

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

THE GRACE MESSENGER



April 2006

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

1326 South 26th Street
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

Return Service Requested

Dated Material

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REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

9:00 A.M. Christian Education

10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker

Editor/Church Secretary – Pam Reents

Sudanese Ministries - John Ivo Mounto

Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr

Organist - Cody Talarico

Sexton - Ambros Lado

Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

2006 Council Members		
Frances Campsey	Andrew Edwards	Arlone Farber
David Hufford	Greg Hula	Ernest Olson
Barbara Nelson	Richard Settgast	Brenda Spahr
Pastor Laaker	Ivo Mounto	

Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula Treasurer: Margie Sutej



Council Reports

The regular meeting of the Council was held March 14. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Richard Settgast, Norene Fitle, Frances Campsey, Ernie Olson, Thelma Harrahill, Francine Wise’s daughter Monique, thanksgiving for the successful surgery on Cheryl Brown’s grandson, Rusty (David Hufford’s friend with new job and death of his mother), for our troops deployed, for rain, for the concern about avian flu, for those affected by the fires in Texas and the tornados in MO, KS, and IL. Pastor led devotions from Isaiah 57:15 and 2 Corinthians 3:4 which spoke about God as an emergency medical technician and God in our heart.

Visions for Ministry: Pastor introduced the new study book, “Becoming a Blessed Church.” Conversation began on how to open our hearts and minds to God in our communities in such a way that we become blessed in everything.

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

Christian Education had no new report.

Evangelism/Outreach reported that new contracts for Kids At Work were sent out. The welcome dinner will be Tuesday, May 16, 6:30 p.m.

Finance had no new report.

Property reported the basement floor was re-waxed and the upper fellowship hall will be re-waxed next week. Ambros Lado has replaced Regina Ivo as custodian. Would folks be willing to come and do some spring cleaning?

Service/Social Ministry reported that there were three new ESL students.

Support/Stewardship had no new report.

Worship reported that Lent was underway. David Hufford is composing a song for Easter.

Unfinished Business: The council will present a request to the Disney Endowment Board to provide a \$1,000.00 gift to Grace Lutheran Church in New Orleans for the purpose of reconstruction following the hurricane damage. Andrew Edwards and Brenda Spahr will attend the Abundantly Blessed Workshop, Sunday, March 19.

New Business: The council decided to offer a seminar by Lutheran Planned Giving in October.

Announcements: The Council Visioning Ministry for the future will be held, Sunday, April 2, Noon – 2:30 pm. at St. Luke’s Lutheran.

FROM THE



One of the regular email subscriptions that I read offered this information from barna.org by way of Christianity Today.

Churchgoing Children Grow Up to Keep the Faith: But study finds many still unclear on biblical teachings

The Bible admonishes believers to “train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,” and a new nationwide survey provides some statistical support for Proverbs 22:6, a verse often quoted by Christian parents and educators.

According to the latest report by the Barna Research Group (BRG), adults who attended church regularly as a child are three times as likely to be churchgoers as adults than are peers who avoided church during childhood. They are also much more likely than their unchurched peers to be involved in church-based and personal spiritual activities.

The BRG survey of 1,003 adults found that roughly 71 percent of those interviewed had regularly attended church as youngsters. Sixty-one percent of those who attended church as a youngster still attend regularly, while 78 percent of those who were not churchgoers as children remain absent from churches.

But the California-based Christian organization said the most shocking finding of its study was the limited impact long-term church attendance has had on the theological beliefs of Americans.

The survey revealed that adults from both churched and unchurched backgrounds held similar views—often at odds with biblical teaching—regarding the existence of the Holy Spirit, the reality of Satan, the means to eternal salvation, the perceived accuracy of the Bible and the holiness of Jesus Christ.

“People who were churched as youths were much more likely to state that their religious faith is very important in their life today, but there was not much evidence that such faith had made much of an impact on their belief structure,” BRG president George Barna said.

The survey discovered that churched-as-children individuals were twice as likely as unchurched-as-children adults to be born again Christians (44 percent vs. 24 percent).

However, a minority of both groups believes in the existence of the Holy Spirit and of Satan, and a majority believes that eternal salvation can be achieved by doing enough good deeds. Only a minority of both camps strongly believes that the Bible is totally accurate in all that it teaches.

The study also revealed that church attendance is declining through the generations, regardless of childhood church experience. The drop is steeper, though, among adults who did not go to church as a child.

The study noted that church growth experts have long held that one of the major reasons why unchurched people return to a church is to give their children meaningful religious experiences. “While there is clearly merit to that argument, the research suggests that this benefit may not be as substantial as in the past,” it concluded.

Continued on next page

Overall, 63 percent of adults who attended church as children now take their own children. In contrast, only 33 percent of adults who were not churched bring their own children to a house of worship. "Attending a church appears to be more a function of one's personal experience when young than a sense of responsibility to one's own children," Barna commented.

This article raises a number of interesting issues. I invite your reflection and I would welcome personal conversation on any of the topics covered.

Pastor Laaker



ELCA Bishops, LIRS President, Call for Fair and Just Immigration Reform

WASHINGTON, D.C. (ELCA) -- The Rev. Mark S. Hanson, presiding bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), Chicago, and Ralston H. Deffenbaugh, Jr., president, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service (LIRS), Baltimore, and 53 ELCA synod bishops, sent a statement March 27 to U.S. Senators, calling for fair and just immigration reform. The issue is to be debated the week of March 27 in the Senate, and the statement will appear in the March 28 issue of "Roll Call" -- the newspaper of the U.S. Capitol.

LIRS is a cooperative agency of the ELCA, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and the Latvian Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

"We are compelled by the spirit of Christian solidarity that transcends borders and by the life of Jesus, himself a refugee as a young child, to call on you to oppose immigration reform legislation as currently proposed," Hanson and Deffenbaugh said in an introductory letter sent to the Senators along with the statement.

The statement was written out of concern for language in the legislation currently under consideration in the Senate which would criminalize pastors, service workers and faith-based volunteers who provide humanitarian aid to undocumented immigrants. The statement also opposed language that would "[criminally] punish immigrants who seek only to work or remain with their families with sentences of up to two years."

Those endorsing the statement requested specific changes to the legislation currently under consideration:

- *oppose the criminalization of the church, its ministers and its members, who provide humanitarian aid to undocumented immigrants.
- *oppose provisions which criminalize undocumented presence.
- *provide a path to permanence for individuals currently residing and working in the United States as well as their families.
- *ensure basic constitutional due process rights in the enforcement of our laws.
- *include in the legislation the bipartisan "Agricultural Job Opportunities Act" for farm workers -- a measure negotiated by growers, agricultural employers and farm workers -- to create an "earned adjustment" program enabling some undocumented farm workers and H-2A guest workers to obtain temporary immigration status with the possibility of permanence, which revises the existing H-2A worker program

"As members of a church with immigrants, and with roots in immigrant churches in a nation of immigrants," the statement said, "we urge the Congress to make these corrections to the bill, or to reject it."

A copy of the full statement is posted on the bulletin board at the church or available on line at <http://www.ELCA.org/advocacy/immad0306-5.pdf>



Lenten Dinner Schedule

Dinner at 6:00 p.m. Worship Service at 7:15 p.m.

Sponsor

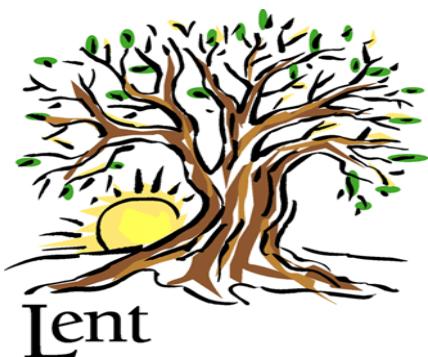
Free Will Offering for:

April 5	Alice Friedlander, Louise Al-sager and Arlone Farber	Church Library for new books
April 13 Maundy Thursday	Bob and LaVonne Moss	LMM and W/ELCA Projects
April 16 Easter Breakfast	Loren and Marsha Moyer and Family	Habitat for Humanity

Lenten Worship Services

Come for a time of reflection and repentance, remembering that our sins brought death but Christ, through His death and resurrection, paid the price of our sin and brought us eternal life.

The Wednesday Lenten Worship Theme, "Faith Stories of the Congregation; How God Touches My Life." has been featuring a person involved in the life of Grace Lutheran Church. The evening begins with a Lenten dinner at 6:00 p.m. followed by worship at 7:15 p.m.



Guest Choir Ministers at Grace Lutheran

On Sunday, April 2nd, the Rejoice! Lutheran Choir from Omaha presented an Easter Cantata during morning worship. The choir, under the direction of Ray Swartz, told the Easter story through music and the Word.

All attending were invited to stay after the worship service for a cookie reception in honor of our guest choir.

Father of light,
in you is found no shadow of change but only the fullness of life and limitless truth. Open our hearts to the voice of your Word and free us from the original darkness that shadows our vision. Restore our sight that we may look upon your Son who calls us to repentance and a change of heart, for he lives and reigns with you forever and ever. Amen.



Worship Schedule *for* Lent

April 9
9:00 a.m. Sunday School
10:30 Worship Service

Wednesday Nights
6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper
7:15 p.m. Lenten Service



Good Friday April 14
No Supper
7:15 p.m. Good Friday Service

Thursday, April 13
6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper
7:15 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service



**BEHOLD,
CHRIST HAS RISEN!**

April 16
6:30 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service
7:30 a.m. Easter Breakfast served by the Moyer family.
9:00 a.m. Sunday School and Confirmation Class.
10:30 a.m. Worship with Communion.



**Next Grace Lutheran
Men in Mission Breakfast
Saturday,
April 15, 2005
8:00 a.m.**

The Women of the Grace Lutheran ELCA are collecting items for the Oaks Indian Mission as part of their participation in the Spring Gathering.

Tangibles List

Necessities

- ◆ Mouthwash
- ◆ Hair brushes & Combs
- ◆ Deodorant
- ◆ Dandruff Shampoo
- ◆ Shampoo & Conditioners
- ◆ Hair Spray, Mousse, Hair Gel
- ◆ Bath Soap (Liquid & Bar)
- ◆ Tennis Shoes (All sizes)
- ◆ Socks (All sizes)
- ◆ Undergarments (All sizes)
- ◆ Razors & Shaving Cream

Medical Supplies

- ◆ Tylenol & Motrin
- ◆ Antibiotic Ointment
- ◆ Lice Shampoo
- ◆ Alcohol/Peroxide
- ◆ Cough Medicine
- ◆ Band-aids

School Supplies

- ◆ 100 Count Brown Paper Bags
- ◆ 100 Count Paper Plates
- ◆ Wet Wipes
- ◆ Quart Size Storage Bags
- ◆ Scotch Tape
- ◆ Kleenex
- ◆ Glue Sticks

Please DO NOT leave the items on the Pantry Shelf.

If you have things to donate, contact Barb Nelson, Marilyn Van Ormer or LaVonne Moss.



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

W/ELCA Board Meeting

**April 3, 2006.
1:00 p.m.**

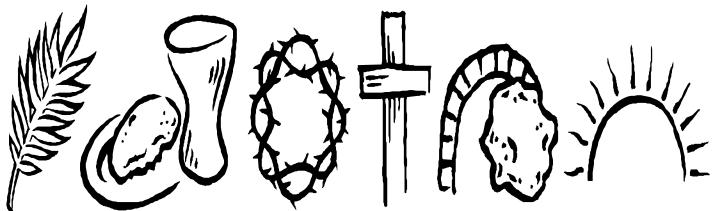
Hostess
Norma Olson

W/ELCA Circle Meeting

**April 18, 2006
1:00 p.m.**

Bible Study Leader
Barbara Narducci

Hostess
Gertrude Hufford





Prayer Concerns for Friends and Family

- ◆ Jeanette Mendoza - Direction for her life. (Attender)
- ◆ Norene Fitle - Pray for strength, especially at the end of each week.
- ◆ Dean Bauer - Health Concerns. (Father of Jason & Kym Bauer)
- ◆ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ◆ Rex Olson - for healing as he deals with cancer.
(Don and Norma Olson)
- ◆ Rose Hamilton - Healing for her cancer.
(Aunt of Andrew and Christi Edwards)
- ◆ Thelma Harrahill - Health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Frances Campsey - Health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Linda Whitney - Struggling with on-going cancer.
(Friend of LaVonne Moss)
- ◆ Dan Reents - Undergoing chemo for cancer. (Brother-in-law of Don and Pam Reents)
- ◆ Ernie Olson - Ongoing therapy after his stroke. (member)
- ◆ Pray for Brenda Spahr as she directs After School Program. Pray for the word to get out about the program and for the children to come to this safe, fun environment. Pray for her as she begins organizing kids and volunteers for the Kids at Work Program for this summer.

Sudanese Church Requests

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese Sunday School.
- ◆ Pray for the newcomers who have recently arrived as they adjust to live in America.
- ◆ Pray for the Nuer family whose son was recently killed in a hit and run here in Omaha.
- ◆ Pray for the ELCA Sudanese leaders across the country as they dialog and make plans to increase God's work.
- ◆ Pray for Pam Reents as she begins the hunt for Bibles and songbooks in the Nuer, Madi, and Dinka languages. Churches in the area and around the country are desperate for God's Word in their native language.

Pray for strength and spiritual wisdom for the leaders in the local church and the Nebraska Synod:

Pastor Laaker, Grace Lutheran Church
Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod
Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

Pray for wisdom for your Church Council and the NCD Team as they lead Grace Church in 2006.

“Without prayer no work is well begun.”

Lady Fanshawe, (1665)
Wife of Sir Richard Fanshawe,
Bart., ambassador from Charles the Second to the courts of Portugal and Madrid



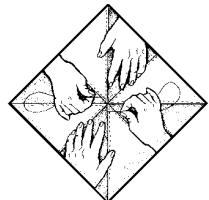
After School Program

Free!

**4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.
Monday thru Thursday**

**Games, Crafts, and Fun
Geared for Elementary Kids!**

Brenda Spahr
Director of Youth and FUN!



Quilting on Mondays! at 9:00 a.m.

If you have the morning free, drop by and help cut squares and tie quilt tops on to the backs. Coffee break is at 10:00 a.m.

Kids At Work 2006



**Kids At Work Preparations
Underway for the
Summer Program**

The Lent Dinner on March 22nd went very well. A very big THANK YOU to all the youth who helped serve the dinner and dish out the yummy Root Beer Floats for dessert. They were Alexandra Everitt, Andrea Spahr, Angela Everitt, Angelina Adrian, Donavan Halfhill, Julia Traynor and Samantha Trejo.

The contracts have been sent out and the program as of today has eight spots filled. If you are interested in being a part of Kids At Work this summer, please complete your contract and mail it in today!

I'm asking that same old question again; would you like to volunteer to be a team leader for Kids At Work? If you are not quite sure if you could commit to the program, ask some prior leaders like Frances Campsey, Alice Friedlander and Jim Costello. If you want further research, talk to some of the kids who have been apart of the program, like Julia, Samantha, Angela, Dillon or Tori. Be the first volunteer for the summer of 2006! It's really a great experience for everyone involved!

*Brenda Spahr
Director of Kids At Work*



Happening in the Library!

2006 God's Creation Calendar
ON SALE!

**Only \$5.00!
Look for the Display in the
Upper Fellowship Hall.**

All proceeds go to the
Library for new books.

The used book sale going on during the Lenten season continues. Stop by the table and look at the books offered for purchase. All the proceeds from the book sale will go to buy new books for the library.

It's Not Too Late!

The Library Board is collecting good used books for resale to benefit the church library. A box has been placed in the upper fellowship hall for your donations.

The books do not have to be spiritual in nature, just in good condition with wholesome storylines. We welcome any kind of used book, including children's books, clean romance novels, mysteries, fiction and non-fiction. We will also accept children's videos, CD's, or cassettes. Some of your donations that are suitable may be added to our church library.

Each week during Lent, members of the Library Board will have new books out on a table in the upper fellowship hall. Stop by and browse through the books. The book table will be self-serve with a place to deposit your money should you decide to purchase any items.

All proceeds will go to buy more books for our church library. The used book sale will end on Maundy Thursday.

If you have books to donate, look for the box in the upper fellowship hall. If you have questions, contact Marsha Moyer, Library Board Chairwoman.

Good Reading

The O'Malley Chronicles by Dee Henderson (Volumes 1 and 2)

The O'Malleys are a close knit "adopted" family of men and women who met in an orphanage as children. They learn to rely on each other and God through many obstacles.

Each has an important job. Kate is a hostage negotiator, Marcus is a U.S. Marshall, Lisa is a forensic pathologist, Jack is a firefighter, Rachel is a trauma psychologist, and Stephen is a paramedic.

Originally, these were published as individual books but have now been put together in two volumes. Full of suspense, intrigue and even a little romance, these books are a GOOD READ!



"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Project Hope

The Theme for April is Canned Vegetables

These are things our clients can not purchase with their food stamps.

Diapers	Dish soap	Bar soap
Deodorant	Toothbrush and toothpaste	
Mouthwash (without alcohol)	Feminine hygiene products	
Hair products (combs, brushes, picks)	Shaving Cream	
Razors	Bathroom tissue	Kleenex

Matching Funds available for Project Hope

For the ninth straight year, Alan Shawn Feinstein will divide \$1 million among hunger agencies nationwide using it to help raise funds during March and April, 2006.

As you give whatever you can, your money will be doubled!



If you wish to participate in this project, use a pew envelope and mark it Project Hope/Feinstein and drop it off at the office or place it in the offering plate.

Needs for the Sudanese Room

We need:

Children's clothing - All sizes.	Wire hangers
Paper or plastic bags	Toys and children's books.

We have some African newcomers. They are in desperate need of beds. If you can help, Call Pam in the church office, mornings at 341-7730.

Pray for the people of Oaks Indian Mission, one of our Nebraska Synod partners in ministry.

Bishop Floyd M. Schoenhals, Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod, sent the following message this morning to Pastors and Congregations in the Arkansas-Oklahoma Synod:

On Sunday evening, March 12, 2006, a tornado touched several communities in Northeastern Oklahoma. Pr. Jack Russell, EbenEzer Lutheran Church, Oaks, OK, informed me this morning that the storm touched down in the communities of Leach, Twin Oaks, Kansas, and Colcord not far from the Oaks community. At this time Pr. Russell reported that he is not aware that any member of EbenEzer had significant storm damage. That will continue to be assessed. Pr. Russell also reported that people in the community of Oaks saw the storm and heard the "roar" that accompanied it. The Oaks Mission School served as a temporary shelter for the people of the community. As a result, many of the basic supplies are depleted. The Women if the ELCA are collecting these items for their Spring Gathering project. Check page 7 of this newsletter for a complete list.

Community News



Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

Next Meeting -
April 20, 7:00 p.m.

Grace Lutheran Church - 1326 S 26 St.

Topic - **Neighborhood Spring Clean Up
on April 29th!**

**Membership dues are only
\$5.00 a year per household!**

CPNA
1326 S 26 Street
Omaha, NE 68105

Call 341-7730 for more information.

Medicare D Drug Information and Enrollment

ENOA & VIE
4223 Center Street

Open to the Public
8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday, April 11
Thursday, April 20
Tuesday, May 2

Final Enrollment Day
Monday, May 15, 2006
Appointment Only
Call 444-6444

Bring your Medicare Card
and List of Medications

Contact Mary Laaker for more information.

Lutheran Service Corps' Third Annual Charity Golf Tournament

Monday, May 15, 2006
Players Club at Deer Creek.
The tournament fee includes
lunch, dinner, a gift bag and a
chance at a pin prize at every hole (18 holes)

Contact Heather Abbott at 250-3599 or Bill Davis at
598-5883 for information and registration forms.
More information , fees and a schedule of events are
posted on the bulletin board.



Forum on Omaha Together One Community

Shaping a Community that Works for All

- ♦ Educational equity, adequacy and accountability
- ♦ Relief for the high cost of prescription drugs
- ♦ Nebraska drivers certificate for immigrants

Tuesday, April 11, 2006
7:00-8:30 p.m.
Cary Hall

First United Methodist Church
7020 Cass Street, Omaha

With Republican Gubernatorial Candidates
Congressman Tom Osborne has committed to attend.
Governor Heineman and Mr. Dave Nability have been
invited.

Craft Show

Hanscom Park United Methodist Church
1 Block south of Center on 45th Street

Saturday
April 29, 2006 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Used Book Sale (by the Pound)
Lunch
Garage Sale
Bake Sale
Gift Basket Raffle

**Great Plains
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Scrapbooking Fair**
April 29, 2006
7612 Maple St.
10:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.

**Vendor Displays, "How To" Workshops,
Free snacks & Beverages, Free door prize
drawings**

Lots of table space to crop with friends!

**\$5.00 Admission at the door
Proceeds benefit the Ladies Auxiliary
Thomas Pierce Memorial Scholarship Fund
for students with disabilities and the Great
Plains PVA Adapted Sports & Recreation
Program.**



Musical Instruments Needed

Do you have an old unused trumpet, clarinet or other instruments collecting dust in your closet?

The Salvation Army is sponsoring the Band and orchestra Instrument Round-Up to supply underprivileged youth the opportunity to learn to play an instrument. Used Instruments of all kinds including guitars, brass, windwoods, strings, drums and percussives, and keyboards (no pianos or organs, please) are needed. For a list of drop off locations, check the church bulletin board or contact Gregory Kadrik at 898-5936

Concert

Contemporary sacred Music by
Ric Swanson
Director of Contemporary Music
First Presbyterian Church

A Grace Filled Life
April 23, 2006
6:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church
34th and Farnam
\$15.00 donation (kids free)

All proceeds to the
First Presbyterian Food Pantry
Featuring Ric and many local musicians

Ric's Credits: over 200 radio and TV commercials,
National Public radio, Mannheim Steamroller,
Jerry Lewis, Red Skelton, Shirley Jones,
Johnny Mathis to name a few.

The New Religious Pluralism Implications for American Democracy

Dr Robert Wuthrow will present a lecture building on his recent book, *America and the Challenges of Religious Diversity* (2005)

Monday, April 10 at 7:00 p.m.
Skutt Student Center Ballroom
Creighton University Campus
This lecture is free
and open to the public.
Free parking at 24th and Cass.

*Professor Wuthrow is Andlinger Professor of Sociology and
Director of the Center for Study of Religion at
Princeton University.*



If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed." -- John 8:36
Join us for the Freed for Life Benefit Dinner for Prison Ministry!

April 22, 2006 6:00 p.m.
Sheridan Lutheran Church
Lincoln, NE

\$25 individual tickets \$200 for a table of 8

For more information on Freed for Life, please call (402) 591-5063 or email
dhansen@lfsneb.org. More info posted on the church bulletin board.

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



Our New Sexton

Ambros Lado has been hired as sexton and will be cleaning the church building each week. Ambros, wife Elizabeth, and children Shaban, Shedu, Sonia, Sherif, and Omaima have been a part of Grace Church for over two years.

Ambros replaces Regina Ivo Mounto. Regina is in her final months of nursing school and will be graduating this spring. We thank Regina for her faithful service and pray God's best as she begins her new career.

To my friends and family at Grace Lutheran Church,

Thank you for the great support and love you all showed me in the past weeks. I know that your prayers on my behalf were heard and answered. My family and I appreciate your concern for me.

I am at home now and beginning the process of rehabilitation as a result of my stroke.

Ernie Olson



Excerpts from Reflections on Dad

Written by Dr. Ann Settgast for her father, Richard Settgast (August 7, 1939-March 22, 2006)

I will begin by saying that in addition to loving him dearly, I liked my Dad as a person. He always told me that he would have enjoyed knowing me even if I weren't his daughter – well...the feeling is mutual. He was such a cool guy. I had the honor and privilege of spending the past 8 months with him after his diagnosis. While of course I already knew my Dad, this experience was in some ways delightful. I found that the more I knew him, the more I liked him. He was full of surprises. The lessons I learned were numerous: His ability to enjoy his life in spite of difficult circumstances these past months reminds us that happiness is truly available to us all, depending on our perspective.

My Dad's world view was beautiful. He was not ready yet to die – he explained to me that he was not necessarily scared of death or going to heaven, but rather he felt the world is too exciting and interesting to leave just quite yet. He wanted more time. He was nearly panicked toward the end trying to read everything he could and stay informed. He thrived on knowing what was happening on this fascinating planet.

My Dad had no use for things. He never attempted to impress the neighbors – or anyone for that matter. He spent his time and resources doing what he loved – playing duplicate bridge, traveling, talking to people and learning more about the world. He always said, "If you want to make me jealous, don't buy a fancy car, house or boat".

My Dad was a good parent. He always said he had two pieces of advice for raising children: 1) Don't do anything obviously stupid and 2) Get out of their way. While he stayed out of my way in terms of not attempting to control who I would become, he was always deeply involved in my life. While he loved to tease that I was the reason I was an only child, I know that he was extremely proud of me. He did argue though that it was easy to tell which one of us was smarter – it must be him since I had required so many more years of school! I truly think he was funny. My Dad was straightforward, focused, and direct. One of my persistent memories will be of him ordering his coffee as he always did - black and real. He couldn't have been more real himself. I love him so much and I miss him terribly already.

If you wish to send condolences, Ann will be staying at her dad's house for the next month or so to clear up his estate.

A copy of the whole eulogy is posted on the bulletin board.



Welcome, Julie Chytيل

**Newest Member of the
Interfaith Health Services Team**

Faith in Action, Ayudantes Viejos

Greetings! I would like to introduce myself. My name is Julie Chytيل and I am the new program coordinator for the Faith in Action program beginning right here in your congregation. Our program, Faith in Action, Ayudantes Viejos is sponsored by Interfaith Health Service and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. If you're like me, you know someone – perhaps a family member or neighbor – who needs help getting around. Maybe it is an older parent who needs help with the groceries or maybe it is a neighbor who needs a ride to the doctor. You help out when you can, but millions of Americans have no one to turn to for help with daily tasks.

In fact, according to a recent survey, approximately 16 million older Americans struggle with daily activities as simple as shopping, cooking and housework. Nearly one half of those who have difficulty do not receive any help from family or others. The lack of assistance and difficulty finding additional help threatens the ability of these older Americans to continue to live independently in their homes and communities.

That is why The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is stepping up its efforts to recruit volunteers and encourage them to help their neighbors in need. Through a national initiative called Faith in Action, the Foundation is encouraging people to volunteer through its national network of free, interfaith, community-based programs that provide services to those with long-term health needs. Faith in Action, Ayudantes Viejos is a part of this initiative and provides free services right here in Southeast Omaha.

Volunteers shop, cook, drive, or just visit those who need help with daily activities. They help their neighbors stay in their own homes and in their own communities and give people the gift of independence—a gift that older Americans treasure above all others. It's a wonderful thing when people of many faiths come together to help their neighbors in need.

I'm looking forward to meeting you and excited about working within your congregation. In the meantime, think about becoming a volunteer or think about someone you know who would benefit from receiving volunteer services.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 672-7334 or e-mail me at: jlchytيل@hotmail.com

Sincerely,

Julie Chytيل



Interfaith Health and Latinas in Action Thank Instructor

Last week at Grace Church, our Latinas in Action group hosted a surprise birthday party for our wonderful and talented aerobics instructor, Hilda. Hilda has been a tireless teacher for Interfaith 4 days a week for the past year!

We planned the party from Wheeler Church when Hilda had left for the day, which we thought was very sly. Participants signed up to bring beverages (but NOT soda, as Gaby Ortiz will not allow "unhealthy" and sugar laden beverages at our events because she is a promoter of health!), enchiladas, fruit salads, jello, tuna salad and fresh fruit. Cristina, a participant in our group who is being trained by Hilda to be an aerobics instructor herself, brought one of her famous strawberry cakes, one which fed our participants and children who attended the celebration. It was the biggest non-wedding cake we had ever seen and oh-so delicious!

Hilda's son and daughter attended the celebration since they had the day off from OPS for teacher conferences. They shared with our group that they were very proud of their mom and were happy to be a part of the day honoring her. They led us in singing "Happy Birthday" to their mom and in passing out cake to our group members.

It was clear from the care and planning that went in to hosting the party that our women have the deepest respect for Hilda. Gaby and I share this feeling of respect and gratitude for all Hilda has done for our programs at St. Luke's, Wheeler, Grace and the YMCA. We are blessed each day by Hilda's enthusiasm in teaching and strong commitment to promoting community and wellness. Hilda is a shining example of a person who goes out of her way to help our neighborhoods become stronger and to help our neighbors get to know one another through her work with Interfaith and the Latinas in Action group.

*Virginia McGill, Coordinator
Interfaith Health Service*

For more information on these programs or any of the others offered by Interfaith Health Service, contact Virginia McGill at 660-6689 or at the church at 341-7730.

Free Classes

Latinas in Action/ Aerobics
(Childcare Provided)
Tuesday - St Luke's Church.
Wednesday - YMCA on O St.
Thursday - Wheeler Presbyterian.
Friday - Grace Lutheran Church.

Beginning Yoga
Monday Evenings - Cristo Rey Luterana

Call Virginia at 660-6689 for details.

Interfaith Health Team

Virginia McGill, Director (402-660-6689)
Gabriella Ortiz, Assistant (402-660-1035)
(Douglas County Health Department)
Se habla español .

Robert Wood Johnson
Faith in Action Program Ayudantes Viejos
Julie Chytal, Coordinator (402-672-7734)

From The Editor

I'm finding myself at a loss for words
And the funny thing is it's okay
The last thing I need is to be heard
But to hear what You would say

Word of God speak
Would You pour down like rain
Washing my eyes to see
Your majesty
To be still and know
That You're in this place
Please let me stay and rest
In Your holiness
Word of God speak

I'm finding myself in the midst of You
Beyond the music, beyond the noise
All that I need is to be with You
And in the quiet hear Your voice

Word of God speak
Would You pour down like rain
Washing my eyes to see
Your majesty
To be still and know
That You're in this place
Please let me stay and rest
In Your holiness
Word of God speak

I'm finding myself at a loss for words
And the funny thing is it's okay

Mercyme from *their album "Undone" 2004*

Unending noise is annoying. Whether it's the constant sound of the dog next door barking, or the incessant buzzing of your daughter's alarm as she repeatedly hits the snooze button in the next room, sometimes all you want is QUIET! My husband truly longed for the onboard "big brother" computer his bosses installed in the semi he drives to be silent on one occasion this week. Due to a management miscalculation, the computer beeped nonstop for 5 hours out and 5 hours back as he did his route one day. Beep...beep. See how annoying it is to even *read* that over and over? Imagine 10 hours of *hearing* that over and over! My friend, Tim, suggested that after a day like Don had, perhaps I shouldn't plan on using my microwave to prepare supper that night. One more "beep" could send my hubby over the top!

As children we are taught that God hears us when we pray but lately I've been wondering if God doesn't sometimes wish we could just be quiet for a while and listen. Psalm 46:10 says, "Be still, and know that I am God." I know and believe the part that He is God but the part about being still doesn't come easily. Even when I am sitting still, my life is full of noise. The television, the stereo, the sounds of the town, even my own thoughts crowd in and rob the stillness. God is often unable to get in an word edgewise because I'm always talking about what I think, about what I want and how He should answer. No genuine loving relationship would last very long if only one person got the chance to speak. How much more must my love relationship with God suffer when I play "hit and run" with my prayer life? "O.K. God. Here it is. Thanks for this and this and this. Now I want this and this and this... Oh, and by the way, I sort of goofed up so I'm sorry. Forgive me. See ya later. Amen." How God must wish He could say to me, "Pami! (Maybe that's His *love* name for me:-) Stop. Take a breath. Be still. Grab your mug and sit with me awhile. I've got something important to show you. No prayer list. No noise. Just us." Even as a I write this, I feel a longing in my heart to respond to that invitation.

It is my greatest desire to be comfortable enough to just sit in His presence. To know and hear the love in His words as He speaks to me and tells me about what's coming in eternity when we will really be face to face. To understand fully the joy He has in the life I willingly surrender to His service and the pleasure he feels when the gifts and talents He's given me are spent on doing what He wants me to do.

Word of God speak. Would You pour down like rain. Washing my eyes to see Your majesty. To be still and know that You're in this place. Please let me stay and rest in Your holiness. Word of God speak.

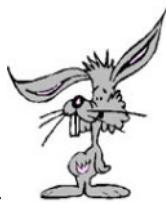
Pam Reents, Editor



April is
International Guitar Month
Keep America Beautiful Month
National Anxiety Month
National Humor Month
National Welding Month
National Garden Month,

Awwwww...

There was a man who entered a local paper's pun contest. He sent in ten different puns, in the hope that at least one of the puns would win. Unfortunately, no pun in ten did.



Peanut Butter Crunch Cake

From the kitchen of
“Saint” Charlotte Palcyznski
(because everyone says this is “heavenly”)

1 package of Supermoist yellow cake mix
(with pudding in the mix)
1/2 cup of brown sugar, packed
1 cup creamy peanut butter
1 cup water
1/4 cup vegetable oil
3 eggs
1/2 cup chopped nuts
1 package of mini chocolate chips (6 oz)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Grease and flour a 9 x 13 x 2 cake pan.

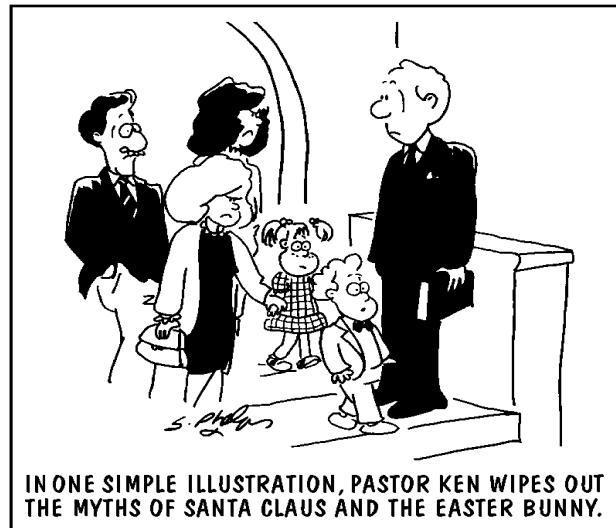
Beat dry cake mix, brown sugar and peanut butter in a large bowl on low speed until crumbly. Reserve 2/3 cup for topping. Beat remaining crumbly mixture, water, oil and eggs on low speed scraping bowl frequently for approximately 2 minutes. Pour batter into pan. Fold in 1/4 cup to 1/3 cup of chocolate chips into the batter, reserving the rest of the chips. Stir nuts into reserved crumbly mixture and sprinkle over the batter. Sprinkle remaining chocolate chips over the top. Bake 40 to 45 minutes.



Daylight Savings Time begins on April 2.

*Go to bed early on Saturday night April 2nd!
You will lose an hour of sleep.*

Set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday night!
If you don't, you'll be late for church!



IN ONE SIMPLE ILLUSTRATION, PASTOR KEN WIPES OUT
THE MYTHS OF SANTA CLAUS AND THE EASTER BUNNY.



Easter Word Search

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

WORD LIST

Burial
Christianity
Cross
Crucifixion
Death Earthquake
EmptyTomb
Eyewitnesses
Gospels
HeIsRisen
HistoricalFact
JesusChrist
Prophecy
Resurrection
RomanGuards
Salvation
Stone
Substitute
ThirdDay

The Elevator

An Amish boy and his father were visiting a mall. They were amazed by almost everything they saw, but especially by two shiny, silver walls that could move apart and back together again.

The boy asked his father, "What is this, Father?" The father responded "Son, I have never seen anything like this in my life, I don't know what it is." While the boy and his father were watching wide-eyed an old lady in a wheel chair rolled up to the moving walls and pressed a button. The walls opened and the lady rolled between them into a small room. The walls closed and the boy and his father watched small circles of lights with numbers above the walls light up. They continued to watch the circles light up in the reverse direction. The walls opened up again and a beautiful 24 year old woman stepped out.

The father said to his son, "Go get your Mother."

