

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/gracelutheranomalaha

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

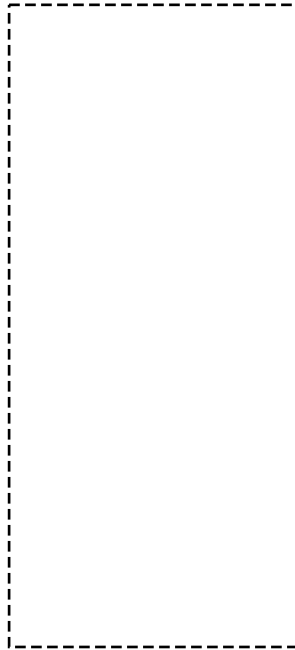
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez

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THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2020



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

Connect with us on the web: graceluth.com



On Monday, October 26, I listened in on the presentation by Rev. Dr. Katherine Shaner during the Nebraska Synod Theological Conference (Virtual) as she addressed the topic: Communities Called Out in Christ. She began her presentation with the question, "What does it mean to be church?" This is an interesting question. I noticed right away that she didn't formulate the question as what does it mean to be "the" church.

She located her thoughts with the first ending of Mark's gospel. Mark **16:1-8** When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. ² And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. ³ They had been saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the tomb?" ⁴ When they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had already been rolled back. ⁵ As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him. ⁷ But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you." ⁸ So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

She spent some time explaining some of the nuance of the word "ekklesia." She said she understood its meaning to be "called out into the world." I resonate with her description. As a young man entering seminary, I recall my professors stating that a pastor is not just called to a place but is called out to the world. I'm sure I didn't understand that then as much as I do now.

It seems clear that those women and first disciples were clearly called out into the world. They didn't have any structure or building or constitution. They were simply called out to be messengers of this truly amazing Messiah, Jesus. He, also, didn't spend his time in structures. Almost all of the stories in the New Testament about Jesus and his ministry are located out in the world.

Continued.....

I wonder if this pandemic time is a time in which we are being called out. Called out to share how God is continuing to work through the Holy Spirit to bring the kingdom closer to each of us as we recognize the way Christ is with us in this time away from the structures that have confined our thinking and doing. Are we able to listen more closely to those who have been outside of our structures as they have encountered the healing sustaining presence of God? Are we able to see and share the ways God accompanies us in this time?

We soon end the church year season with the celebration of Christ the King. May we shed our fear, rejoice in the good news of God's abiding presence and share the wonderful ways we experience God's grace, love and mercy.

Blessings
Pastor Damon Laaker



Worship Plan Update

The Covid-19 pandemic has made the possibility of our in-person worship very tenuous at best. Your leaders met on Tuesday, October 20, to discuss their thinking about next steps for our worshipping communities.

Unfortunately, we here in Nebraska have seen a serious uptick in cases being reported. While we don't know if it continues and recognize that it would be better if there was a consistent decline in the reported infections.

Therefore, your leaders have decided it is **best to still not meet inside for worship through the month of November and likely December.** I am grateful that we had the several Sundays outdoors but the weather has now made that untenable.



We ask for your prayers as we continue to discern what is best for our worshipping communities. Please continue to support the ministry of Christ in our midst. Please be safe and know that you are important to God. May God bless our efforts at being church for the sake of the world.



2020 Council Members

Donna Adrian	Tom Emery	Arlone Farber
Ralph Fitle	Janet Hula	Sandy Nielsen
Brenda Spahr	Amanda Vazquez	
Pastor Laaker		

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

The regular meeting of the council was held on October 13th. Council members shared prayer concerns for Greg's former boss who was diagnosed with COVID, Mickey who had been in the hospital, our community as the numbers of positive cases rise, schools and staff members as they continue to meet in person and try to keep students safe, and our leadership as the election draws near.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker, reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts" from 1 Chronicles 28:20 and 1 Corinthians 4:1. The first says that God will not forsake us until all the work for the service of the Lord is finished. The second suggests that we are servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries.

Visions for Ministry: We reviewed chapter 5 in our book Uproar. It talked about non-anxious leaders and the way they respond to situations. He provides tools that we can use to be responsive rather than reactive and help bring a calming element to anxious situations. We should reflect on how we can be less anxious and more responsive in our leadership at Grace. Read Chapter 6 for next month.

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

Christian Education: none.

Evangelism/Outreach: It was suggested to provide Halloween candy for the pantry. An email will invite the congregation to provide candy for the pantry families.

Finance: Immanuel Vision - we have submitted a grant and will hear in November whether or not it has been approved.

PPP - we can now go forward with the grant paperwork so that the loan can be forgiven.

Property: Vandals - broke the door to the little library, capstones on west wall and uprooted a rose bush.

Fogger: new machine that is shared between Grace and St. Luke's - chemicals are expensive - but the fogger electrifies any potential harmful virus killing it instantly.

Boiler - cleaned and working properly.

Smoke Alarm - General Fire checked smoke alarms and found 1 not working in the side office.

Service/Social Ministry: none.

Support/Stewardship: Fall Program begins Nov. 1 - will look for readers for 3 weeks.

Worship: Organist Contract - time to renew.

Outdoor and Online? With weather turning colder already this coming Sunday, we will move back to online services through the winter.

When to reopen? Bishop's Letter shared.

Unfinished Business: A written report of the Pastor was shared.

New Business: None.

Announcements: Arlone will bring treats for next meeting.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary

Continued...





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
David Nange
Marilyn Van Ormer
The family of Oren Powley



Andrew Edwards
Susan Miller
Amber Morlan
Pam Reents
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 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
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn



Please **PRAY** for those affected by **COVID-19**

**GIVE THANKS
and GIVE BACK**

THRIVENT MEMBER NETWORK -
NEBRASKA REGION
FOOD SHELF CHALLENGE
NOVEMBER 1-30, 2020



With the holidays approaching, the Thrivent Member Network - Nebraska Region is hosting a November Food Shelf Challenge.

Calling all Thrivent Members!

We encourage all to **safely** partner with one another in collecting over 500 non-perishable food items by the end of November. When we collect over 500 items, a Generosity Multiplier Gift of \$500.00 will be directed to the Loaves and Fishes Fresh Food Pantry at Grace.

Please bring your donated non-perishable food items to the church by November 29th in support of the Loaves and Fishes Fresh Food Pantry this holiday season!

Please call the office, 402-341-7730, to make sure someone is present or if you have any questions. Please do not leave food items outside.

In hopes of spreading a little happiness, donated Halloween candy was collected and prepared to give out to pantry participants on Monday, October 25th. Behind Mary Thompson's mask is one very huge smile!



Experiencing the Joy of Generosity

Next week, we begin our stewardship emphasis *"Experiencing the Joy of Generosity."* We hope and pray that you will be blessed by the three weeks of sermon messages and worship. Joy is a beautiful word that seems to bring a smile in saying it. As God's people, we know that Jesus is the source of our joy.



We have the deep and abiding joy of being loved by God through Jesus. King David wrote, *"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore"* (Psalm 16:11). Our stewardship emphasis will encourage us to experience the joy that God gives us through our generosity in sharing with others and extending his kingdom. In the words of Rev. Robert Schnase: "Through our generosity, God can do extraordinary things. Through our giving, God changes lives, and in changing them, transforms us. The practice of generosity describes the Christian's unselfish willingness to give in order to make a positive difference for the purposes of Christ."

May God bless us as we honor the Lord through our generosity.

Watch your mail for information regarding your 2021 Stewardship Emphasis.

Methodist Community Health Clinic Fall Health Screenings



The Mobile Diabetes Center will be on site at the Methodist Community Health Clinic, 208 S. 26th Avenue, offering free flu shots and health screenings, including blood pressure and blood sugar checks. Non-perishable food items will also be available, courtesy of Kountze Food Pantry. Wednesday, November 11th and 18th from Noon until 4:00 p.m. To schedule your appointment, or if you have any questions, please call 402-354-3198.



Dear Grace friends:

Thank you for your kind greetings and gifts in memory of Greg's mother, Dottie Hula. She was a wonderful, caring mother and grandmother and was loved dearly by her family and friends. We are certain that she is home with her beloved Jesus now.

Sincerely, Greg and Janet Hula



5 – Alexandra Granillo
6 – Jan Monico
9 – Mickey Andersen
10 – Telly Mounto
11 – Margie Sutej
18 – Charlotte Palczynski
20 – Pastor Laaker
26 – Greg Hula
Ralph Fitle
29 – Ron Adrian

Wishing you much happiness,
On this special day
And for the coming year
May blessings come your way.

Be thankful for each day you have
Thank God in heaven above
Fill your life with happy not sad
Remember you are loved.

Sign on Main Entrance to Grace Lutheran Church:

Covid-19 Notice



Grace Lutheran Church is taking necessary precautions by cleaning, sanitizing and social distancing. We cannot completely eliminate the risk of exposure, however. By participating in activities in this location, you are however assuming risk that may result in exposure to infectious and communicable diseases.

Please honor one another by wearing a mask and observe social distancing.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Lutheran Disaster Response brings God's hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

The Lutheran Disaster Team has been present during recovery efforts of the California wildfires, Hurricanes in the Gulf region, Monsoon rains in India, the explosions that rocked Beirut and the list goes on....

Your donation to the Lutheran Disaster Team helps to continue their efforts to provide God's hope, healing and renewal to all those in need.



Prayers and donations for those impacted are always needed.



Donations made to Grace Lutheran Church with the memo line indicating "Lutheran Disaster Response" will be forwarded to the Nebraska Synod office in support of the many efforts ongoing right now.

Contagious Generosity

You have a ticket to heaven no thief can take.
You have an eternal home no divorce can break.

*

Every sin of your life has been cast into the sea.
Every mistake you've made is nailed to the tree.

*

You are blood-bought and heaven-made.
A child of God-forever saved.

*

So be grateful, joyful-for isn't it true?
What you don't have is much less than what you do.

~ Max Lucado

Important notice for preventing COVID-19 outbreaks.

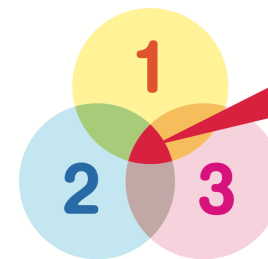
Avoid the "Three Cs"!

- 1. Closed spaces** with poor ventilation.
- 2. Crowded places** with many people nearby.
- 3. Close-contact settings** such as close-range conversations.



One of the key measures against COVID-19 is to prevent occurrence of clusters.

Keep these "Three Cs" from overlapping in daily life.



The risk of occurrence of clusters is particularly high when the "Three Cs" overlap!

In addition to the "Three Cs," **items used by multiple people** should be cleaned with disinfectant.



MHLW COVID-19

Search



We know how to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

I know it doesn't always seem that way. And, yes, there is still a great deal we don't know about the virus.

You should wear a mask if you're going to spend time near anybody who is not part of your household. You should minimize your time in indoor spaces with multiple people. You should move as many activities as possible outdoors.

You should wash your hands frequently. And you should stay home, away from even your own family members, if you feel sick.



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.

Remember to turn your clocks
Back one hour by the
end of your day on
Saturday, October 31st



Loaves and Fishes Pantry

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

Pantry is Open 10:00 - 10:30 am
Every Monday



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

All are served with love and care.

Staying within the CDC guidelines the Pantry continues to reach



out to those in need on a weekly basis. During this time of reduced gatherings, clients of the Loaves and Fishes Pantry have been driving through the alley and picking up prepared sacks and bags of much needed food items. The Pantry is in need of additional bags and paper sacks to continue this community service, if you are able to donate please call the church office 402-341-7730.

Do you know of a family or individual in need of food assistance? Please share the Pantry information with them. You could be the link to helping someone's stress be a little bit less!



Protect the
volunteers,
yourself and
your family!



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.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"I'm glad turkeys taste better than they look."

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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"Pastor, the church board would like YOU to handle the message board, not the finance committee."

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"At Thanksgiving time, Pastor Tom Getchell-Lacey of First United Methodist Church, Gilford, NH, was talking to the children and asked them if they liked turkey.

"One little boy replied that he didn't like turkey, but liked the bread the turkey ate."

- via Joyce Keyser, Gilford, NY

One-Liners

"Be a rainbow in someone else's cloud."
~ Maya Angelou

"Compassion is language the deaf can hear and the blind can see."
~ Mark Twain

"By swallowing evil words unsaid,
no one has ever harmed his stomach."
~ Winston Churchill

Jokes on this page shared by JoyfulNoiseletter.com



Thanksgiving



BOUNTY
CRANBERRIES
DRESSING
FAMILY
GATHER
GRATITUDE
GRAVY

GREEN BEANS
HAM
HARVEST
NOVEMBER
PARADE
PIE
PUMPKIN

SHARING
STUFFING
THANKSGIVING
THURSDAY
TURKEY



*I pray beautiful, bountiful blessings, into your life and work today.
May God use you as His extended hands and show you each step of the way.
Look to our Lord of lords and King of kings, our Savior and Redeemer.
Now, put all of yourself into God's care for you will be there forever.*

- Gordon L. Densmore, Brenham, TX