

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/gracelutheranoma

SEPTEMBER SUNDAY EVENTS

9:30 a.m. Worship Service at
St. Luke's, 2315 I Street

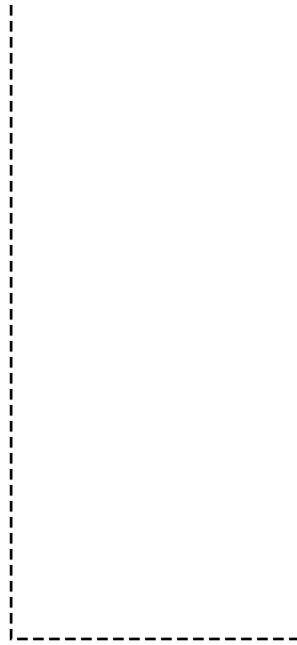
Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Colleen Jeffrey
Sexton - Alma Lopez

Delivered to the Post Office November 1



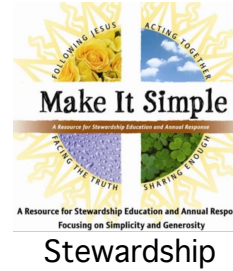
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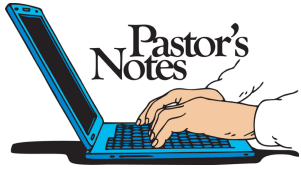
THE GRACE MESSENGER

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



I enjoyed the time away. We drove to Albuquerque so that I could attend the Fall Gathering of the Voyagers – clergy who actively engage thinking and acting from Bowen Theory in Family and Work. The scenery on the drive down and back was so delightful. It has been a long time since we last drove through any portion of the Rocky Mountains. The majesty and beauty was so rewarding.

My days were filled with the planning, participation and reflection of our week-long program. We began with a very thoughtful presentation on “Understanding Christian Nationalism.” Wikipedia describes Christian Nationalism in this manner. **“Christian nationalism** is Christianity-affiliated religious nationalism. Christian nationalists primarily focus on internal politics, such as passing laws that reflect their view of Christianity and its role in political and social life.” This seems to be most aligned with evangelical groups of Christianity.

Our guest presenter on Thursday was Kathy Wiseman. She presented on the topic “Bowen Theory in Family and Work: Have I got time for the pain?” Included in her talk were presentations by two other individuals. Dr. Patrick Stinson who has developed an app that can create a visual form of the generations and the interactions that mark the emotional systems of the family. Allison Whitney, the Western Pennsylvania Family Center Board Chair, presented a very unique look at triangles. Triangles are the building block of larger emotional systems.

We also presented in a small group our Family of Origin. This gives us the opportunity to reflect on the various concepts of the theory. I am amazed at the things I have discovered in exploring my family of origin.

I am grateful for the colleagues that come together and are excellent thinkers and practitioners of this theory. It is good to be grounded with such good people.

Continued.....

I believe this work has helped me be a better person and pastor.

I hope your gatherings for the celebration of Thanksgiving are marked with joy and delight. Explore the stories that are marks of your family history.

God bless!

Pastor Laaker

Thanksgiving Eve Service, 6:30 pm.
St. Matthew Lutheran Church
1726 South 60th Street



Grace has the opportunity to join with congregations from St. Luke's, Bethel, Augustana and St. Matthew's for a Thanksgiving Eve Service. Following the service we will have time for Fellowship and Refreshment.



presents

AMERICAN SALUTE

Music of American Composers

Saturday, November 5 • 7:00 PM

St. Luke's Lutheran Church
2315 I Street
Omaha, NE 68107



Contact Us

402-477-7899
402-477-8222 (fax)
nb@artsincorporated.org
www.artsincorporated.org/nb

Single Admission

Adults	\$12
Seniors (65+)	\$10
Children	Free
Students	Free



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 October 11, 2022. Council members shared prayer concerns for an end in the violence occurring in Ukraine, Iran and N. Korea, victims of Hurricane Ian and ongoing natural disasters, Eva's sister Betty who is receiving cancer treatments, daughter Gloria who is dealing with health problems, Brenda's neighbor Tony who is dealing with multiple health concerns, and for much needed rain.

Devotions: Devotions were led by Sarah Emery, reading the selected verses in the "Daily Texts" from Deuteronomy 26:15 and Luke 2:30-32. The first talks about tithing in previous verses and continues with asking and praying for God to continue blessing us in all that we do. The second reminds us that Jesus is our light and salvation for ALL PEOPLE.

Visions for Ministry: Council members reflected on an article "It's Time to Rethink American Churches." This revealed through a poll with Gallup the steady decline of Americans that say they belong to a church, synagogue, or mosque. 2020 shows for the first time the percentage is below 50% and now indicates only 47% associate or belong with a church. Majority of people, mostly young adults, are now saying they are not religious but are spiritual, outside of a church building. They are spiritual when and where they choose, but this is done without guidance or leadership. It is good to see folks taking care of and seeking justice for one another.

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

Christian Education: Pastor concluded the four-week Bible Study on October 4th with three people participating.

Evangelism/Outreach: Crossroads Prison Ministry meal was held on Sunday, September 18th with 22 people in attendance. There was a miscommunication with letting individuals know there was a service. Plenty of food was leftover.

Continued...

Finance: Council approved an increase to Pastor's Housing Allowance. Pastor will apply for the Immanuel Vision Foundation Grant so we may provide a variety of supplies for the teachers and staff at Liberty Elementary from Grace and Spring Lake Elementary from St. Luke's.

Property: Loren Moyer helped Pastor install a new garbage disposal in the upstairs kitchen. Loren also helped with changing burnt-out light bulbs in the vintage hanging lights in the sanctuary.

Council discussed a leaky refrigerator in the basement which has caused tile damage, should have the refrigerator either repaired or replaced.

Service/Social Ministry: None.

Support/Stewardship: Make It Simple - Fall Emphasis. Additional information will be available in the November issue of the Grace Messenger.

Worship: Council discussed options for Thanksgiving Eve Service and would like to follow up with Pastor and what the Metro East Cluster will be doing. Christmas Eve is on Saturday this year and Christmas is on Sunday. Council decided that it would be best to have one Christmas Eve service at St. Luke's and then Christmas morning service will be at Grace. Two of Grace's council members, Brenda and Janet, will visit with St. Luke's council during their meeting on Thursday and discuss these options. Council also decided it would be nice during 2023 to switch months with St. Luke's so both congregations could experience worship services in different months.

Unfinished Business: None

New Business: Council discussed and agreed to have a cake reception following worship service on Sunday, October 23rd, in recognition for Pastor Appreciation!

Announcements: Ralph will prepare a prayer for next month.

Adjournment: The Council meeting closed in prayer and adjourned at 8:20pm.

Respectfully Submitted, Amanda Vazquez, Secretary





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
Pam Reents
Urbano Vasquez



Andrew Edwards
Samuel Mantzaris
Sue Mize
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 Scott Johnson, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Elizabeth Eaton, ELCA Bishop

Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Charles Tuw is the elder 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!



Our Fall Stewardship Emphasis begins here in November. Watch your mail for information and the opportunity to respond with your planned giving for 2023.

Walter Brueggemann writes in *Mandate to Difference: An Introduction to the Contemporary Church*:

Jesus has come that we may have abundant life. His feeding narratives attest that the generosity of God is assured whenever Jesus rules in the earth and we count on that generosity. And that means, does it not, that our common practices of greed, of the pursuit of consumer goods, of the frantic effort to acquire more, are both inappropriate and unnecessary. Our society always hungers for more: more body surgery, more cosmetics, more cars, more beer, more sex, more certitude, more security, more money, more power, more oil. . . whatever. This hunger for more is a true sign that we do not trust the goodness of God to supply all of our needs; we do not trust that the generous rule of Jesus who has ascended to power is in effect. But we, we are Jesus people, and therefore we are pledged and empowered to act differently, differently in the neighborhood, differently in the economy, and as citizens of the last superpower, differently in the world. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007, p. 5)

May we act as Jesus people and plan to share generously in 2023.

Pr. Laaker

Worship
SERVICE

November 9:30 am Worship services
will be at St. Luke's Lutheran
2315 I Street
All are welcome!



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 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!

Lutheran Women of Omaha
Tuesday, November 8, 2022
12:00 Noon



Join us at St. Matthew Lutheran Church, 1725 S. 60th Street.

Cost: \$3.00

Program will be Immanuel Communities, with Reverend Brian Maas as the guest speaker.
Free Will Offering will support Immanuel Communities Mission & Spiritual Care.

Call Mardelle Gocek at 402-292-1328 by Sunday, November 6th to reserve your seat.

St. Martin of Tours Presents

Arias for Autumn

A CONCERT & FUNDRAISER
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13 AT 3PM
24th and J Street

You are invited to attend a Benefit Concert at the historic St. Martin of Tours Episcopal Church on 24th and J Streets.

On Sunday, November 13, 2022, at 3:00 pm., St. Martin of Tours will present a benefit concert to raise funds to renovate a Sunday School Room and purchase Choir Robes. A reception in the undercroft will follow the concert.

Please consider attending to support St. Martin of Tours

Concert will feature River's Edge Mixed Chorus; Rev. Keith Winton, Conner Mowery and Carol Mowery and Carol Durhan; Nola Jean Pierre and the Resurrection Choir.



Potluck Fundraiser for Gaza

St. Timothy's Lutheran Church, 510 N 93rd Street
Thursday, November 10th - 5:45 pm

All donations will support Augusta Victoria Hospital's work in Gaza and the Palestine Children's Relief Fund. Donations are tax deductible.

Your donation will help to provide thousands of children medicine and food; send injured kids abroad for free medical care they cannot get locally; sponsor orphans and disabled youths; provide training for local doctors; coordinate hundreds of volunteer doctors on medical missions for injured children.

Sponsors: St. Timothy's Lutheran Church; Holy Land Task Force, Great Plains Conference of The United Methodist Church; Social Justice and Peacemaking Committee, Presbytery of Missouri River Valley of The Presbyterian Church USA; Omaha Friends Meeting (Quaker); and Nebraskans for Peace Palestinian Rights Task Force.

Make checks out to Grace Lutheran Church with a note in the memo line that it is for Augusta Victoria Hospital or Palestine Children's Relief Fund. If you can't attend, please mail checks to: Steve Horn, 4916 Trail Ridge Road, Blair, NE 68008.



Community Relay is a free, online directory to help you find services and support in your local community. Starting with your zip code, you can search for local programs and services for things like food, housing, job placement, transportation, legal services and more. Community Relay is searchable in over 100 different languages and more than 155,000 organizations participate nationwide! Community Relay is a free resource presented by the Nebraska Health Network. Please visit - communityrelay.com and see if you and someone you know can benefit from this helpful website!



- 2 – Michael Brown
- 6 – Jan Monico
- 9 – Mickey Andersen
- 11 – Margie Sutej
- 18 – Charlotte Palczynski
- 20 – Pastor Laaker
- 26 – Greg Hula
- Ralph Fitle
- 28 – Elena Blenderman
- 29 – Ron Adrian

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.

We are grateful to have had the opportunity to share the boundless love of God with 1,346 campers at Carol Joy Holling and Sullivan Hills Camps this past summer. We all know how faith comes alive when we step outside of our day-to-day routines and explore faith conversations with our peers at camp. Check out some of the upcoming opportunities for the youth of your congregation to get back to camp this fall and winter:



November 11-13, 2022 - Middle School Retreat! Come back to camp for the weekend. Come and enjoy classic camp activities such as high ropes, creatives arts, and campfires!

November 19-20, 2022 - Mother & Tween Daughter Retreat! Fall is a time where life seems like a giant to-do list. Join us for a weekend to be present, try new things, grow together, and have fun!

January 21-22, 2023 - High School Retreat. We are trying something new this year, and moving the Retreat out of winter break and into January.

To learn more about these retreats and to register, visit: CJHCenter.org/upcoming-retreats.

Early Bird registration is now open for summer camp 2023. Campers who sign up before January 31, will receive \$50 off a full-week session and a CJH Camp beanie!



Dear friends of Grace Lutheran Church,

My name is Ashley, and I'm the Associate Director of [MICA House](#). Over the last couple of years, MICA House has continued to provide shelter and support to families and women experiencing homelessness in our community. Although we had to reduce the number of volunteers and supplemental programming, we never stopped serving through our mission.

We are in need of volunteers for our [BUDDY Program](#) – a play program that allows kids to be kids while their parents attend classes in the evenings. BUDDY Program is hosted on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday night from 6-8 PM. Individuals interested in supporting the youngest clients at MICA House can apply via this form: <https://bit.ly/3C8HMPu>

We are also in need of food and supplies like pasta, canned vegetables and fruit, and diapers (size 5-6). We have online wish lists through Amazon and Target that can ship directly to us. Groups or individuals are also welcome to host a collection drive for items, and we would be happy to talk more with anyone who is interested in hosting a drive.

Visit our website at: themicahhouse.org to learn more about the volunteer opportunities at MICA House. If you need or want any additional information, please don't hesitate to reach out. I look forward to hearing from you! Thank you!

Ashley Flater, Associate Director/Interim Executive Director MICA House
1415 Ave J, Council Bluffs, IA 51501 ~ phone: 712-323-4416 x. 2105
aflater@themicahhouse.org

2023 Winter Retreat

January 14, 2023

9:00 am - 3:00 pm

St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Grand Island



Join us for a day of fellowship, fun, and lunch.

Guest speaker is Jennifer Rodewald, she is a Christian author of fiction who is passionate about the Word of God and the power of story. There will be updates from Saved to Serve Opportunities, Conference Spring Gatherings, and of course, some fun surprises for all.

Visit: womenoftheelca.org for additional information.



1611 1/2 Farnam Street
Omaha, NE 68102

2022 has been a year of successes and challenges. Costs are on the rise, upward trend in cafe patronage to be the "in need" who volunteer for their meal. Income is down. We invite you to give generously to assist in sustaining the mission of Table Grace Ministries. We are seeking monthly donors who would give \$100 - \$5000 per month or one time donations. All donations are welcome. We thank you for your support, prayers, and partnership.

Successes

7000 Cafe meals served

3000 Truck meals served

32 - 10 day applicants

3 - 10 day graduates

Challenges

Fuel prices 44% increase

Food prices 9.1% increase

In need meals 20% increase

Income/donations 10% decrease

Ways you can donate: Paypal nhbs.cc/paypal * Text the word "NOURISHING" to 44-321 * Come to Table Grace for a meal and give * Attend a Food Truck lunch and give * Send a check to Table Grace (address above) * Book an Event nhbs.cc/book.

"988" The Nation's New Mental Health Hotline

"988" has been 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, food, supplies and equipment. Quilts and kits are a 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.



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.

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. **The Pantry is in need of clean plastic grocery bags and paper grocery bags!** 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

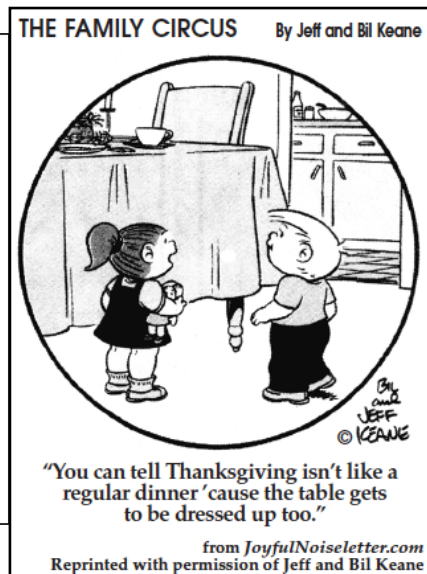
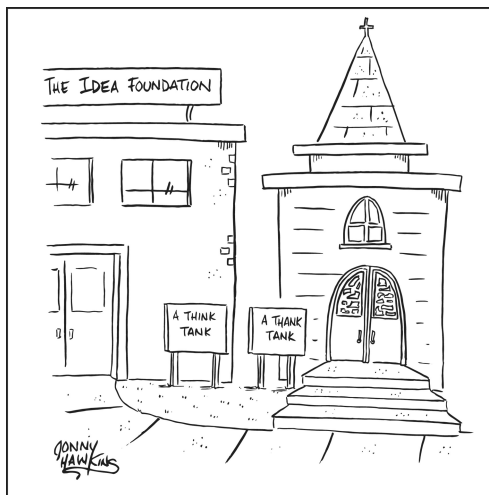
Protect the volunteers, yourself and your family!

**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.



Jokes reprinted with permission from JoyfulNoiseletter.com

Humor Power - (How to spell relief)

L * Let go of what's bugging you!

Play with the situation until you can find some way to laugh about it.

A * Alter your attitude

Try to always think positive.

U * You need to lighten up.

Burdens become heavier if we hang on to them.

G * Go do it!

Get busy and forget yourself.

H * Humorize

Practice telling jokes to someone else.

~ via Denny Brake, Raleigh, NC

"The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and have is given to me as a gift of love, to be celebrated with joy."

~ Henry Nouwen

"Fill me with gladness from above, hold me by strength divine;
Lord, let the glow of your great love, through my whole being shine."

~ Author unknown

My Thanksgiving List

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. Psalm 100:4 (NIV)



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

FOOD	FRIENDS	FAMILY	FLOWERS	HAPPINESS
SUNSHINE	PRAYER	HOUSE	SCHOOLS	BIBLE
COUNTRY	CLOTHES	RAIN	HEALTH	LOVE
CHURCH	PEACE	FREEDOM	TEACHERS	PETS
MUSIC	PARENTS	SALVATION	TREES	JESUS

Thank you for...

...the mess to clear up after a party, because it means I have been surrounded by friends.

...a lawn that needs mowing, windows that need cleaning, and gutters that need fixing, because it means I have a home.

...the taxes I pay, because it means I have an income.

...the alarm that goes off in the morning, because it means that I'm alive.

~ via Rev. Felix A. Lorenz, Jr., Northville, MI