

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

Email: graceluth@graceluth.com
Web Site: www.graceluth.com
Like us on Facebook at:
www.facebook.com/gracelutheranomaha

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

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

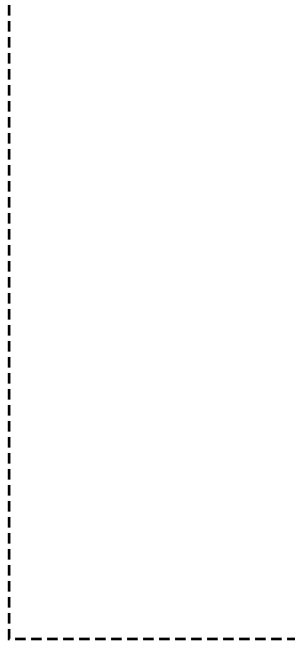
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez
Lutheran Volunteer Corp - Tyler Birkhoff

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THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2019



APRIL 2019

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



2019 Council Members

Donna Adrian Andrew Edwards Tom Emery
Arlone Farber Janet Hula Marsha Moyer
Terry Nielsen Amanda Vazquez

Pastor Laaker

Officers Serving the Congregation:

Financial: Janet Hula Treasurer: Ralph Fitle

The regular meeting of the Council was held on March 12th. Council members shared their prayer concerns for Arlone and her family, Vicki Cox, victims of recent tornadoes, floods, and other natural disasters, and the people of Venezuela experiencing a blackout.

Devotions: Pastor led devotions from Deuteronomy 5:21 and Romans 13:10. The first tells us not to covet our neighbor's wife. The second reminds us that love does no wrong to our neighbor.

Visions for Ministry: We continued discussion of chapter 2 of Baptized for this Moment by Stephen Paul Bouman. This chapter talked about lamentations and how it is important to recognize laments. One must give in to their laments before one can move forward from their grief. It also talked about how we find hope in despairing times and the incredible strength we find when we need it. Read chapter 3 for next month.

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

Christian Education

Confirmation retreat is coming up on March 30th.

Evangelism/Outreach: Crossroads prison ministry had a nice turnout last month. Our next Crossroads meal here at Grace is scheduled for November 24th.

Finance: None.

Property: Dealing with flooding in the basement from all of the rain we got today.

Service/Social Ministry: None.

Support/Stewardship: None.

Worship: Lent began last Wednesday at St. Luke's. The last Wednesday of March will be a joint service at Augustana.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: We are one person short for our Council. If you know of anyone who might consider serving on Council, please share that suggestion. Synod Assembly will be at the end of May. We still need a delegate to attend. Please talk to Pastor if you're interested.

Announcements: Pastor will be in Tampa the last week of March for the Voyagers Conference. Arlone will bring treats for April.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:01pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary



Grace's dedicated group of cheerful servers during the recent meal and service shared with Crossroads Connection Ministry in Omaha.

Reflectors of God's Love include; Loren, Marsha, Pastor, Mary, Arlone and Tyler.



Continued...



The Council has begun reading “Baptized for This Moment; Rediscovering Grace All Around Us” by Stephen Paul Bouman. In the Foreword, Stacy Martin says, “It’s not that we really believe that God resides in church buildings. We know better. But our actions often imply that the world has no place in church. The world is too messy and an hour on Sunday doesn’t leave us enough time to clean things up. This might not be a problem were it not for the theological conundrum of Christ’s incarnation. As Bishop Bouman outlines . . . , we’ve spent so much time trying to figure out how to get the church out into the world, we’ve forgotten to invite the world into our churches.” These words have been bouncing around in my thoughts since I first read the Foreword.

How do we invite the world into our churches? The world is often a very scary place. In the last week, we have watched and listened to the flooding that has devastated much of eastern Nebraska. We have watched and listened to the terrorist who murdered 49 persons of the Muslim faith in New Zealand. Do we dare these horrific things into our churches? Are we not supposed to find peace within our churches? These things don’t bring peace, they only bring sadness and sorrow, helplessness and futility. Our hearts break and we lament these and many other messy things of our world.

Bishop Bouman was serving as Bishop of New York Synod at the time of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. He describes the experience of 9/11 and its aftermath. We often want to move on quickly after very difficult times. He suggests that “the first response of the Church in the face of any of the tragedies we now find afflicting us (is): Show up. Listen. Tell stories. Pray.”

I wonder how we might be willing to show up in the most recent tragedies. I wonder how we might listen to those who have experienced these tragedies directly. I wonder if we can encourage the telling of the stories that arise out of the tragedy. I wonder if we can purposefully pray.

I am convinced that hope arises out these efforts. I am convinced that in showing up Christ is present to comfort and attend to the brokenness. I am convinced that the Spirit moves between us as we listen intently to the stories not seeking to simply move on but to pause and hold the sorrow tenderly. I am convinced that prayer in all of its forms is a vital healing measure for the world and the church.

How do you see hope arising out of tragedy? How might we see genuine love get expressed?

Pastor Laaker

This year’s Lenten Midweek Services, include a pulpit rotation with several of the Metro Urban congregations. We will use the Nebraska Synod resources centered on the theme “We Are Church Together.” In recognition of this theme of unity, on Good Friday, April 19, all seven congregations participating in the rotation will gather for a joint service at St. Matthew Lutheran (1725 S 60th Street).



Here is the remaining Lent schedule:

Date	Topic	Preacher/Congregation	Location
April 3, 2019	Diversity	Pr. Peggy Hall	St. Luke’s
April 10, 2019	Joys/Burdens	Pr. Rebecca Sheridan/Bethel	Grace
April 18, 2019	Maundy Thursday	Pr. Laaker/St. Luke’s	St. Luke’s
April 19, 2019	Good Friday	Tenebrae	St. Matthew



You are invited to gather together and lift our voices in the celebration of God’s abundant love reflected and shared through Christ’ resurrection on Easter Morning, April 21st at 6:30 am.

Following the Sunrise Service, stay, visit and enjoy gathering together through the sharing of an Easter Breakfast!



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



Please keep in your prayers the individuals listed below who have health issues and concerns:

Vicki Cox
Carolyn Matson
Sue Mize
Oren Powley
Pauline Stechenfinger
Urbano Vasquez
The family of Theresa Courtney



Andrew Edwards
Jack Pablo McGill
Gloria Moore
Pam Reents
Dan Taylor



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 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-in and Nursing Home resident:

Mickey Andersen - Home
LaVonne Moss - Bickford Cottage
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn



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 9:30 a.m.; another opportunity for fellowship with one another. No experience necessary!

**COFFEE
FELLOWSHIP**

Join us!



Grace Reads



As Grace Lutheran continues its partnership with Liberty Elementary, there is a need to fulfill each classroom with readers! There is the opportunity for two readers on each day Grace representatives read at Liberty Elementary. Two readers are needed on the first, second and third Tuesday and Wednesdays of the month. If you are interested to share your talents by being a blessing and reading to a classroom at Liberty once or twice a month; Tuesday reading at 12:20pm and Wednesday reading at 3:05pm. A sign-up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board, if you have any questions, please call the church office at 402-341-7730.

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.



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 ESL tutors; Vicki, Arlone, Mary, and Amanda, for making connections with the students willing to learn and form friendships.
- ✝ Thank you Greg, Janet, and Mary; who take turns picking up altar flowers every Sunday morning.
- ✝ Thank you LaVonne, June, Eva, Marilyn, Donna and Mary 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, Marilyn, Gloria, June, Donna, and Ron, for your dedication and help in assembling the monthly Grace Messenger!
- ✝ Thank you Ron, Donna and Brenda for taking care of the altar, and preparing the communion table.
- ✝ Thank you to all ushers, Andrew, Vicki, Oren, and Mary for greeting everyone on Sunday mornings.
- ✝ Thank you to all who share their time and talents with Liberty Elementary through the "Grace Reads" partnership.
- ✝ Thank you to all Loaves and Fishes Pantry Volunteers; for delivering food items on Sunday mornings, unloading and putting foods items away until Monday mornings, getting everything ready for Mondays and in greeting and serving all with smiles, care and love!

Ready for this year's Annual Used Book Sale? Take a few moments to browse over some used books, DVDs, old VHS movies, puzzles, games, or CD's. You may find a new treasure to read, watch or put together a new puzzle. All proceeds will go toward new books, projects, or library supplies.



This season of Lent, we will walk with people around the world afflicted by war, displacement and poverty by collecting and assembling Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits.

**BASKETS
OF PROMISE**

During Lent, Grace will be collecting items each week to assemble 30 Personal Care Kits on Palm Sunday, April 14th 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. These kits help individuals to stay healthy, clean, and preserve personal dignity.

Items needed to complete a Basket of Promise are:

Bar of Soap (4 to 5 oz., any brand, in original wrapping).
Bath Towels (light-weight, maximum 52" x 27", dark color recommended).
Toothbrushes (adult size, in original packaging).
Combs

We continue to collect the following items by Palm Sunday.
April 7th Nail Clippers (metal, attached file optional).
April 14th Second Bar of Soap.

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.



**Place Your Order for
Easter Lilies
by Sunday, April 7th**

Cost: \$7.50



Celebrate Christ's resurrection by ordering your Easter Lily and help make the sanctuary both visually and aromatically beautiful! A sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board, or you may call the office, 402-341-7730 to place your order.

Kids At Work - consider the possibilities of volunteering: with only 16 total days available for participants to work; the variety of opportunities are flexible including volunteering all 16 days, or two days a week, one day a week, one week out of the month, any time you can spend helping with the Kids At Work Summer Program will be helpful. Kids At Work will continue to meet each Tuesday and Thursday from June 4th through July 18th. If you are interested in participating or volunteering in this awesome awareness for the youth to give back to the community, please speak with Tyler Birkhoff.



Lutheran Service Corps
16th Annual Charity Golf Tournament
Saturday, May 18th (rain or shine)
Eagle Hills Golf Course,
501 Eagle Hills Drive, in Papillion

Golfers and non-golfers, men and women, young and old alike are welcome to attend this event. Registration and lunch begin at noon, shotgun start at 1:30 pm and dinner at 6:00 p.m. Individual golfers are \$100, a team of four is \$400. Sponsorship opportunities are still available, including hole sponsors at \$250, banquet sponsors at \$500 and major sponsor at \$2,000. Additional golf forms and information are available upon request in the church office. For additional information, please contact Scott Glaser at (402) 457-5890 or email at Omaha.dev@lutheranvolunteercorps.org.



Omaha Together One Community

10th Annual Spring Fundraiser

**Celebrating Community
Working for Human Justice**

**Kaneko
1111 Jones St, Omaha**

**Tickets: \$25 (\$30 at the door)
For Tickets call: (402) 344-4401**

**Silent Auction Cash Bar
Appetizers Dessert
Live Music**

**Saturday, April 13, 2019
6:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.**



**Immigration Workshop
Saturday, April 6th**

Learn about the immigration situation at our border and meet some of our long time neighbors who have Temporary Protected Status (TPS) beginning at 4:00 pm at First United Methodist Church (7020 Cass Street).

This interactive workshop sponsored by OTOC, IPL and Nebraska TPS Alliance will give you a chance to learn about this challenging issue, and think more about what people of faith can do together to shape immigration policy in our nation.

Loaves and Fishes Pantry

Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26th Street
402-341-7730

North Door (Parking Lot Door)
Opens at 9:45 am

Pantry is Open 10:00 - 11:00 am
Every Monday

Variety of fresh foods donated by
Trader Joe's and Whole Foods.

All are served with love and care.



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 has three additional ways that you could contribute without spending any out of pocket funds. Only a few moments of your time to download apps for TAGG - Together A Greater Good and when you shop at smile.amazon.com Amazon will donate - Grace's unique link is: <https://smileamazon.com/ch/47-0667089>. Register your Bakers Plus card with Kroger and choose Grace Lutheran as your charitable choice! All of these opportunities will match a certain percentage of your purchases and direct those funds to Grace.



Grace Sunday School
Classes in March:
April 14th & 28th
10:00 a.m.



Grace Sunday School continues to meet every second and fourth Sunday each month. Classes give the opportunity for children to learn Bible stories through reading, games, crafts and other fun & creative activities. Children age 4 through 6th grade are welcome! If you have any questions, please speak with Brenda, Mary or Sandy.



Christian Education Opportunity!!
WOW (Word on Wednesday)

Words on Wednesday will be taking a break during the Lenten season. Additional updates will be posted in the May issue of the Grace Messenger!

If you have any questions, please talk with Brenda Spahr at Grace or Connie Tefft at St. Luke's.

The Fort Dodge Iowa High School A Cappella Choir will perform a **Concert at Bethel Lutheran Church on Saturday, April 6th at 7:00.** (1312 S. 45th St) All are welcome to come at 6:00 for a meal before the Concert. Refreshments will be served after the Concert



Matt Drees is the director of the Choir. He is Shanna Harald's niece, BreAnn's husband. Matt and BreAnn both graduated from Luther College in Decorah Iowa. Matt is the music director at Fort Dodge High School. He has a group of very talented singers. It will be a perfect way to spend your Saturday evening!

Hey Everybody!

I hope everyone has been keeping dry this past month to the best of their abilities. I know we got a little water at the house but I like to look on it as it's nice to finally be able to drive around in the sunshine again. The overall mood of our house seems to have lifted as the seasons change. The halls appear to fill with music once again. As well as the changing of the seasons, the year is going further and faster than ever, and we are actively starting to look for volunteers for the Kids At Work program this summer. We already have a few businesses with confirmed interest and I know that with your help we can make this program a positive experience for everyone. If you are interested in helping, feel free to call me at the church (402-341-7730) or email me at outreach@graceluth.com. Keep an eye out for flyers as well for participants and how they can be involved as well.

Smiles!

Tyler Birkhoff
Community Outreach Coordinator
Grace Lutheran Church



Lutheran Youth Choir of the Omaha Area is extending an invitation to all middle and high school singers to join together for a new opportunity to perform in a Spring Youth Program. Rehearsals and Program will be held at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, 2650 Farnam Street. The Spring Program will be held on Wednesday, May 29th.

Rehearsals and Program will be held at Kountze Memorial Lutheran Church, 2650 Farnam Street. Rehearsal schedule will be:

April 7th	Sunday	6:00-8:00 p.m.
April 10th	Wednesday	5:00-6:30 p.m.
April 28th	Sunday	3:00-5:00 p.m.
May 25th	Saturday	10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Must be able to attend at least 3 rehearsals

May 29th	Wednesday	Lutheran Youth Choir Program
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For additional information or questions, please contact Janet Carlsen Campbell at 402-880-0155 or email at Janet@kmlchurch.org.

Transformed by Grace, Faith and Love Stewardship as a disciple of Jesus

Stewardship is one of the most important concepts we can define. According to Merriam Webster, stewardship is "the conducting, supervising, or managing of something; especially the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care."

As we enter the season of spring, there will be many opportunities to exercise our careful management of the physical world that makes up our homes. We will have opportunity to plant and attend to the soil. We will have opportunity to clean up areas that have been the repositories of winter debris.

We will also have the opportunity to support those who have been the victims of the flood waters that have devastated so many communities. Our Lutheran Disaster Response team here in Nebraska will be needing resources to assist individuals and families as they seek to clean up and rebuild their properties and lives. We can be generous in support.

We will also have the opportunity to support our ministry efforts that seek to touch the lives of those we know and those we seek to know. Your contributions make a great deal of difference as we seek to be good stewards of all that God has placed in our hands.

May we find joy and delight in careful and responsible management of all that has been entrusted into our care!



April 2019

Responsibility List

WORSHIP ASSISTANTS

7 - Brenda Spahr
14 - Terry Nielsen
21 - Mary Laaker
28 - Arlone Farber
May 5 - Greg Hula



1 - Sarah Emery
Eva Martin
5 - Emily Bauer
7 - Linda Helm
8 - Elizabeth Koka
14 - Thomas Emery
23 - Julia Traynor
28 - Tyler Birkhoff

April Acolytes

7 - Andrea Spahr
14 - Damien Rodriguez
21 - Donna Adrian
and Greg Hula
28 - Brenda Spahr
May 5 - Janet Hula



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



USHERS THIS MONTH

Oren Powley
Andrew Edwards



GREETERS SCHEDULE

7 - Ron and Donna Adrian
14 - Brenda and Andrea Spahr
21 - Andrew Edwards and Ralph Fitle
28 - Greg and Janet Hula
May 5 - Bobby Stechenfinger & Mary Laaker

Altar Flowers



7 - OPEN.
14 - OPEN.
21 - Easter Lilies.
28 - Carolyn Matson in celebration of her niece, Elena's baptism
and in loving memory of her Mom, Ferne Matson.
May 5 - Andrew, Christie, Clay Edwards and Tracy Petrini in loving
memory of their Mom, Charlotte Edwards.

Flower Pick-Up for April: Greg and Janet Hula



Backpack Program

7 - OPEN.
14 - Ed and Charlotte Palczynski in celebration of their grandchildren,
Lindsey and Sam's birthdays.
21 - Marilyn Van Ormer in celebration of her grandson, Nick and her
great-grandson, Henry's birthdays.
28 - Eva Martin in celebration of her granddaughter, Lydia's
birthday.
May 5 - OPEN.



Coffee Servers

7 - Ron & Donna Adrian
14 - Marsha & Loren Moyer
21 - Easter Breakfast
28 - Brenda & Andrea Spahr
May 5 - Sarah & Madison Emery





Habitat Omaha - Faith House 2019

Neighbors South Coalition will be working with two other faith coalitions to build a new home for Mbaliwombazi & Ndarusangiyabandi at 3167 Evans Street, beginning Saturday, May 10. You can be a part of this wonderful effort to provide a home for this family.

Volunteer Registration Link - <http://cerv.is/m?0119gF9oLgR>

Step 1 - Follow the direct link to your build registration page.

If you are a new volunteer, follow the on-screen prompts to set up a profile.

Step 2 - Follow the on-screen directions to register for the dates that work best for you. That's it! Now you're ready to volunteer!

You can expect a confirmation email immediately after registering and a reminder email 2 weeks before your build. You will get a final reminder the Tuesday before your shift, with scope of work and the name of the supervisor you'll be working with.

IMPORTANT – to ensure we comply with all safety regulations, only volunteers who have registered online in advance of the build day will be allowed to volunteer.

Available in the sanctuary on the back table are several Shield-A-Badge Prayer Cards. You are invited to pick up a card with the name of an Omaha Police Officer printed at the bottom of the card, and uphold that officer in your daily prayers.



South High School Alumni Association 24th Annual Packer Pasta Dinner



Sunday, March 31st from noon to 4:00 p.m. at Cascio's Steakhouse, 1620 S. 10th Street. The menu will include a Pasta Bar, Salad, Orsi bread, dessert and coffee/tea. Eat In or Take Out. Ticket price is \$10.00 per person and \$5.00 per child 10 years old and younger. Tickets will be available at the door or in advance from the Alumni Office. Cash and checks accepted.

The location may have changed, but the tradition of a delicious meal and fabulous fun will remain. Come help the SHS Alumni Association raise funds for South High scholarships and teacher special projects.

For additional information please call 402-738-9493.

SHS Alumni Association is a non-profit 501(c)3.

Detectors
Save
Lives

Protect Your Family with a
Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Detector

The Detector and Installation is Free

Just call the Omaha Fire Department
at 402-444-3560 for the
Free Detector and Installation



Sleep better at night with the peace and knowledge that your family is protected with early detection in case of a dangerous situation!

Detectors supplied by the First Responders Critical Support Foundation.

