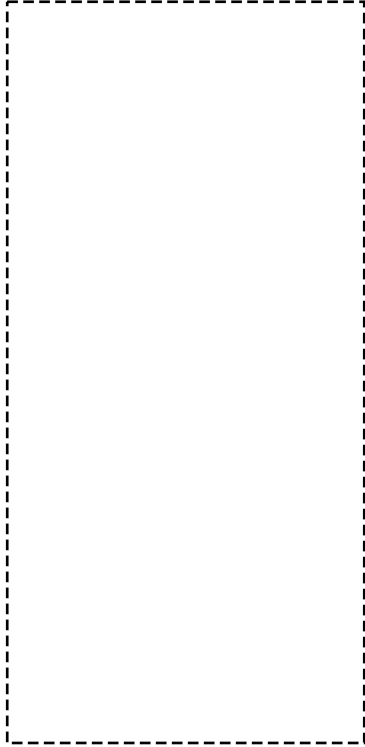
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez
Families In Action - Virginia McGill
Lutheran Volunteer Corp - Jessica Menary

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THE GRACE MESSENGER



2014



1889 - 2014

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

The regular meeting of the Council was held on July 8th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: We pray for the continued recovery of those close to us; Arlone's mother, Norma Courtney who has suffered a stroke, for Sarah's mother in law, Roseanne Emery as she continues with her chemo treatments, Margie Sutej as she recovers from hip surgery. We pray for the healing of Alma Lopez's son, Obed Lopez, who was hospitalized with an asthma attack and for Andrew as he struggles with continued health issues. We remember Vicki's sister's grandson Ethan Marcus...born early but doing great! Let's pray for good choices with regard to children coming over our borders in search of peace and assistance.

Pastor led devotions from Leviticus 19:13 and Romans 15:2. They speak about not being self-serving, but accepting differing outlooks from others and seek to help them excel in their own skills. This helps us realize that there are always multiple sides to each situation.

Visions for Ministry: The Council continued reading The Future Starts Now. We focused on our goals. Do we look to find fun in what we are doing ...or find a way to experience fun in everything that we touch? What do YOU project?? God is in our midst....be on the lookout! Observe it, and own it! Name it! Cultivate people - take time to reach out and learn about your neighbors, what do they enjoy?? Please read Chapter Five for our next meeting.

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

Christian Education: VBS starts Sunday!

Evangelism/Outreach: Our KAW Celebration will be held on July 27. We will host a picnic, play games, and celebrate Jessica and the completion of the KAW program!!

Continued...

Finance: Motion to ratify Disney Endowment Board distributions as set forth by the Endowment Board.

Property: No real news with the Church Mutual suit. The attorney has made a revised demand to Church Mutual. Refrigerator replaced, water fountain repaired, pop machine serviced.

Service/Social Ministry: OTOC training - July 15 movie at 7 p.m. at Urban Abbey.

Support/Stewardship: Quarterly statements will be sent out soon!

Worship: July 9th was the third anniversary of Freedom to South Sudan!

Unfinished Business: Kitchen Floor to be replaced soon.

New Business: No new report.

Announcements: Malachi will be here the last Sunday in July. Janet will bring treats for our August meeting.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Get ready to serve! Sunday, September 7, 2014

On Sunday, September 7, 2014, the nearly 10,000 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) are invited to put their faith into action by serving their communities in ways that share the love of God with all of God's people.

Got an idea or two? Please share with Pastor Laaker or a council member, any project idea that you can think of which would help an individual or a group in our community feel God's love through Grace Lutheran Church.

Fact: The fastest and most significant way to increase volunteerism is to ask more people to help. Among the 44 percent of respondents who were asked to volunteer in the past year, 86 percent actually did. Among the 55 percent who were not asked only 24 percent volunteered. - *from the Roper Organization*



July has come to an end. We have celebrated with our young people the successful conclusion of the Kids At Work Program for 2014. This marks the fourteenth year of touching the lives of young people. This year seventeen young people participated. I can only scratch the surface of impact this effort has made in the lives of young people and their families. I am amazed at the efforts of leaders and volunteers who help make this ministry effort a resounding success. Thank You!

We also celebrated the work of our Lutheran Volunteer Corps member, Jessica Menary. Jessica came to us last August fresh out of college. She leaves us as a valued member of our ministry staff. I have thoroughly enjoyed Jessica's work among us. She has demonstrated wonderful gifts of patience and persistence. She has willingly taken on roles that were not in her job description when we began. Her enthusiast smile captured the hearts of many. We will miss her but know that her ministry among us has been a wonderful blessing.

In mid-August, we will welcome Malachi Black as our Lutheran Volunteer Corps member. Malachi is a recent graduate of Xavier University in Cincinnati. He brings a variety of volunteer experiences from summer camp to congregational life, from serving in the military to tutoring children. I look forward to working with Malachi.

On Sunday, July 27, I said, "The world looks at what Jesus has done and is unimpressed. He has healed some people, but not millions of people. He has preached a couple of memorable sermons but even those are small in comparison to others. He has called people to join his movement, but frankly, none of them are very impressive.

"And Jesus tells them not to be discouraged. He tells his disciples not to look at God's work among them through the eyes of the world. What the world considers to be small and inconsequential, God sees through the eyes of love. God is doing a mighty work among us, but God's mighty work does not appear mighty in the world's eyes.

"I think about our church gathered here. There was a day when our church was bursting at the seams. Not anymore. We were not the biggest building in the community but clearly the building stood out as significant. There was a day in North America when a majority of the people were Christians. A large percentage of the people in town attended church. But not anymore.

"I think about you gathered here. By the world's standards, you are not the "movers and shakers" of this town. There are not many powerful and prominent ones among you. I think about the number of young people who have participated in the Kids at Work program. There are many churches who have youth programs that exceed out numbers by two or three times.

"But remember the parable of the mustard seed. From this tiny seed there grows a great plant. Now maybe the movement from a tiny seed to a large plant doesn't seem very impressive to hear. But maybe the parables are a way of getting us to look at things as God looks at things because, as we know, God's ways are not our ways.

And finally, I said, "Let us take heart! Let us respond to the Spirit of Christ alive in each of us. God does not expect us to be great, only to do little things with great love. God will provide the growth and from small things bring great blessings!"








May we continue to do small things with great love.

Pastor Laaker



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 the plants in the entry way, they continue to thrive and look welcoming.
-  Thank you to the ESL tutors; Vicki Cox, Arlone Farber, Mary Laaker, and Amanda Vazquez, for making connections with the students willing to learn and form friendships.
-  Thank you to Greg Hula and Ron Adrian for sharing their awesome grilling talents, the food was delicious!
-  Thank you to Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer, Greg and Janet Hula; who pick up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
-  Thank you to the crew from Prince of Peace who are taking on the role of lawncare this summer.
-  Thank you to Ron and Donna Adrian and Brenda Spahr who take care of the altar, and prepare the communion table.
-  Thank you Alma for taking over the responsibility of cleaning this busy building, it looks fantastic!



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 and concerns:

Andrew Edwards
James Harrahill
David Hufford
Ferne Matson
LaVonne Moss
Don Olson
Margie Sutej
Urbano Vasquez



Sandy Fitzgerald
Ken Hilmer
Carolyn Matson
Gloria Moore
Robert Moss
Cheryl Powley
Lori Vasquez

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.)
Pam Reents (Close friend to many!)
Roseanna Emery (Tom Emery's Mom.)

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



Pray for our Shut-ins and Nursing Home residents:

Ferne Matson - Home.
Barbara Narducci - Home.
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn.



Prayer Service
Wednesday
August 20, 2014
7:00 p.m.

An inspiring and quiet experience in meditation, light music, and a deeper connection within God's presence, peace, and love.

Grace Lutheran Church
ESL (English as a Second Language) Classes
Saturdays 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
402-341-7730



Do you know anyone searching for the opportunity to learn the English language? Please direct them here at Grace. Every Saturday morning they would be greeted with a smile and very helpful tutors to start their education in one of the most difficult languages to learn as a second language.



Kids At Work 2014



KAW Wrap-Up!

Kids At Work was finishing up this week, and so I would like to give you all a snippet of the summer and especially thank those involved for their kindness and dedication. The kids were great this summer, they worked hard and learned a lot along the way. I had some one-on-one discussions with them, and they mentioned in their own words that they learned things such as: that working together is important in a team and at a job, that different places in the community offer different services like helping people and that some of those jobs are difficult but that they work very hard and do a lot, that helping people in our community is good and things like picking up trash is important to keep Omaha beautiful, that managing your money is important, and that being responsible and kind and knowing how to work hard are valuable traits.



The kids also talked with me about what they enjoyed most from KAW. They enjoyed the work they did helping senior citizens and small children, because they liked being able to bring joy to their lives. The kids really did a great job interacting with people and serving others, and it was something they liked doing too! The KAW

kids also talked about how they enjoyed working as a team, and they said they learned about responsibility and personal and group accountability. The kids really liked being able to spend time with the friends they already had before coming to the program, and they also enjoyed getting to know new people and making more diverse friends in the program that they would maybe not have gotten to meet if not for KAW. When I asked the kids if they would like to do KAW again or if they would recommend it to a friend, they all said yes, because they said not only was it fun and gave them something to do in the summer, but they also learned many things and they appreciated learning about how to help other people and that they gained happiness from taking action to help others.



Clearly this is a program that benefits the whole community and helps our children grow. The challenges this program faced this summer where that we did not have enough adult volunteers to be group leaders, and I hope there will be more for next year. The adult leaders who helped this summer are superb and they did an amazing job. I am so grateful for their help, and their acts of service to their community and dedication of their time and energy to this program to cultivate growth in the kids and in the community is truly commendable. Thank you to everyone involved in KAW!

Thank You Grace for a Great Year

It is difficult for me to express how much this year working at Grace Lutheran Church means to me, because I have a lot of positive things to say, and I will miss all of you here. I am very glad I got to be involved in so many things this year, and I learned so much from each project and even more from all the people.

You have made this church feel like a home, not just a place I work at. You made me feel welcomed here. I learned that I can count on you all for things ranging from volunteering in a pinch to having meaningful discussions about spirituality. Here at Grace I have observed talent being put to use for good deeds, and people taking action to create positive change in this community.

Some of the memories I will pack up with me as I go onto my next adventure are: lots of laughter and smiles, knowledge of how to decorate with streamers like a pro, constant fear of someone jumping out and scaring me when I least expect it in the workplace, lessons in ESL grammar that still make no sense, experience working in tandem with different cultures, a strong drive to be a Husker fan, and most of all, the inspiration you all gave me to help others even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone.

I will take away so many good memories and valuable lessons from Grace. I have been inspired by all your kindness, willingness, thoughtfulness, courage to question, to discuss and to grow, problem solving together, playfulness and joy and also encouragement, genuine interest in each other's lives and hearts. I am blessed to have had this opportunity to work here and to get to know you all. I will be in touch, and I hope to visit!

Love,

Jessica





**FAMILIES IN
ACTION – OMAHA**



Virginia McGill, MA
Executive Director

Gema C. Wolde
Community Health Worker
Se habla español.

www.familiesinactionomaha.org

Dunklau Grant to Benefit Interfaith and Families in Action Participants

“I am part of Interfaith Health and Familias en Accion because there are many programs where I can learn. So can my children. I can also spend time with my children during programs. We make new friends. We learn together. The workers and volunteers always help us in whatever we need. Thank you for making a difference!”

Abigail, age 30, Interfaith Health Participant

Interfaith Health Service (IHS) via Familias En Accion (FIA) is pleased to share the wonderful news that we were recently awarded a grant for \$10,000 from the Rupert Dunklau Foundation. This generous grant will be used to develop our programming in the areas of education, health and cultural exchange.

At IHS/FIA, we are growing to meet the changing needs of the South Omaha community by building trusting relationships within the community. IHS/FIA is well known for our collaborative, asset-based approach to programming, and we continually reach out to others interested in a lived experience of service to others within the context of mutual learning.

IHS will extend its scope and services with the assistance of the Dunklau Foundation by working with neighborhoods in the areas directly surrounding our home office at Grace Lutheran church, where a 25% and 44% poverty rate is documented (the New York Times, Mapping Poverty Website). It has long been shown that communities lacking in resources are the most at-risk. IHS will utilize funding from the Dunklau Foundation to meet the needs of the growing Latino Community and to provide a cultural exchange between our volunteers and participants. Specifically, IHS will access individuals who are relatively socially isolated and have few, if any, financial and practical resources necessary to access educational, physical activity, health and wellness programs. While providing opportunities for positive social interaction, programs will continue to track outcomes in the areas of improved education, wellness and self-esteem.

Our unique outreach efforts consistently yield successes far beyond goals. This is due to the support of funders like the Dunklau Foundation and others, the motivated population of children and families we serve, and the high level of trust built up over the years by IHS, something very few other organizations have been able to achieve.

We are deeply grateful not only to Pastor Damon for his work and vision within our organization, but also to our participants and staff who are deeply committed to our mission and community. We are also thankful for our many supporters, volunteers and all of our congregation members and partners who work with us and keep us close in prayer.

With Thanks,

Virginia, Gema and Kaela, IHS/FIA

**Lutheran South Pantry
4401 South 23rd Street
402-502-7070**



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 wipers, and Diapers, especially sizes 4, 5, 6 and pull-ups.

We always need paper or plastic bags.

Electronic Giving is a convenient, consistent way to help our church year round.



Consider scheduling a recurring electronic contribution today. It's easy! You will no longer need to write out checks and prepare envelopes every week. Even when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending services, your electronic contributions will continue to be received on an uninterrupted basis.

Get started today! Ask for an authorization form in the church office.

August 2014



Worship Assistants

3 - Lori Vasquez
10 - Brenda Spahr
17 - Mary Laaker
24 - Larry Foreman
31 - Greg Hula
Sept. 7 - Arlone Farber



2 - Vicki Cox
3 - Bobbi Jo Pankaj
8 - Jace Hargis
9 - Becky Hanson
23 - Charles Emery
26 - Kirstin Pafford
29 - Lily Casey
30 - Linda Pafford

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

August Ushers

Ron Adrian
Larry Foreman
Jerry Van Ormer
Andrew Edwards



Greeters

3 - Sarah and Madison Emery
10 - Gloria Moore and June Hilmer
17 - Vicki Cox and Ralph Fitle
24 - Ron and Donna Adrian
31 - Bob and LaVonne Moss
Sept. 7 - Greg and Janet Hula

Responsibility List

Altar Flowers



3 - Margie Sutej, in honor of her husband, Brian's birthday.
10 - Greg and Janet Hula, for the Glory of God.
17 - Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer, in honor of their 61st Wedding Anniversary.
24 - Joe and Barb Narducci, in loving memory of their parents.
31 - OPEN.
Sept. 7 - OPEN.

Flower Pick-Up for August - OPEN

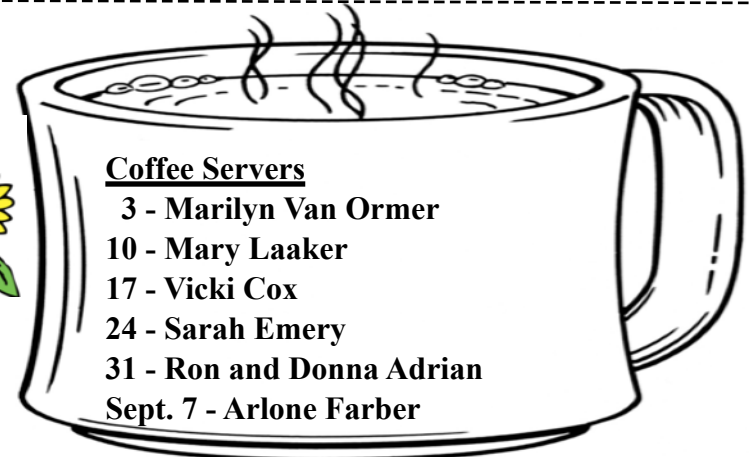
Backpack Program

3 - Vicki Cox, remember all who are hungry.
10 - Vicki Cox, for all the children going back to school.
17 - Eva Martin, in honor of her brother, Will's 70th birthday.
24 - Brenda Spahr, remember all who are hungry.
Sept. 7 - OPEN.



Coffee Servers

3 - Marilyn Van Ormer
10 - Mary Laaker
17 - Vicki Cox
24 - Sarah Emery
31 - Ron and Donna Adrian
Sept. 7 - Arlone Farber



OTOC - Omaha Together One Community
Organizing for the Common Good
Summer 2014 Training Series

OTOC is offering training on the basics of broad based organizing. This series is for all those interested in learning how congregations and community leaders can develop relationships that have the power to create change based on shared faith values. Leadership development and organizing skills promote creative problem solving and collaboration - skills useful in the workplace and in congregational committees, as well as any type of organizing.

Monday, August 18th Augustana Lutheran at 7:00 pm (38th & Lafayette)
Cycle of Organizing: How moving from individual meetings, to small group issue teams, into research, and public actions leads to community changes.

Monday, September 8th, St. Pius X Parish Center at 7:00 pm (70th & Blondo)
Public Conversation with Candidates to the OPPD Board: Putting what we are learning into action by sharing concerns for environmental sustainability with candidates, and hearing their responses.

To RSVP or for more information about the Training Series, call the OTOC office at 402-344-4401 or e-mail at omahatogether@otoc.org.

**Lutheran Service Corps
Football Ticket Raffle**

This year's Lutheran Service Corp Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser will be held on Sunday, September 14th 5:00-7:00 pm at Trinity Lutheran Church, 6340 N. 30th Street. This year there will be a Football Ticket Raffle for the Nebraska vs. Perdue game on Saturday, November 1st. The raffle will include 2 Club Level Tickets, parking and a night stay at the Cornhusker Marriott in Lincoln. The cost for the raffle tickets is \$20; there will only be 100 raffle tickets sold. If you are interested in tickets, please speak with Pastor Laaker, or call the church office at 402-341-7730.



VBS - Catch the Buzz
ELCA Malaria Campaign



Children listen to the Bible Message of the Day - Jesus has compassion on the sick and heals them. With our friends in Africa, we can follow Jesus' example and "rebuke" malaria.

Children play a "web" game with the message that we are part of a global church family that still supports and cares for one another just as the early church did. Working together they could support a balloon with a web of string!



During the week VBS and the Grace Congregation raised \$261.70 toward the ELCA Malaria Campaign. Great Job!

Two Dozen Pure Witticisms

1. I started out with nothing...I still have most of it.
2. Some days you're the dog, some days the hydrant.
3. I finally got my head together, now my body is falling apart.
4. Funny, I don't remember being absent minded.
5. If all is not lost, where is it?
6. It is easier to get older than it is to get wiser.
7. If at first you do succeed, try not to look too astonished.
8. The first rule of holes: If you are in one, stop digging.
9. I went to school to become a wit, only got halfway through.
10. It was all so different before everything changed.
11. Nostalgia isn't what is used to be.
12. Old programmers never die. They just terminate and stay resident.
13. A day without sunshine is like a day in Seattle.
14. I wish the buck stopped here. I could use a few.
15. It's hard to make a comeback when you haven't been anywhere.
16. Living on Earth is expensive, but it does include a free trip round the sun.
17. The only time the world beats a path to your door is if you're in the bathroom.
18. If God wanted me to touch my toes, he would have put them on my knees.
19. Lead me not into temptation (I can find the way myself).
20. If you're living on the edge, make sure you're wearing your seat belt.
21. An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.
22. It's not hard to meet expenses...they're everywhere.
23. Jury: Twelve people who determine which client has the better attorney.
24. Old people shouldn't eat health foods. They need all the preservatives they can get.

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 227

Rev.21:11-21

The New
Jerusalem

A	H	T	F	L	E	W	T	C	L	E	A	R	S	I
G	D	E	C	O	R	A	T	E	D	S	W	S	H	C
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N	L	E	C	Y	C	D	T	E	O	O	D	H	L	G
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A	T	T	E	A	N	E	R	S	R	A	O	R	V	R
G	A	N	R	C	P	T	S	P	T	P	G	U	E	A
L	O	E	E	S	O	P	H	T	A	I	B	O	N	U
D	M	D	A	T	T	N	H	Z	O	M	B	F	T	Q
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S	T	A	D	I	A	G	L	L	R	A	E	P	C	O
E	R	U	S	A	E	M	A	N	G	E	L	S	R	Y

BERYL	ANGELS
CLEAR	AMETHYST
CUBITS	APOSTLES
GATES	CRYSTAL
GLASS	DECORATED
GLORY	ELEVENTH
GOD	EMERALD
GOLD	FOURTH
JEWEL	ISRAEL
LAMB	JACINTH
PEARL	JASPER
SHONE	MEASURE
STONE	PRECIOUS
TENTH	SAPPHIRE
STADIA	SECOND
THICK	SQUARE
TOPAZ	TWELFTH
TRIBES	TWELVE
WALLS	WRITTEN

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>

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