

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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Omaha, NE 68105-2380  
402-341-7730

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Like us on Facebook at:  
[www.facebook.com/gracelutheranomaha](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutheranomaha)

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS  
9:30 a.m. Christian Education  
11:00 a.m. Worship Service

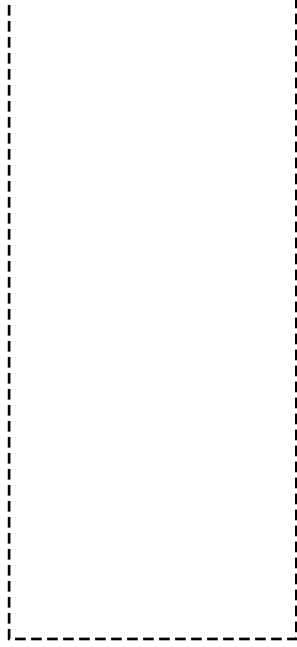
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker  
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr  
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey  
Sexton - Alma Lopez  
Community Outreach - Malachi Black

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# THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2015



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



**2016 Council Members**

Ron Adrian	Vicki Cox	Arlone Farber
Ralph Fittle	Greg Hula	Loren Moyer
Brenda Spahr	Amanda Vazquez	Pastor Laaker
*****		

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

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 The regular meeting of the Council was held on January 12th. The Council shared their prayer concerns for US servicemen and women in Iran, members and friends of council members with health concerns, employees of M's Pub and surrounding businesses, homeless individuals enduring the extreme cold weather and shelter workers and volunteers.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts" from 2 Samuel 23:3-4 and Acts 20:28. The first tells us that a good and just leader brings light and beauty to the darkness in our lives. The second tells us to take care of our neighbors and be a good example to those who look up to you or rely on you.

Visions for Ministry: An article was shared highlighting small churches that defy the odds and thrive.

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

Christian Education: Be thinking ahead for options for Vacation Bible School this summer.

Evangelism/Outreach: The Grace Reads program is going well and is looking to expand to 3rd graders.

Pastor received a phone call from a neighbor who is working on becoming a licensed in-home daycare. The state requires that she have a separate location to take the kids in case of emergency, and she has asked if Grace could be her emergency location. The council agreed unanimously.

Finance: Exemption application for taxes has been filled out and submitted. Mission Plan budget was forwarded to the congregation for adoption at the annual meeting.

*Continued...*

Property: Small leak over sanctuary doors will need to be addressed.

Service/Social Ministry: None

Support/Stewardship: If you haven't turned in your planned giving for this year, we would still welcome it.

Worship: Lent begins in 3 weeks. (Feb 10) Adopted a proposal to share all Lenten services with St. Luke's. Grace will host Ash Wednesday and then alternate with St. Luke's in hosting the remaining services.

Unfinished Business: Nomination Committee has recommended Greg Hula, Vicki Cox, and Brenda Spahr for the three open council positions. We need someone to fill the remainder of the 2-year term held by the Sudanese group.

An Audit Committee will be appointed.

New Business: Arlone's term is up for the Endowment Board. The council nominates Sarah Emery for service on the Endowment Board.

Announcements: Pastor and Mary will treat the Council members to their annual appreciation dinner the first week of February. Arlone will bring treats for February.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:37 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary



Prayer Services that are held on the third Wednesday of the month will be taking a Hiatus during February and March returning on Wednesday, April 20th.

# Pastor's Post

I was reading an article in Leadership Journal that was titled "Are We More Invested in Bringing People to Church? Or to Jesus?" The author, Karl Vaters, begins by saying, "I have a confession to make. As a pastor, I have too much invested in getting people to attend church. My salary depends on it. My reputation depends on it. My sense of self-worth depends on it. All to a much larger degree than I'm comfortable with. And I'm not alone."

I agree with his premise but would not agree with all of his confessions. I do think that the way our church is structured, it sets the stage for simply trying to get people to come to church. We clearly need people who are willing to be supportive of the church. However, I am more and more convinced that people will be supportive if the church is the mission center that values people's volunteer work outside of the church; if the church is the place where people are encouraged to find God at work in their neighborhood, their school, their workplace, their city.

When I think about the stories of Jesus in the New Testament, I am reminded that the vast majority of the stories take place apart from the synagogue. He is at home. He is at a wedding. He is on the road to somewhere else. He is in a boat. He is on a hillside. He is where everyday ordinary people are found. I am convinced that we need to change our lenses and see Jesus in those places today.

My hope and desire is that as I live and preach and disciple people they will come to see Jesus and be committed to serving others just as he did. I am reminded that Jesus promised that if we serve his kingdom first, "all these things" will be taken care of. To me, this means that there will be ample volunteers and ample finances to support the structural needs of the church.

I look forward to the ways that we will encounter Jesus throughout this year of 2016. I am hopeful that the special ways we experienced Jesus in 2015 are simply the building blocks for greater things to come.

Come, let's experience Jesus in worship and then let's serve Jesus in and through the people we encounter throughout the day, week, month, and year.

*Pastor Laaker*



And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.

*Ephesians 6:18*

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

### Individuals listed below have ongoing health issues and concerns:

Andrew Edwards  
Ken Hilmer  
Carolyn Matson  
Don Olson  
Norma Courtney (Arlone Farber's Mom.)  
Christian Barajas (Samantha Trejo, Angela & Alex Everitt's brother.)  
Dottie Hula (Greg Hula's Mom.)  
Linda Pafford (Friend to many.)



James Harrahill  
David Hufford  
LaVonne Moss  
Urbano Vasquez



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

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 Worshiping 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.  
Joe and Barbara Narducci - Home.  
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn.



*We always thank  
God for all of you  
and continually  
mention you in  
our prayers.*  
1 Thessalonians 12, NIV

The Councils of Grace and St. Luke's have decided to combine our Lenten worship this year. We recognize that this will mean having to choose to participate at the other congregation. We are hopeful that you will make every effort to be supportive of this joint effort for Lent. Together we will encourage one another. Together we will develop new friendships and relationships. Please decide now to participate in this combined Lenten observance.

Mid-Week Lent will feature a seven-part film series about hope, featuring Ed Dobson.

February 17 (at St. Luke's) It Ain't Over - Ed reminds us that life isn't over yet and that we don't have to feel overwhelmed by the struggles we're facing today. Difficult news can sometimes make us feel like our lives are over. Ed shows us that we don't know the future, and that things may turn out quite differently from what we expect.

February 24 (at Grace) Consider the Birds - Tomorrow is not guaranteed...for any of us. When we worry about tomorrow, we often miss out on the beauty, richness, and fulfillment of today. Could living for today be what's best for us, and could it even free us from the worries of tomorrow?

March 2 (at St. Luke's) Be There - When those close to us suffer, it's only natural to want to help. But what do you say when someone's life falls apart and suffering becomes their reality? How can you show you care?

March 9 (at Grace) My Garden- Many of us find our identity in what we do. But what happens when our career comes to an abrupt end? What happens when that job is no longer there? Are we still ourselves? Does our identity change? A pastor for many years, Ed struggled to adjust to a life without the pulpit. He eventually discovered there is much more to who we are than what we do. Could it be that change is an opportunity for a renewed sense of purpose?

March 16 (at St. Luke's) Ask Forgiveness - When Ed was told that his life would be over in a few short years, he found his priorities drastically rearranged. He wanted to mend relationships that may have been broken. He decided that relationships were way more important than who was right and who was wrong. Ed discovered that forgiveness is an issue that requires humility. He also discovered a transforming experience for all involved. Could the power of forgiveness lead to a better world around us?

*Continued.....*

March 24 (Maundy Thursday at Grace) Grateful - Ed has said that he wouldn't wish ALS on his worst enemy, yet even in the midst of his own diagnosis, he has chosen gratitude. When we are faced with suffering, or when our loved ones suffer, it can feel impossible to be grateful. Sometimes our situations seem too difficult or too painful for us to be grateful for anything. Ed and his wife, Lorna, have learned gratitude, even in the midst of the challenge of becoming a caregiver, and a care-receiver. Ed and Lorna teach us that it is possible to wake up every day and honestly say, "Lord, thank you for waking me up this morning."

March 25 (Good Friday at St. Luke's) Healing - Ed discovered that in the Bible there is a difference between being cured and being healed. In this film Ed and his wife, Lorna, share their struggle with a search for a cure for Ed's disease. In the process they discovered the beautiful and profound meaning of what it means to be healed.



Date	Host/Hostess	Benefit
<b>February 10th Ash Wednesday</b>		
<b>February 24th</b>		
<b>March 9th</b>		
<b>March 24th</b>		
<b>March 27th Easter Breakfast</b>		

Meals and Services will be held at St. Luke's Lutheran,  
2315 I Street on the following dates:

February 17th,  
March 2nd and the 16th  
Good Friday Service on the 25th

**LENTEN  
Schedule**



The basis for cheerful giving comes from the love that we receive from God. *“For God so loved the world that he gave...”* (John 3:16). God loved and continues to love. His nature is both loving and giving. Because of his love for us, he promises to supply all of our needs. Paul said, *“He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all-how*

*will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?”* (Romans 8:32).

With the love and grace that we receive from our heavenly Father, we are changed from self-centered to God-centered people. With God in control of our lives, we can begin to trust and depend on him. Filled with God’s love, we will love and give cheerfully. Christ’s nature will be seen in our giving to others.

Jesus provided the model of giving one’s self to others. He *“...did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many”* (Matthew 20:28). Christ willingly and cheerfully accepted this humble position to give and serve others. Jesus said, *“Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you”* (John 13:14-15).

As his stewards, we are called to give cheerfully to the needs of others. In giving to the needy, we are reminded of the words in Matthew 25:40, *“...I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these bothers of mine, you did for me.”*

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### Grace Quilters for Lutheran World Relief

Monday mornings from 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.  
Join a lively group of people and assemble  
amazing tie quilts for Lutheran  
World Relief organization.

These quilts are delivered around  
the world to areas most in need of a  
little comfort. Please feel free to stop by  
check out the activity. Coffee break and joke time  
is 10:00 a.m.; another opportunity in fellowship  
with one another. No experience necessary!



For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

- ♥ Thank you to Marilyn and Jerry Van Ormer for their on-going dedication in caring and tending to the plants in the entry way, they continue to thrive and look welcoming.
- ♥ Thank you to the ESL tutors; Malachi Black, Vicki Cox, Arlone Farber, Mary Laaker, and Amanda Vazquez, for making connections with the students willing to learn and form friendships.
- ♥ Thank you to Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer, Greg and Janet Hula, and Eva Martin; who take turns picking up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
- ♥ Thank you June, LaVonne, Eva, and Marilyn for your continued dedication in creating a reflection of God’s love and care in every quilt sent to support Lutheran World Relief.
- ♥ Thank you LaVonne, June, Gloria, Marilyn, Jerry, Eva, and Malachi for your dedication and help in assembling the monthly Grace Messenger!
- ♥ Thank you to Ron and Donna Adrian and Brenda Spahr who take turns in the care of the altar, and preparing the communion table.
- ♥ Thank you to all ushers, Andrew, Jerry, Ron, Vicki, Larry, Mary, and Malachi for greeting everyone on Sunday mornings.
- ♥ Thank you to the Liberty Elementary readers; Malachi, Pastor Laaker, Arlone, Margie, Vicki, Eva, and Brenda for sharing the gift of learning through imagination and fun with the second graders.
- ♥ Thank you to everyone who shared food and conversations with one another during the potluck luncheon before the Annual Meeting.
- ♥ Thank you to Loren and Dustin Moyer for repairing and installing the faucet in the mens restroom.



Oftentimes, winter is associated with ideas such as hibernation, storing up what has been collected, conserving energy, and awaiting for better times and opportunities to present. We are limited by what we can actively do throughout the winter months. The exterior elements or the risk of danger make it difficult for us to get out and be active on a number of days. The days can be dreary and uninviting. It can be harder to be enthusiastic about the day ahead of us when there is no sun anywhere and little motivation.

This should be the time for preparation of better times to come. Our activities and decision making should be concise and filled with motivation. As we were expectant of Christ's entrance into the world, we should now be moved to act and live according to the way He set before us. God calls us to community with one another, restoration through His redeeming power, and growth through the work of building the kingdom of God.

We have begun to discuss in Sunday Adult Class why we worry and will take a more in-depth look at relationships between fear and faith. The hope is to identify how our individual worries impact our decision making and our Christian walk. The goal should not be to remove worry from our lives, but to maximize the spiritual gifts grown and manifested through our Christian experience. Service must be continual in the midst of our fears and worries rather than only in the absence of them. What we do in the early months of the year will set the tone for how the rest of the year unfolds.

When we recognize and step into the things we can do, we increase our ability to be effective. When our focus is on the uncertainties we are faced with each day, we can become paralyzed or trapped into remaining inactive, worried that we will err or trying to avoid making mistakes. Whether we are in cold, challenging times in our lives or have storms that limit our ability to be as engaged or active as we would like, we must find ways to work with what we have at our disposal. Cooperative efforts can create possibilities that otherwise would be unavailable or too difficult to accomplish with individual efforts.

*Continued....*



How will you challenge yourself through these winter months to be part of the collective efforts to live for Christ? What ways can you leverage real concerns with capabilities and resources that are available to you? Prayerfully, I believe there is much we will accomplish this year, even during the cold weeks of winter that are to come. Please be receptive to upcoming opportunities that may come your way as God continues to stir our hearts to action.

Malachi Black  
Community Outreach Associate  
outreach@graceluth.com



Habitat for Humanity South Coalition 2016  
Kick-off on Saturday, February 6, 2016 from  
11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at King of Kings  
Lutheran Church located at 11615 I Street.

Enjoy some fellowship and learn about coalition planning for 2016. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Janneane Gerot at [jgerot@habitatomaha.org](mailto:jgerot@habitatomaha.org) or by calling 402-884-6691. A \$100 grant will be provided toward the cost of your 2016 coalition build for each person who attends from your coalition.

## Omaha Together One Community

"Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) will sponsor an Issues Conference on Sat., Feb. 27, 2016, 8:30 am - 12:00 pm, at First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass St. Attend two breakout sessions out of half a dozen that will be offered on community violence, environmental sustainability, the death penalty, health insurance for all in Nebraska, mental health and other critical topics. Give voice to your ideas about possible solutions."

Any questions, please contact OTOC office at 3647 Lafayette Avenue, 402-344-4401 or [www.otoc.org](http://www.otoc.org).

February 2016



- 7 - Mary Laaker
- 10 - Brenda Spahr
- 14 - Greg Hula
- 21 - Arlone Farber
- 24 - Malachi Black
- 28 - Terry Nielsen
- March 6 - Mary Laaker

February Alcolytes

- 7 - Brenda Spahr
- 10 - Vicki Cox
- 14 - Donna Adrian
- 21 - Janet Hula
- 24 - Brenda Spahr
- 28 - Andrea Spahr
- March 6 - Greg Hula

February Ushers

- Malachi Black
- Larry Foreman
- Andrew Edwards

Ushers & Greeters



February Greeters

- 7 - June Hilmer and Gloria Moore
- 14 - Brenda and Andrea Spahr
- 21 - Ron and Donna Adrian
- 28 - Loren and Marsha Moyer
- March 6 - Larry Foreman and Ralph Fitle



- 8 - Gerald Van Ormer
- Dustin Andersen
- Brenda Spahr
- 9 - Destiny Perales
- 10 - Jackson Vazquez
- 21 - Sonia Lado
- 24 - Hayden Bauer
- 25 - Graham Moyer
- 26 - Gloria Moore
- Sandy Nielsen
- 28 - Scott Moore

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



Responsibility List

Altar Flowers

- 7 - Brenda Spahr sharing birthday celebrations with Jerry Van Ormer.
- 14 - OPEN.
- 21 - OPEN.
- 28 - OPEN.
- March 6 - OPEN.



Flower Pick-Up for February: OPEN.

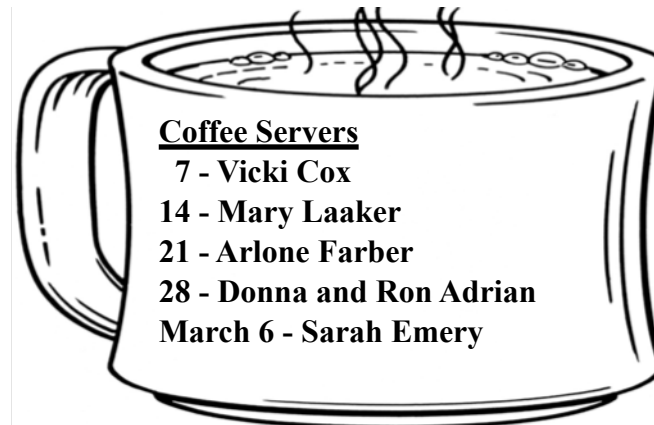
Backpack Program



- 7 - Brenda Spahr sharing birthday celebrations with Jerry Van Ormer.
- 14 - Pastor and Mary Laaker in celebration of their grandson, Jackson's birthday.
- 21 - Jerry and Marilyn Van Ormer in celebration of their grandsons, Jason and Kyler's birthdays.
- 28 - Eva Martin in celebration of her son, Melvin's birthday.
- March 6 - OPEN.

Coffee Servers

- 7 - Vicki Cox
- 14 - Mary Laaker
- 21 - Arlone Farber
- 28 - Donna and Ron Adrian
- March 6 - Sarah Emery





Virginia McGill, MA  
Executive Director

www.familiesinactionomaha.org



Gema C. Wolde  
Community Health Worker  
Se habla español.

As the New Year begins, we would be delighted to accept gently-used toys and art supplies for our children's programming. If you have items that you would like to donate to Families in Action, please contact Gema Wolde at 402-616-4721. Thank you for your generosity!

Virginia, Gema and Kaela

**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.**



**Grace Lutheran Church**  
ESL (English as a Second Language) Classes  
Saturdays 9:30 to 11:30 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.

**Buy Your 2016 God's Creation Calendar!**

The Calendars Are Here! Calendars are open for everyone, if you would like to purchase a copy, please look for Donna or Brenda on Sunday mornings or call the church office at 402-341-7730.



Calendars include beautiful monthly scenic photography enhanced with inspiring Scriptures from the Holy Bible. High-quality, heavy-weight stock with gloss coated photo pages and ample space to write appointments and family events.

Same Great Price ~ Only \$5.00



**Baker's Community Rewards**

Grace Lutheran Church has been accepted into the Baker's Community Rewards Program. Grace will get credit for every purchase\* you make using your registered Plus card. The more you shop with Baker's, the more opportunity Grace will have to earn rewards. It is just that easy!

Haven't had the chance to sign up? Not a problem, please contact the church office for a complete list and instructions on how to obtain your registered Baker's Plus card, talk to a Baker's associate; they are happy to help set up your rewards card, or you can refer back to previous issues of the Grace Messenger. Grace Lutheran's 5-digit NPO is 62209.

For assistance setting up an online account or with general questions, please feel free to contact Baker's at 800-576-4377 option 3, or email at DCR@dillonstores.com. **If you're already registered, beginning Jan. 1, 2016, you will need to re-register for the new year.**





## The Cure for Cabin Fever

Feeling stuck inside this winter? So is the air inside your home.

Indoor air pollution is caused by a lack of ventilation and can lead to more frequent colds, respiratory problems, and other ailments. Here are tips to keep your home and your family health:

**Keep the house clean.** Dust mites, pollen, animal dander, and other pollutants can be reduced through regular cleaning. Install and use fans vented to the outdoors in kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry rooms.

**Prevent moisture buildup.** Water condensation on building materials can breed bacteria and mold and can be incredibly dangerous to your family's health. Keep humidity levels in these areas below 50%.

**Clean humidifiers regularly and refill with fresh water daily.** Humidifiers can become breeding grounds for bacteria. Evaporation trays in air conditioners, dehumidifiers, and refrigerators should be cleaned frequently to prevent contaminants from building up.

**Thoroughly clean and dry water-damaged carpets or consider removing or replacing them.** Wet carpets can harbor mold and bacteria. It is very difficult to completely rid them of contaminants once they've grown.

**Minimize pollutants in basements.** Clean and disinfect the basement floor drain regularly. Operate a dehumidifier in the basement if needed to keep relative humidity levels between 30% - 50%.

**Make sure cleaners are clean.** Avoid spray cleaners and air fresheners which are often toxic, opting instead for cleaners deemed safe by Environmental Working Group. Never mix chemical products, especially chlorine bleach, with an ammonia cleaner. Follow instructions for use of all cleaning products and keep rooms well ventilated.



*green tips from earthshare.org*

## Reading Your Bible in a Year - February 2016

1	Luke 23:1-25	Genesis 41	Psalms 32
2	Luke 23:26-56	Genesis 42	Psalms 33
3	Luke 24:1-12	Genesis 43	Psalms 34
4	Luke 24:13-53	Genesis 44	Psalms 35
5	Hebrews 1	Genesis 45:1-46:27	Psalms 36
6	Hebrews 2	Genesis 46:28-47:31	Psalms 37
7	Hebrews 3:1-4:13	Genesis 48	Psalms 38
8	Hebrews 4:14-6:12	Genesis 49-50	Psalms 39
9	Hebrews 6:13-20	Exodus 1-2	Psalms 40
10	Hebrews 7	Exodus 3-4	Psalms 41
11	Hebrews 8	Exodus 5:1-6:27	Proverbs 1
12	Hebrews 9:1-22	Exodus 6:28-8:32	Proverbs 2
13	Hebrews 9:23-10:18	Exodus 9-10	Proverbs 3
14	Hebrews 10:19-39	Exodus 11-12	Proverbs 4
15	Hebrews 11:1-22	Exodus 13-14	Proverbs 5
16	Hebrews 11:23-40	Exodus 15	Proverbs 6:1-7:5
17	Hebrews 12	Exodus 16-17	Proverbs 7:6-27
18	Hebrews 13	Exodus 18-19	Proverbs 8
19	Matt. 1	Exodus 20-21	Proverbs 9
20	Matt. 2	Exodus 22-23	Proverbs 10
21	Matt. 3	Exodus 24	Proverbs 11
22	Matt. 4	Exodus 25-27	Proverbs 12
23	Matt. 5:1-20	Exodus 28-29	Proverbs 13
24	Matt. 5:21-48	Exodus 30-32	Proverbs 14
25	Matt. 6:1-18	Exodus 33-34	Proverbs 15
26	Matt. 6:19-34	Exodus 35-36	Proverbs 16
27	Matt. 7	Exodus 37-38	Proverbs 17
28	Matt. 8:1-13	Exodus 39-40	Proverbs 18
29	Day to	Catch	Up

## ELCA World Hunger's 40 Days of Giving Lent 2016

As part of ELCA World Hunger's year-of-emphasis in *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, congregations across the ELCA will join together to raise \$2 million to benefit the ministries of ELCA World Hunger beginning Sunday, February 7, and extending through the season of Lent.

### BASKETS OF PROMISE

During Lent Grace will be collection items each week to assemble 25 Personal Care Kits on Palm Sunday, March 20th following worship services. The Personal Care Kits provide basic sanitation and hygiene items for families who have lost their belongings in some of nature's devastating disasters to stay healthy, clean, and preserve personal dignity. Items needed in each Personal Care Kit are 2 bars of soap, a comb, toothbrush, nail clippers and a bath towel.

Baskets of Promise go to help families like 9-year-old Omar. His family of eight fled Syria to Jordan to escape the ongoing violence at home. Omar is now a student at the New Orthodox School in Jordan, but he explains that his parents cannot send him to school and meet the family's other needs. Children like Omar received School Kits and Personal Care Kits, allowing them to attend school and stay healthy and avoid school absences. Omar quickly put his new supplies to use, saying, "Since I arrived in Jordan, this is the first time I received such a complete kit... Thank you for my present!"

To learn more about how you can help those affected by the violence in Syria, visit [lwr.org/syria](http://lwr.org/syria).

### Souper Bowl of Caring

The 26th Annual Souper Bowl is Sunday, February 7th, we plan to highlight the work and ministry of the Lutheran Pantry in the Omaha area. You are invited to participate and bring a special collection that includes canned goods, paper products (toilet paper), or personal care items to donate to the ministry efforts to serve those in need within our community.



## A Terrible Illness

Just wanted to let you know that I have recently been diagnosed with a very serious condition and there's no hope I will ever recover. The scientific world is frantically searching for a cure.

This is an ailment many of us suffer from and may not as yet have been diagnosed, however, now you may be able to discuss it with your loved ones and try to explain what really happened to you all those times you tired so hard to accomplish something and couldn't.

I call it the "But First Syndrome." You know, it's like when I decide to do the laundry, I start down the hall and notice the newspaper on the table. OK, I'm going to do the laundry...BUT FIRST, I'm going to read the newspaper.

After that, I notice the mail on the table. OK, I'll just put the newspaper in the recycle stack...BUT FIRST, I'll look through that pile of mail and see if there are any bills to be paid. Yes, now where's the checkbook?

Oops... there's the empty glass from yesterday on the coffee table. I'm going to look for that checkbook, BUT FIRST, I need to put the glass in the sink. I head for the kitchen look out the window, notice my poor flowers need a drink of water. I put the glass in the sink, and darn it, there's the remote for the TV on the kitchen counter.

What's it doing here? I'll just put it away... BUT FIRST, I need to water those plants. Head for the door and.... Aaaagh! Stepped on the cat. Cat needs to be fed. Okay, I'll put that remote away and water the plants... BUT FIRST, I need to feed the cat.

End of day: Laundry is not done, newspapers are still on the floor, glass is still in the sink, bills are still unpaid, checkbook is still lost, and the cat ate the remote control.

And, when I try to figure out how come nothing got done all day, I'm baffled because I KNOW I was BUSY ALL DAY!!

I realize this condition is serious and I need to get professional help, BUT FIRST... I think... I'll check my email... !!!!



## A Stormy Sunday Morning with no place to go

(Dr. Bob Nominelli, a retired dentist and member of Zion Lutheran Church in Hancock, MI, composed the following poem titled "A Stormy Sunday Morning: with No Place to Go." Passed on to JN by Sally Santeford of Houghton, MI.)

It's a stormy Sunday morning; And a wind is blowing loud  
Church has just been canceled; 'Cause they would never bring a crowd.

The temperature is negative. It's much too cold to pray,  
So services are canceled. It's just that kind of day.

The members all are notified; And all of them are glad.  
No one wants to go outside, When the weather is so bad.

Pretty soon it's nine o'clock, Not too long it's ten.  
Ten thirty – when the service starts – Today we'll just pretend.

The weather's still too stormy And it's the pastor's guess  
It'd take a week to drive to church – The roads are such a mess.

So here we are – my wife and I sitting in a chair,  
Now looking out the window at the storm that's raging there.

And somberly I said to her, "It looks pretty bad outside.  
Let's jump in the mountaineer and take a little ride."

So we motored down the main street and out across the bridge –  
It's too cold to be outside. The air feels like a fridge.

We struggled up Van Orden's Hill. It was whiter than a sheet.  
She said "Let's go to Perkins and get a bite to eat."

We parked the car and went inside, A cold and frigid pair.  
We were flabbergasted! The whole darn church was there.

The moral of this story is – as if you didn't know –  
You can cancel what you want – we'll find a place to go.

—Robert J. Nominelli, DDS

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## Bible Wordsearch

Sermons of Jesus 5

Wordsearch 245

Matt.7:13-27

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

BEARS	AGAINST
BEAT	CLOTHING
BROAD	EVERYONE
BUILT	EVILDOERS
CRASH	FEROCIOUS
DEMONS	KINGDOM
DRIVE	LIKEWISE
ENTER	MIRACLES
FALSE	NARROW
FATHER	PERFORM
HOUSE	PRACTICE
LEADS	PROPHECY
LORD	STREAMS
WATCH	THISTLES
WINDS	FOOLISH
WOLVES	GRAPES
WORDS	HEAVEN

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

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One-Liners shared from JoyfulNoiseletter

"Finding some humor in today's many problems is the next best thing to solving them." - Tom Mullen

"The quickest way to double your money is to fold it and put it back into your pocket." - Will Rogers during the Great Depression.

"The invariable marks of wisdom is to see the miraculous in the common." - Ralph Waldo Emerson

"I think God has a tremendous sense of humor." - Rainn Wilson