

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

JULY SUNDAY EVENTS
9:30 a.m. Indoor Worship Service
At St. Luke's, 2315 "T" Street

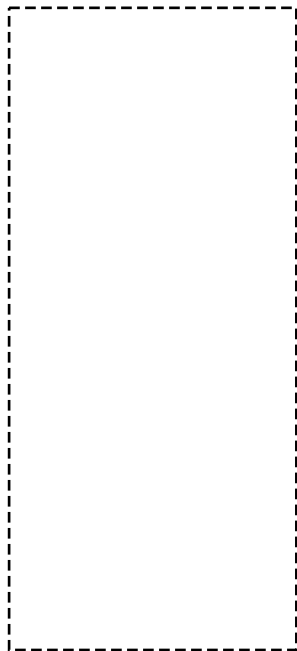
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez

Delivered to the Post Office June 24



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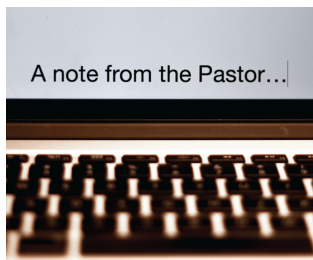
THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2021



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



A note from the Pastor... Bishop Maas in his message to the Synod Assembly noted that “we could say two things about the past year. It was a year of pain and a year of learning. It was a year of pain in the form of loss and grief, of agonizing over difficult decisions, and of conflict over choices made and actions taken. The unfortunate politicization of the pandemic and its requisite safety protocols caused a great deal of unnecessary harm in some of our congregations, and trust will take time to rebuild. This is to say nothing of the cost of COVID-19 itself in terms of disruption, illness and death. It has been a hard year (plus).

“It was also a year of learning. Some things we learned rapidly - how to get worship services (and other activities) online, for example. Others we learned with time - such as how to make pastoral care visits, how to share Holy Communion safely, how to facilitate giving and participating when not in person.

“Looking to the year ahead, we can also say two things: we are still a church making our way through pandemic (this is a long way from over), and we are a smarter and more resilient church, better equipped for our future than we were just a year and a half ago.

“We now teeter on the knife’s edge of what will happen next. Will we lean forward into change and tip over into a new future, or will we lean back to the familiar and tip over into the past? This is the greatest question confronting every congregation and the synod as a whole. Yet we’ve been here before.”

He went on to say that “Because this synod has overcome adversity and adapted so many times before, I am confident we can emerge from this experience stronger, more focused on our mission and ready for transformation. Pioneering is in our DNA.”

This effort though means that we will need to address some of the big issues that this past year has raised to the forefront. Issues like vitality, hybrid worship experiences, social justice and the real need for human contact.

Continued.....

Bishop Maas addressed the issue of social justice in this manner. “This last year has also been a painful and disruptive one as we have experienced so many incidents of civil unrest and racial injustice. Our Racial Awareness, Reconciliation and Engagement (RARE) Team was already busy leading us into deeper awareness and concrete action regarding the reality of racism in our culture and communities when George Floyd was murdered last summer. They stepped up with even more resources and online events for people to explore the reality of racism in our culture and how it impacts our lives and the lives of our congregations. Check out the RARE page on the Synod website. You’ll find ways you can engage this important work and bring its essential if sometimes difficult conversations to your congregation. RARE’s excellent work has led to deeper interest and commitment to expanding the inclusivity of our church, so that it might look more like God’s diverse Kingdom, and more like the communities around us.”

I have to admit that I too am hopeful that we as a church can honestly address the reality of our systemic racism and find ways to engage in this important work. I am pleased that our Church Council at Grace has taken the first step and agreed to use our time within our council meetings that explore this effort with diligence.

May we trust that God’s effort through the Holy Spirit will guide and inform our work together. May we pray for patience and a listening that opens us to growth.

Please be safe as you celebrate our national holiday.
Pastor Laaker

Maya Angelou Quotes

“I’m convinced of this: Good done anywhere is good done everywhere. For a change, start by speaking to people rather than walking by them like they’re stones that don’t matter. As long as you’re breathing, it’s never too late to do some good.”

“While I know myself as a creation of God, I am also obligated to realize and remember that everyone else and everything else are also God’s creation.”

“Forgive yourself for not knowing what you didn’t know before you learned it.”





2021 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 June 8th. Council members shared prayer concerns for health conditions of members and friends.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker, reading the selected verses in the “*Daily Texts*” from Isaiah 60:17 and Romans 14:17. The first tells us that God will appoint peace as our overseer and righteousness as our taskmaster. The second tells us that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Visions for Ministry: The author circles back to the benefit of better understanding our family of origin. Read the Postscript 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: Grace Reads - Principal Oberst is retiring, so Liberty will have a new principal next year. The teachers have indicated that they are planning to pick this up with volunteers and reading in the new school year. Greta Carlson, who was a Lutheran Volunteer Corps person who was placed with OTOC working on the educational component (IPL), is now Youth director at Morningstar. She is looking for a service project for her middle/high school aged youth for 1 day this summer.

Finance: Synod Assembly offering - Mission Field Nebraska support
Insurance - changes were made to the insurance policy to keep our premium basically the same.

Property: CLS - (we will need to replace tile and patch wall)
All of our A/C units were serviced.
Graffiti was painted on the basement alley walls. It has been removed by the city.

Continued...

Service/Social Ministry: OTOC event - Sunday, June 13th

Support/Stewardship: None.

Worship: Ongoing plans

June 20 - Pastor will be out of town. Vicar Heather from Augustana will conduct the service. Amanda will record it.

New Business: Synod Assembly Report - We Are One was the theme. Celebrating 40 years of women in the ministry, 21 years for women of color, and 12 years for LGBTQ+.

Announcements: Tom will prepare a prayer for next month.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:39pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary



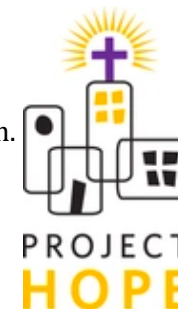
Project Hope
6201 N 60th St., Omaha, NE 68104
projecthopeomaha.org

Project Hope is making plans to reopen their clothing pantry. They are now accepting clothing donations. Please deliver your gently used clothing to our pantry on Tuesday or Thursday between 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Remember, they do not distribute stained, ripped, or otherwise damaged clothing items. Please do not donate clothing items that are damaged.

If you have any questions, please call Project Hope office at 402-453-7649.

Helping Neighbors - Improving Lives - Spreading Blessings

We are called to feed and clothe God's people in need.
We believe nutritious food contributes to good health.
We value people with love, hope, compassion and dignity.





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
Pam Reents
Urbano Vasquez



Andrew Edwards
Susan Miller
David Nange
Marilyn Van Ormer



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:

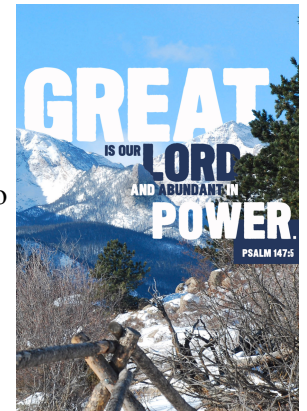
Mickey Andersen - Home
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn
Rev. Terry Nielsen - The Meriwether



Terry enjoys receiving mail, if you would like to brighten his day, please call the church office for his current address. Blessings!

Stewardship thoughts from Grace Duddy Pomroy

What do we mean when we say we serve a God of abundance? In a world where so few people have so much and so many people have so little, can we truly claim an abundant God? Various forms of the word "abundance" appear 146 times in the NRSV Bible, depicting a God who shares. However, the Bible also describes the abundance of humanity, which can be used for good or for ill.



Who is this God of abundance? The psalms and the prophets sing and shout of God's abundant character. First and foremost, God abounds in steadfast love for God's creation (Psalm 5:7). This powerful love — with no beginning and no end — is the foundation of the relationship between God and God's people. God is love, and through the lens of God's love we see the rest of God's character. God is abundant in power (Psalm 147:5), forgiveness (Isaiah 55:7), mercy (Psalm 51:1) and goodness (Psalm 145:7).

God provides for God's people, lavishly sharing God's abundance with creation. The psalmist celebrates how God richly supplies food and water to Israelites wandering the wilderness (Psalm 105:40). God showers the earth with rain, watering the earth and giving growth to the seeds (Psalm 65:10). God offers salvation, wisdom, knowledge, and the promise of abundant life (Isaiah 33:6, John 10:10).

As we live in community, we have the responsibility to recognize the provider of this abundance. We, like the people of Israel sharing their abundance of wealth and skills to build the temple, join with Solomon in declaring, "O Lord our God, all this abundance that we have provided for building you a house for your holy name comes from your hand and is all your own" (1 Chronicles 29:16). We recognize that God is the creator, sustainer, and giver of all things. We are only stewards.



The Collective for HOPE

Ted E. Bear Hollow



Address:
7811 Farnam Drive
Omaha, NE 68114
402-502-2773



It may be summer break, but we are still here for you and those you love. Please take a peek at our upcoming groups and events and as always, reach out with any questions at all.

HEALing Embrace (Pregnancy & Infant Loss) This support group is open to individuals grieving a pregnancy or infant loss (infants up to the age of one.) This group meets from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursdays of every month. Meetings, in July are the 8th and 22nd.

Monthly Family Bereavement Support Groups These sessions start at 10:30 a.m. and run to 11:30 a.m. on the second Saturdays of every month. Join us on Saturday, July 10th! ZOOM groups will be held for adults, teens, and preteens. Children ages 5-9 will be provided special links/activities but won't meet concurrently. Please email monthly@thecollectiveforhope.org with any questions or to discuss special needs.

Adults Helping Adults (AHA) Adults Helping Adults meets the 1st and 3rd Thursdays of every month. It runs from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. and, like the name sounds, is only open to those aged 19 or above. The next session will be July 1st. Please email Anica at amarcum@thecollectiveforhope.org if you have any questions.

To Register for any or all programs, or to read additional information, please go online at: thecollectiveforhope.org or call 402-502-2773 for any questions.



8 – Charles Farber
9 – Madison Emery
11 – Urbano Vasquez
17 – Caleb Ketelson
20 – Dustin Moyer
24 – Angela Everitt
25 – Samantha Moyer

Happy Birthday in faith and blessings be upon you! On your birthday, remember that you were wonderfully made by God and rejoice in his love. You are so blessed to be you and to share the amazing love of Jesus on your birthday! May God bless this day with more love than your heart can hold.



Carol Joy Holling Camp,
Conference & Retreat Center
33rd Annual Quilt Auction
Saturday, July 31, 2021



When summer camp comes to a close, we'll be celebrating our 33rd Annual Quilt Auction on Saturday, July 31st. So that we can support CJH programs as strongly as possible, we want friends like you to come and share the day with us. This event breathes community, from the people who donate the quilts to those who buy them and those who come to watch and connect back to CJH.

Over 350 quilts will be auctioned off. The live auction begins at 9:30 a.m. New this year, the silent auction will be online through the Qtego platform.

Some elements of the Quilt Auction will look different this year. We will follow the standards and protocols set by, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and our state and local health departments. The website page will be updated continuously as specific changes are made.

If you have any questions, please visit the website at CJHCenter.org or call Heather Abbott at 402-944-2544.

Free Parking and Admission
Delicious luncheon from 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.



Grace Lutheran Church has some additional ways that you could contribute without spending any out of pocket funds.

Take a few moments of your time to download the app for TAGG - Together A Greater Good; they partner with several community business. Take a snapshot of your receipt and that some businesses will donate 5% to a charity of your choice (Grace Lutheran).

While shopping online at smile.amazon.com you can designate Grace Lutheran Church as your charity of choice and Amazon will donate a percentage of your purchase to Grace.

Register your Bakers Plus card with Kroger and choose Grace Lutheran as your charitable choice!

Saving your Family Fare, Bag & Save, No Frills, Fresh Market and SunMart receipts will benefit Project Hope. For every \$150,000 in receipts collected, Project Hope receives \$1,000 to use for dairy products. Receipts will be mailed to Project Hope monthly.



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 the tornado recovery efforts in Alabama, California wildfires, AMMPARO Advocacy, Monsoon rains in India, South Sudan Relief, 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.

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, paper sacks and egg cartons 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.

**Spread the Love by donating
Peanut Butter and Jelly.**



FACE MASK
REQUIRED

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, Feminine hygiene products, Hair products (combs, brushes, picks), Bathroom tissue, Shampoo, Dry Laundry Soap, Hand Sanitizer, Sunscreen, Bug Repellent, Band-aids Diaper wipers, and Diapers, especially sizes 6 and pull-ups.

We always need paper or plastic bags.

Worship Update

Mark your calendar! July worship services during the month of July will be held at St. Luke's Lutheran Church, 2315 "I" Street. Service will begin at 9:30 a.m. Please plan to attend!



Independence Day humor

Some time ago, Fr. Herman Page of St. David's Episcopal Church, Topeka, KS, wrote JoyfulNoiseletter that Independence Day humor was hard to come by. Rev. Dr. Karl R. Kraft, a UMC pastor, came up with these July 4th offerings:

Q: What is the Declaration of Independence?

A: **A note excusing you from school.**

Q: Why did Paul Revere ride his horse from Boston to Lexington?

A: **Because the horse was too heavy to carry.**

Q: What are the last two words of the national anthem?

A: **"Play Ball!"**

Q: What dance was very popular in 1776?

A: **Indepen-dance.**

Q: Who wrote, "O say, can you see?"

A: **An eye doctor.**

Q: How is a healthy person like the United States?

A: **They both have good constitutions.**

Q: What did King George III think of the American colonists?

A: **He thought they were revolting.**

Q: What ghost haunted King George III?

A: **The Spirit of '76.**



Jokes on this page shared by JoyfulNoiseletter.com

4th of July Word Search

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



AMERICA
BLUE
BRITAIN
DECLARATION
FIREWORKS
FLAG
FOURTH

FREEDOM
INDEPENDENCE
JULY
LIBERTY
NATION
PARADE
RED

REVOLUTION
RIGHTS
STATES
SUMMER
THIRTEEN
UNITED
WHITE



Fourth of July Safety Tips

redcross.org

- *Never give fireworks to small children, and never throw or point a firework toward people, animals, vehicles, structures or flammable materials. Always follow the instructions on the packaging.
- *Keep a supply of water close by as a precaution.
- *Make sure the person lighting fireworks always wears eye protection.
- *Light only one firework at a time and never attempt to relight "a dud."
- *Store fireworks in a cool, dry place away from children and pets.
- *Leave your pets at home where they feel safe and secure.