

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

AUGUST SUNDAY EVENTS
9:30 a.m. Worship Service

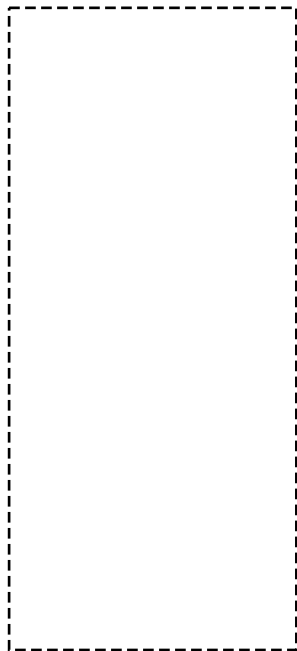
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez

Delivered to the Post Office July 25



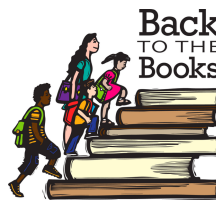
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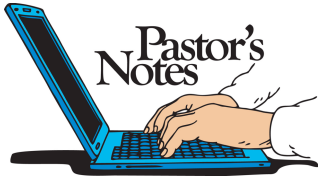
THE GRACE MESSENGER

1889 - 2022



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 few weeks ago on Sunday, I shared a message in which I talked about how difficult it is come near those who are suffering. We, as an American culture, don't know how to hold pain. A couple days after that message, Richard Rohr shared a daily message that reflected further on this difficulty. His message read as follows:
"There seem to be two typical ways to avoid conversion or transformation, two diversionary tactics that we use to avoid holding pain: fight and flight.

"Fight" is what I'll call the way of Simon the Zealot. It describes people who want to change, fix, control, and reform other people and events. The zealot always looks for the political sinner, the unjust one, the oppressor, the bad person over there. Zealots consider themselves righteous when attacking *them* (whoever *they* are at a given time), hating *them*, even killing *them*. When they do, they believe they are "doing a holy duty for God" (John 16:2).

"Zealots often have good conclusions, but their tactics and motives can be filled with ego, power, control, and the same righteousness they hate in others. They want to do something to avoid holding pain until it transforms them. Such people present Christianity as "a cult of innocence" as opposed to a movement for solidarity.

"As long as *they* are the problem (whoever they are), and we keep our focus on changing them and correcting them, then we can sit in a reasonably comfortable position. But it's a position that the saints call *pax perniciosa*, a dangerous and false peace. It feels like peace, but instead is the false peace of avoidance, denial, and projection. The Peace of the Crucified comes from holding the tension.

"This brings us to flight, the second diversionary tactic. This is the common path of the "Pharisee," the uninformed, and the falsely innocent. Such people deny pain altogether and refuse to carry the shadow side of anything in themselves or in their chosen groups. They allow no uncertainty nor ambiguity as they scapegoat and project their own wounded side somewhere else! There will be no problems. It is a form of narcotic, and at times probably necessary to get some people through the day.

Continued.....

"Both fight and flight people are subject to hypocrisy, projection, or just plain illusion: "We are right; you are wrong. The world is divided into black and white, and we alone know who is good and who is bad."

"Resurrected" people are the ones who have found a *better* way by prayerfully bearing witness against injustice and evil—while also agreeing compassionately to hold their own complicity in that same evil. It is not over there—it is *here*. It is *our* problem, not *theirs*. The Risen Christ, not accidentally, still carries the wounds in his hands and side. The question becomes: How can I know the greater truth, work through the anger, and still be a life-giving presence?

"That is the *Third Way* beyond fight or flight, which in a certain sense includes both. It's fighting in a new way from a God-centered place within, and fleeing from the quick, egocentric response. Only God can hold such an act together within us.

Adapted from "[Zealots and Pharisees](#)," Third Core Principle of the Center for Action and Contemplation.

Pastor Laaker

Stewardship

Years ago, Chinese farmers decided they would eat the good big potatoes and just use the small ones for seed. A new understanding of the laws of life came to them when, through the years during which they kept up the practice, nature reduced all their potatoes to the size of marbles! Those farmers learned through bitter experience that they could not keep the best things of life for themselves and use the leftovers for seed. The laws of life decreed that the harvest would reflect the planting.

"Planting small potatoes" is still common practice. Too many folks take all the big things of life for themselves and only plant the leftovers. They expect that by some crazy twist of the laws of nature their selfishness will reward them with blessings.

Are we planting small potatoes or have we learned that planting generously brings lots of ways the mission of Christ grows in big and healthy ways?

Pr. Laaker



2022 Council Members

Ron Adrian	Andrew Edwards	Sarah Emery
Ralph Fitle	Greg Hula	Janet Hula
Eva Martin	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 July 12th. Council members shared prayer concerns for individuals connected to council members; people of Ukraine; people affected by the wildfires, natural disasters, and excessive heat; for the victims and families of recent mass shootings; and for the US economy.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Pastor Laaker, reading the selected verses in the “Daily Texts” from Habakkuk 3:19 and 1 Timothy 4:10. The first reminds us to be hopeful that we have strength from God and through God. The second tells us that even through all our struggles, we continue forward, never give up, keep looking for opportunities even in our struggles knowing God surrounds us in ways unknown.

Visions for Ministry: The Council shared good conversations regarding how we are currently involved in the community and knowing we may not have all the answers but continue to look for additional ways to be a part of the community in ways that are most needed.

Re-read the concluding thoughts for next month.

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

Christian Education: Vacation Bible School “Roots of Creation” - July 23rd 12:30-4:30 pm followed by a meal. Janet and Amanda continue to work on organizing VBS. Janet has received and will be posting five signs in the church yard and the surrounding neighborhood. Bi-lingual flyers have been created and will be shared with pantry participants for the two Mondays prior July 23rd. All who would like to volunteer, please speak with Janet and Amanda.

Continued...

Evangelism/Outreach: Crossroads Prison Ministry - scheduled for Sunday, September 18th at 6:00 pm. We need to be thinking of a meal plan, etc.

Pastor provided two handouts from OTOC:

OTOC - Democracy is Not a Spectator Sport, Living our Faith – Shaping our Community

OTOC – Internal Contribution Campaign Timeline

Finance: Council ratified the Disney Endowment Distributions included in the Endowment Report.

Property: The Cox contract for phone services will expire on July 26th. Quantum, partnership through CenturyLink, has sent information regarding fiberoptic internet line for \$60 a month. Council decided to give Quantum a try with the knowledge there is no contract – month to month service. The AC units have been serviced with no problems.

Service/Social Ministry: None

Support/Stewardship: Second Quarter Financial statements have been distributed.

Worship: Masks might be mandatory for worship services this fall, we will continue to watch conditions.

Unfinished Business: Joint Council meeting - Wednesday, July 27th at 5pm here at Grace.

New Business: None

Announcements: Eva will prepare a prayer for next month.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:21pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Brenda Spahr, Secretary Pro-tem

August Worship services will be
here at Grace, 9:30 am.
All are welcome!

WORSHIP
with us



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
June Hilmer
Carolyn Matson
Sue Mize
Pam Reents
Urbano Vasquez



Andrew Edwards
Samuel Mantzaris
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-elect Scott Johnson, Nebraska Synod
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.

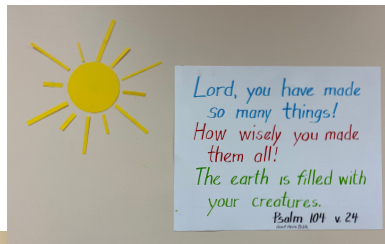
Pray for our Shut-ins and Nursing Home residents:

Vicki Cox - Home
Barbara Nelson - Life Care Center, Elkhorn
Rev. Terry Nielsen - Echo Hills
Marilyn Van Ormer - Home



All of our homebound enjoy receiving mail, if you would like to brighten their day, please call the church office for any addresses you need. Blessings!

Roots of Creation Vacation Bible School 2022



"Sage"
Talking about
God's Creations!

God created
creation for us and
created us to take
care of His creation





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 Mary and Amanda for your weekly dedication running the recording equipment every Sunday during worship service.
- ✝ Thank you Ron, Donna and Brenda for taking care of the altar, and preparing communion.
- ✝ Thank you Mary, Janet, Donna, Ron, and Eva, for your faithful dedication in helping assemble the monthly Grace Messenger!
- ✝ Thank you Alma for keeping both Grace and St. Luke's clean and looking so welcoming to everyone who enters.
- ✝ 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!
- ✝ Thank you to Janet, Amanda, and all who volunteered their time and resources to make Vacation Bible School, Roots of Creation, a memorable experience for all the children who attended this summer.



KAIROS PALESTINE - a plea for help from the homeland of Jesus! Join us in September for a series of chats about what's happening there now. After worship, we'll meet for coffee, worship, and very good bakery in the fireplace room at St. Lukes. To save your spot, please contact Rose Marie at 402-733-5881 or text/call Sara at: 402-686-1693. (12 max at one time)



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.

- 2 – Vicki Cox**
- 3 – Bobbi Jo Pankaj**
Joseph Everitt
- 13 – Daniel King**
Barisila Koka
- 23 – Charles Emery**



Visit the Durham Museum for just \$5 after 5:00 pm on Tuesdays from now until August 30th. The museum will stay open until 8:00 pm each Tuesday through August 30th. Current exhibits include the *Dinosaur Revolution* which including fun fossil facts!

ANSWERS

Solution to this month's puzzle, fill in, located on the last page. No peeking!

Bible Crossword Solution No.59

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

<http://biblewordgames.com>



Organizing Training Series

The Institute for Public Leadership (IPL) and Omaha Together One Community (OTOC) are planning to host the training sessions in person, so space will be limited. They will adhere to the COVID guidelines of the host

organization. Please do not attend if you are feeling ill or have been recently exposed.

Training Schedule:

July 18th What is a Broad Based Organization?
 July 25th Recruiting New Members
 Aug. 8th Qualities of a Leader
 Aug. 22nd Importance of Hard Money
 Sept. 12th Understanding the Budget
 Sept. 26th Effective Meeting / Action

All sessions will take place from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
 Location to be confirmed.

Register and learn more at: <https://forms.gle/WGC6BZGPCBHQST5BA>

OTOC Contribution Form

Return to: OTOC - 3647 Lafayette Ave. - Omaha, NE 68131

Please accept this donation of \$ _____ to support OTOC's work from:

Name: _____

Address: _____ City _____ Zip _____

e-mail: _____

Congregation/Organization/Business _____

___I/we prefer that our donation remain anonymous.

Please make checks payable to: Omaha Together One Community.

OTOC Website: www.OTOC.org

Omaha Together One Community is a non-partisan, non-profit 501(c)4 organization. Contributions to OTOC are not tax-deductible.

IPL provides leadership training for refugees from Asia and Africa, immigrants from Latin America, and leaders of congregations and community organizations affiliated with OTOC so they can be effective agents of positive change in their communities.



IPL Organizers and staff provide Leadership Development and Community Organizing training sessions to a variety of community groups and congregations. Past trainings include House Meeting training for the Anti Defamation League Neighborhood Strong project, House Meeting training for the ELCA Nebraska Synod, guest lectures about community organizing in college classes, and a presentation on why community organizing is effective for the Servants of Mary. For more information, contact Executive Director, Sarah Keeney – skeeney.iaf@gmail.com



"988" The Nation's New Mental Health Hotline

July 16th was the first day "988" was activated as the new three-digit mental health program hotline. In 2020 the Federal Communication Commission designated "988" as the new help number and Congress funded it. Anyone who needs help with their mental health, particularly people in crisis or those struggling with mental health issues, should call this number. Operators speak both English and Spanish and have access to interpreters with over 150 languages.

When people call, text, or chat 988, they will be connected to trained counselors that are part of the existing National Suicide Prevention Lifeline network. These trained counselors will listen, understand how their problems are affecting them, provide support, and connect them to resources if necessary.

The current Lifeline phone number (1-800-273-8255) will always remain available to people in emotional distress or suicidal crisis, even after 988 is launched nationally.

Website: suicidepreventionlifeline.org and 988lifeline.org



Your gifts are comforting families with shelter, essential items and medical supplies

Your generosity is embracing families in Ukraine with the critical support they need right now. Specifically for those families staying at the sanatoriums, you are providing:

Housing for more than 15,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) forced to flee heavy fighting in the eastern and southern parts of the country with no other means of support.

Food, supplies and equipment. Many Ukrainians arrive at the sanatoriums with only the clothing on their backs. Your gifts are providing essentials including food, folding beds, pillows, heaters, laundry detergent, toilet paper and personal hygiene items. And since kids do not stop being kids during war, there are toys to bring smiles and the gift of play.

Quilts and Kits. Because of your generosity, we are channeling quilts and kits to these facilities, bringing some much-needed comfort to families.

You are also providing critically needed supplies and equipment to two hospitals in Ukraine. This includes medical supplies such as stethoscopes, thermometers, and needles, trauma supplies such as surgical and wound care kits, defibrillators and stretchers as well as medicines like insulin and morphine to help with chronic illnesses.

Thank you for caring for our Ukrainian neighbors. Your love and support are making our entire response possible. With your continued support, we will expand our response to reach more Ukrainians.

We are grateful for the thousands of Lutherans across the United States whose care and generosity have made it possible for us to respond immediately. Because of you, our teams on the ground are meeting these immediate needs while also planning longer-term responses as families rebuild their lives around the world. But we can't do it without you.



Usable Glasses Give New Life

Refractive errors can be easily corrected with eyeglasses, yet millions living in low and middle income countries lack access to basic eye care services. Lions Club have recognized the urgent need for corrective lenses and collect usable glasses in their communities to support the Lions Recycle For Sight Program.

If you have a set or two of previous wearable glasses no longer in need, please bring them to the church office and help individuals to see their world a little more clearly. A box is located in the back of the sanctuary to place them.

Have You Included
Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Endowment Fund
in Your Will?



A current, "Remember the Church in Your Will", brochures are currently available upon request. Please pick up a free copy during your next worship time and consider Grace Lutheran a place for remembrance.



Persistent Grace is a ministry of spiritual fitness for people living with chronic disabilities. A medical diagnosis leads us to work on our physical and mental wellness. But what do we do about spiritual wellness? Persistent Grace is about making space to confront the spiritual challenge to living with a chronic disability.

How can Persistent Grace help you? Like our Facebook page to receive daily words of encouragement.

If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Glen Thomas at St. Matthew Lutheran, 402-556-7030 or email: persistentgrace@gmlutheran.com



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 so 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.

The Kroger Co. Family of Stores is committed to bringing hope and help to the local neighborhoods we call home. Our stores are on a mission to not just part of, but to help create a stronger community. We recognize that every community has unique causes that need support. Thank you for being such an important organization in our community.

We encourage you to ask your supporters to link their rewards card to your organization. Community Rewards is easy to use, The more your supporters shop with us, the more money your organization will earn!

The second quarter donation results were: 6 participating households contributed \$28.15. Thank you for your generous support! If you would like to become another participating household, please visit your Baker's store customer service and register your Baker's Plus card, make sure to direct your charitable choice to Grace Lutheran.

The Kroger Co. is committed to carefully protecting their customer's personal information. In order to meet their expectation of privacy, Kroger's has adopted a simple policy to never share a customer's personal information. Their privacy policy applies to Community Rewards participation as well.

Loaves and Fishes Pantry

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

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.



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. Thanks to your generosity the Pantry has a very huge stock of bags and egg cartons! Currently there is no need for these items. Please continue to keep the Pantry and all the work that is done in your prayers.



Do you know of a family or individual in need of food assistance? Please share the Pantry information with them.



face masks
are encouraged

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.

Take Time - Old English Prayer

Take time to dream, it is hitching your soul to the stars.
 Take time to work, it is the price of success.
 Take time to think, it is the source of power.
 Take time to play, it is the secret of perpetual youth.
 Take time to read, it is the foundation of knowledge.
 Take time for worship, it is the highway of reverence and washes
 the dust of the earth from your eyes.
 Take time to be friendly, it is the road to happiness.
 Take time to help and enjoy friends, it is the source of happiness.
 Take time to love and be loved, it is the sacrament of life.
 Take time to laugh, it is the music of the soul.
 Take time for beauty, it is everywhere in nature.
 Take time to look around, it is too short a day to be selfish.
 Take time for health, it is the true treasure of life.

~ via Apple Seeds



Jokes reprinted with permission from JoyfulNoiseletter.com

THE FAMILY CIRCUS

By Bil and Jeff Keane

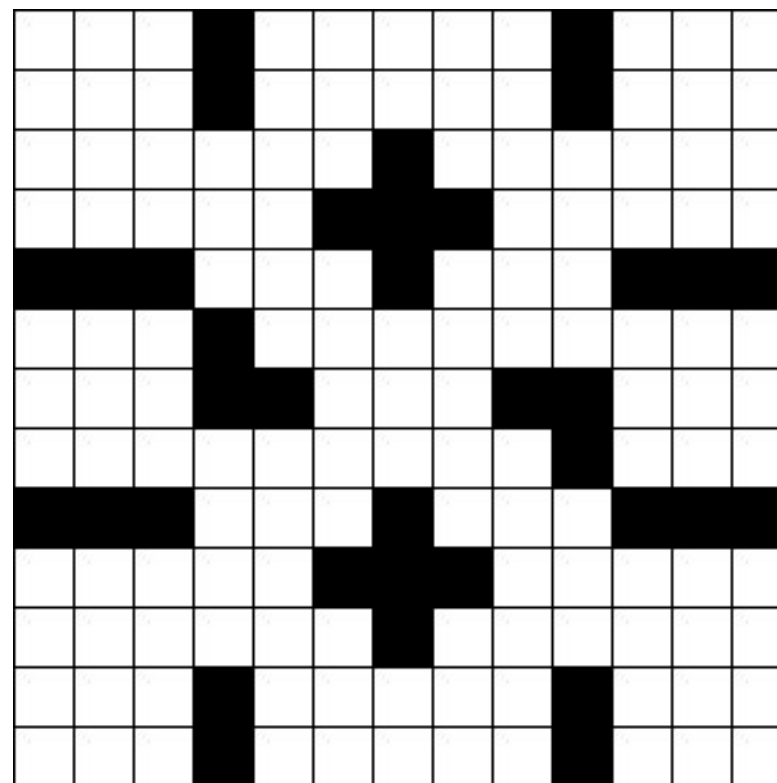


from JoyfulNoiseletter.com

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Bible Word Games Fill-in



2 letters.	GOB	TOW	5 letters.	RATHER
GO	ITO		CORAL	SIMEON
IS	ITS	4 letters.	GOATS	TOHIDE
	JOB	AMNO	HEWHO	WASHED
3 letters.	KEY	BEDS	MINDS	
AIR	LIE	EASE	NOSES	9 letters.
ALL	LOG	HOLE	ONTOP	DIDNOTEAT
AMI	MEN	INAT	ORISA	TOLODGEIN
ARE	NEW	ITIN	RAGED	
ASI	ORI	JOHN	SMOTE	
ATE	OWE	MEON	WEIGH	
BED	PEN	NIGH		
CAN	RAM	ONLY	6 letters.	
DOG	ROB	OWED	ASAMAD	
EAT	ROD	SING	NOARAB	
GAD	SET	WEAK	ONAPOT	
GEM	SEW	WRAP	OTHERS	