

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

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

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS
10:30 a.m. Worship Service
on the Lawn at St. Luke's, 2315 "T" Street

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 - 2021



June

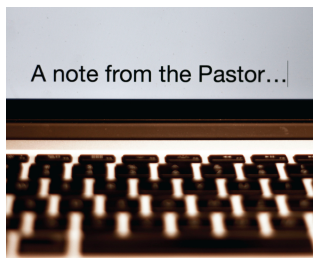


HAPPY
*Father's
Day*



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



Some of you received a letter with some of the following content.

The Church Councils of Grace and St. Luke's met this past month and made some decisions regarding our worship plans for the next two and half months.

First, we will continue to meet outdoors at St. Luke's, weather permitting for the remainder of the month of May. If the weather is not cooperative, we will meet indoors at St. Luke's. The time of the service will be 10:30 am.

Second, as we enter the month of June, we will be changing the service time to 9:30 am. We will meet jointly inside at Grace Lutheran throughout the month.

Thirdly, as we enter the month of July, the time of the service will remain at 9:30 am. We will meet jointly inside at St. Luke's Lutheran throughout the month.

The Councils will meet in July to determine the plans for the months that follow.

In addition to this information, we shared a sheet that contained "worship service changes for your safety." You will find this information elsewhere in this newsletter. I anticipate there will be questions as to why we are seeking to follow these changes when the CDC guidelines have been lifted.

Our intent is to provide the safest possible experience of reopening we can. We know that some will not have received vaccinations, whether by choice or by lack of access. We are hopeful that everyone will take advantage of the vaccine, when available, so that we can reduce the possibility of infection to the lowest level. It seems clear that this virus is not going to be eradicated completely, so, we want to be as safe as possible from its effects.

Some of us will continue to wear masks. I intend to wear my mask when I am in a group of people for a period of time. I also intend to wear it throughout the winter months. It is clear that our mask wearing helped prevent the spread of the flu virus this past year. Who would have guessed that a simple mask made it possible for us to avoid flu sickness, too?

Continued.....

I am looking forward to seeing each of you in person over the next few months. The need for human interaction, person to person, is an important aspect of our care for one another.

Our plans continue to include the recording of our worship service and the uploading of the recording to our You Tube account. However, since the preparation and uploading happens after the worship service experience, it won't be available until Sunday evening. We hope that if you are unable to be present in person, you will continue to access the worship via the Facebook pages or the websites.

May the Spirit of Christ given at Pentecost continue to empower and guide our lives together in Christ.

Pastor Laaker



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 May 11th. Council members shared prayer concerns for Donna's neighbor, Tom's stepfather, Arlone's brother, a family whose son died and for a staff member.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker, reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts" from Deuteronomy 10:14 and Revelation 14:7. The first tells us that all of heaven and earth belong to God. The second tells us that we should worship God who made all of creation.

Visions for Ministry: The author talks about conflict and peoples' innate tendency to react emotionally versus intelligent and thoughtful response, viewing conflict as a learning opportunity. We should practice recognizing our reactivity and try to learn how to continue conversation in an effort to better understand and facilitate growth among groups. We need to let go of the win-lose mentality, and challenge ourselves to a deeper response that leads to a healthier outcome. **Read chapter 12 for next month.**

Continued...

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

Christian Education: VBS - we will share information on St. Matthew's VBS program.

Evangelism/Outreach: Grace Reads - 2nd grade reading was completed today, and 3rd grade will be completed next week for the school year. Crossroads - is beginning to think about restarting and looking for potential host sites. We will keep it on our radar for sometime in the fall.

Finance: none

Property: CLS install - sump pump is installed, however there is still work to be done to fulfill the expectations that were agreed upon.

Tree - out front is dead/dying.

Thanks to Alma for planting and caring for flowers out front along the north side of the building.

Service/Social Ministry: OTOC event - we have put together a basket for the auction.

Care kits - we have enough items to make 75 kits for Lutheran World Relief.

Support/Stewardship: none

Worship: Continuing Online/Outdoors/Indoors - continue outside at St. Luke's through May. In June, we will meet at Grace at 9:30 am each week inside. In July, we will meet at St. Luke's at 9:30 am inside. We will meet in July to discuss future plans beginning in August.

Discussed the need for possible signage: restroom use only, maintain safe distance, wear your mask, please socialize outside, fill out attendance card, etc. to help remind folks we need to continue these safe practices.

Unfinished Business: none

New Business: none

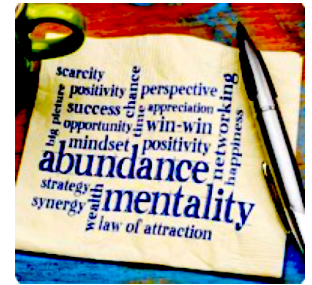
Announcements: Janet will prepare a prayer for next month.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:59pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary

Stewardship

In a recent blog from the "Faith and Money Network," Kathy Killian Noe wrote, "Most of us, whether we are conscious of it or not, operate somewhere on the continuum between an assumption of abundance and an assumption of scarcity."



"An assumption of abundance is a way of living with a healthy amount of trust that everything we truly need to become the people we were created to be will somehow be given. It's a way of living with trust that everything that happens to us — even the things we never would have chosen — can somehow be used for good and as part of our becoming."

"The scarcity assumption tells us that there is simply not enough to go around; not enough resources, not enough attention, not enough love, not enough opportunities, not enough forgiveness for us truly to be forgiven and not enough acceptance for us truly to be accepted, etc."

"The scarcity assumption tells us, maybe on a subconscious level, "if that person is loved, I must be less loved; if that person gets attention, there won't be enough attention for me; if that person is special then I must be less special; if that person's basic need for health care, housing, education and employment are met, there won't be enough to meet my basic need for housing, education health care and employment. The scarcity assumption is at the heart of the ban on refugees, and the building of a wall."

"The truth is there really is the possibility of there being enough for everyone; enough love, enough attention even enough resources to provide for every one's basic needs. But when we operate out of the scarcity assumption, when we act as if there is not enough to go around and we act as if we are not all part of the same human family and we create policies and tax codes that reflect those assumptions, we in fact create scarcity for millions of people."

So, I wonder, which end of the assumption do we operate on? The end of abundance or the end of scarcity. I hope that we might operate more closely to the end of abundance trusting that God provides enough and be willing to share generously of our abundance.



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 Worshipping 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



Lutheran World Relief invited congregations to collect items and assemble donated items into Personal Care Kits recently. Folks gathered following worship service on May 16th and assembled 75 Personal Care Kits in answer to LWR's call for kits.



St. Matthew 2021 Vacation Bible School
1725 S 60th Street
Monday, June 28th - Friday, July 2nd
5:30 - 8:00 p.m.

God's greatest treasure isn't diamonds, gold, or gems - it's us!

The St. Matthew VBS Team is excited to offer a fully in-person Vacation Bible School once again for ALL children ages 3-12. This year, we will journey together through the dense rainforests seeking the hidden treasures in God's Word! We will be following updated masking and social distancing protocols to ensure safety for all participants and staff. Join us for a week of songs, crafts, games, and a **free dinner** each night!



Adults can register their participants by visiting the St. Matthew website at www.smlutheran.com

Anyone ages 13+ who is interested in volunteering for our VBS Crew can sign up by visiting the St. Matthew website at www.smlutheran.com



Anyone interested in donating supplies or funds should email Kiley Compton for additional information at kiley.compton@ralstonschools.org or call St. Matthew's church office at 402-556-7030 if you have any questions.

God's kids say & do the funniest things

A Catholic priest in New Orleans, LA, was teaching a second-grade Holy Communion class about the Mass. After discussing the prayers before Holy Communion, the priest explained that the congregation responds, "Oh Lord, I am not worthy to receive you, but only say the word, and I will be healed."

A little boy in the class started waving his hand frantically. When the priest asked him what the problem was, the boy exclaimed, "Father, Father, what is the secret word?"

- Columnist Smiley Anders, Baton Rouge (LA) Advocate,
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- 2 – Samantha Trejo
- Leigh Ann Wiskus
- 9 – Jason Bauer
- 10 – Trina Rodriguez
- 11 – Micah Laaker
- 14 – Benjamin Laaker
- 15 – Madelyn Moyer
- 20 – Anthony Rodriguez
- 22 – Amanda Vazquez
- 25 – Scott Adrian
- 26 – Colleen Jeffrey
- 28 – Solomon Lewa

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.



Omaha Together One Community

Cordially invites you to
 OTOC's 12th annual Spring Fundraiser
 Celebrating Community:

Silent Auction * Cash Bar * Appetizers * Music

Sunday, June 13, 2021 ~ 4:00 - 7:30 p.m.
 Omaha Design Center, 1502 Cuming St., Omaha

Virtual Auction Sunday, June 6th - Sunday, June 13th
 Bid on items using your smartphone, tablet, or computer!

Tickets: \$25 per person in advance, \$30 at the door
 Tickets can be purchased online at:
<http://bidpal.net/otocaucaution2021>

If you participated in the OTOC Virtual Auction in 2020 you may already be registered and may not need to register again. You will need your password to log in or you can reset it.

Any questions, please call the OTOC office at
 402-344-4401 or speak with Vicki Cox, 402-333-5980.

Worship Service Changes for Your Safety as we meet Indoors.

1. MASKS

We are asking that all worshipers wear a mask upon entering the church. We recognize that CDC guidelines now indicate that fully vaccinated individuals do not need to wear a mask. However, we have no way of knowing if one has been fully vaccinated, so for safety sake please wear your mask while in the building.



2. HAND HYGIENE

Hand sanitizer stations have been placed throughout the building for your convenience. We encourage you to cleanse your hands often, including as you enter the Sanctuary, following tissue use, when hands are visibly soiled and upon exiting the building.

3. SOCIAL DISTANCING

Fellowship and socializing among members and guests has always been welcomed and encouraged. We want to continue with this tradition in a safe manner. When moving through the building or waiting to be seated, we ask that you maintain a safe distance between worshipers or families for your safety. **Socializing before and after service is encouraged to occur outdoors.** We will not be serving coffee or having fellowship opportunities at this time.

4. RESTROOM USE

We request that restroom use be limited to one person at a time. This is to ensure safe social distancing can occur between users.

5. SEATING

Alternating seating in pews helps us to create a safe zone for each person or family. Families are encouraged to be seated together. We ask that children remain with their family at all times. We ask that you respect safe social distancing between families or worshipers in order to keep you and others safe.



6. SINGING

Worship is enhanced through music and singing but we also recognize that singing can enhance dispersion of small respiratory droplets. We ask that you wear your mask at all times during the worship service, including when you sing, in order to contain droplets.

Continued....

7. OFFERING AND COMMUNION DISTRIBUTION

The flow of our worship service involving offering and communion has been altered in order to decrease movement in the sanctuary during worship. As you enter the Sanctuary you will notice a table holding:

- Bulletins
- Attendance card, which will also assist with contract tracings if necessary
- Single-use pencils located in a "clean" container, "dirty" container to collect used pencils
- Self-contained, single serving host and juice containers
- Offering tray to collect your gift and attendance card

8. DISMISSAL

For the safety of all, personal greetings will not occur following the service. Again, we ask that children remain with their family at all times. Please maintain an appropriate social distance.

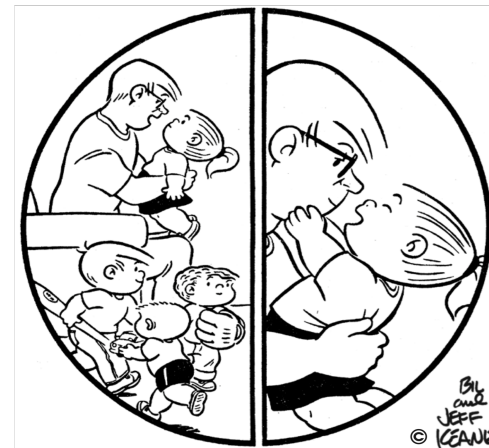
9. FELLOWSHIP

We encourage socializing to occur outdoors.

10. CLEANING/DISINFECTION

You will have noticed that all items that cannot be cleaned and disinfected between uses have been removed from the church, this includes hymnals, bibles and other paper materials. Cleaning and disinfection of the church and restrooms occurs each week.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bil and Jeff Keane



"You're my
favorite daughter."

"And you're my
favorite daddy!"

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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HAPPY
Father's Day



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.

A New Day

When I awoke this morning, Lord my first thought was of You.
For you have given me another day by Your grace and love so true.

Now how I spend this day, dear Lord, you've left that up to me.
I can choose to be smiling and happy and be kind to all I see.

Or I can choose to be down and sad like a weeping willow tree.
Thinking not of my fellow man, but thinking just of me.

Since another day I might not see, as nothing is guaranteed.
I need to live each day I have sharing how my soul You freed.

It's not easy in this world today to keep oneself from worry.
I live in such a high-tech world. I'm always in a hurry.

I'm working at a stressful job trying to make a living.
I often forget Your promise, Lord that You would do the giving.

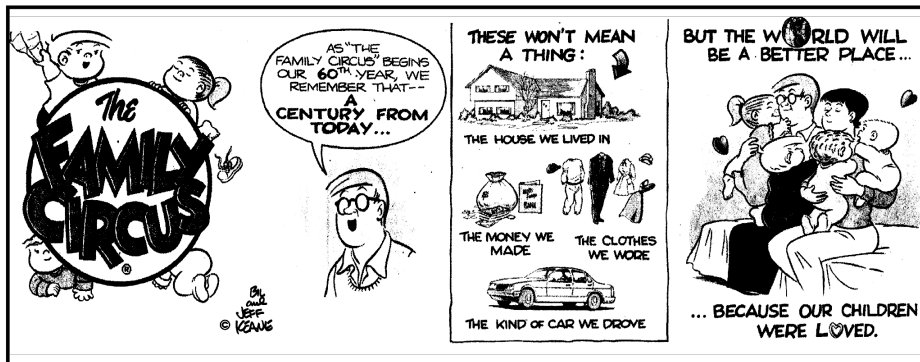
You promised if I'd trust in You that You'd always provide.
No matter what I faced each day, You'd be close by my side.

I also need to remember, Lord the depth of Your constant love.
You promised to be here for me. I need only look above.

At times I need a reminder, Lord that I am only me.
I cannot do it by myself, for You, Lord, are the key.

So on this day, You've given me, I choose to live it well.
Others will know I love You for by my actions they can tell.

Emily McAdams - skywriting.net



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In the Marry Month of June A Humor prescription for weddings and marriages



from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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Father: "And when he proposed, did you ask him to see me?"

Daughter: "He said he had seen you, but he still loved me."

"A happy man or woman is a radiant focus of good will, and their entrance into a room is as though another candle had been lighted."

~ Robert Louis Stevenson

Ten reasons why Adam was the most fortunate of men

1. He was the only man who has never been compared to the man she could have married.
2. He had no in-laws to drop in unexpectedly.
3. There were no Joneses for him to keep up with.
4. There were no credit cards or shopping centers.
5. He never had his dinner interrupted by telemarketing calls.
6. He got away with wearing a simple wardrobe.
7. He never had to shovel snow.
8. If he had gone bald, who would have known that wasn't normal?
9. There was no "standard" weight and height table.
10. When God asked, "Adam, where are you?" he replied, "The woman you gave me is reading the map."

- Author unknown

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Top 15 'Dad Jokes' from the Bible

1. Who was the smallest person in the Bible?
Knee high miah!
2. What car did the wise men drive to see Jesus?
Honda Accord. The Bible says the wise men all came in one accord.
3. Why couldn't Jonah trust the ocean?
Because he knew there was something fishy about it.
4. Who was the most business-savvy woman in the Bible?
Pharaoh's daughter, who went down to the bank of the Nile and pulled out a little prophet.
5. What kind of person was Boaz before he got married?
Ruthless!
6. Where is the first tennis match mentioned in the Bible?
When Joseph served in Pharaoh's court.
7. Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?
Samson. He brought the house down.
8. Which servant of God was the worst lawbreaker in the Bible?
Moses. He broke all 10 commandments at once.
9. How does Moses start his morning?
Hebrews a pot of coffee!
10. At what time of day was Adam created?
A little before Eve.
11. Who is the greatest babysitter mentioned in the Bible?
David. He rocked Goliath to sleep.
12. Did Eve ever have a date with Adam?
No, just an apple.
13. What's the difference between Jesus and pizza?
Jesus can't be topped.
14. Why did Samson try to avoid arguing with Delilah?
He didn't want to split hairs.
15. Need an ark? ~ **I noah guy.**



Fathers Day Word Search

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

BBQ	FATHER	HOLIDAY	LAUGHTER	SPECIAL
BRAVE	FISHING	HOME	LOVE	SPORTS
CARING	FOOTBALL	HONOR	MEMORIES	STRONG
CHILDREN	FUNNY	HUGS	NURTURE	SWEET
DADDY	GIFTS	JOKES	PARENT	THOUGHTFUL
DEVOTED	GIVING	JUNE	PROTECT	TIE
FAMILY	HEART	KISSES	RESPECT	TOOLS

