

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

# THE GRACE MESSENGER



June 2006

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

1326 South 26th Street  
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

Return Service Requested  
Dated Material

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Web Site: [www.graceluth.com](http://www.graceluth.com)

#### 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 Mouto  
Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr  
Organist - Cody Talarico  
Sexton - Ambros Lado  
Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

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2006 Council Members		
Frances Campsey	Andrew Edwards	Arlone Farber
David Hufford	Greg Hula	Ernest Olson
Barbara Nelson	Marsha Moyer	Brenda Spahr
Pastor Laaker	Ivo Mourto	
*****		
Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:		
Financial Secretary: Janet Hula		Treasurer: Margie Sutej

The regular meeting of the Council was held May 9. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Norene Fitle, Frances Campsey, Ernie Olson, Thelma Harrahill, Darlene Spahr, Dean Bauer and family, a desire for peace to be lasting in Dafur, and for graduates Matt Petrini (Edwards nephew) and Amanda Laaker. Pastor led devotions from Hosea 8:12 and John 14:15 which spoke about instructions for life seem strange.

Visions for Ministry: Council discussed the second chapter of “Becoming a Blessed Church.” It asked, “Where is the power of the Spirit in our lives?”

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

Christian Education reported that Vacation Bible School is being planned for July 17-21 in the evening. Confirmation will be held later in the summer so that students can complete their work.

Evangelism/Outreach reported that the welcome dinner for the youth and families in the Kids At Work program will be held, Tuesday, May 16, 6:30pm.

Finance had no new report.

Property reported that the children’s room in the basement had a new ceiling and lighting installed. Floor tiles have been re-glued but more work will have to be done.

Service/Social Ministry reported that Grace had hosted a forum for UNO faculty on Immigrant/Refugee issues. There seemed to be a great deal of interest in the work that we offer through the Sudanese Women’s Survival class.

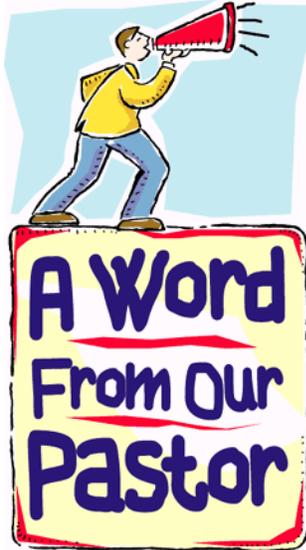
Support/Stewardship reported that Pastor had attended a workshop for clergy on “Faithful Stewards.”

Worship reported that the Cinco de Mayo, bilingual service, at St. Luke’s was a wonderful celebration.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: None.

Announcements: Pastor updated the council on his work with Immigration issues and Palestinian issues. The next joint meeting with St. Luke’s and Cristo Rey Councils will be Thursday, June 8.



The first two days of May I had the opportunity to participate in a new stewardship program that is being offered by the Nebraska Synod, Lutheran Planned Giving Services and Thrivent to pastors of the Nebraska Synod. It was good to be reminded of the many ways in which stewardship integrates into life.

There will be opportunities for others to be involved in developing their stewardship of life in the months ahead. If you'd be interested in participating, please speak to me about it.

If we are afraid to use our time, abilities or energies on something worthwhile, there may well come a time when we want to use them and we can't. This reminder called to mind a story that I had read some time ago. It is a story about a small wooden sailboat.

This small wooden sailboat was a three-seater, painted white with blue trim. The father had built it, and for some time the family had used it every summer. But there was a time when because of other demands on the family's time, it was not used for three years. Finally, someone said, "Hey, let's get the sailboat out and use it." When they pulled it out of the garage, you could see daylight through the cracks in the bottom where the wood had dried.

They stuffed the cracks with oakum, and put water in it for several days before the wood swelled and it would hold water as it should. Then, once again, more or less, it was ready for sailing on the lake.

If that boat had been left in the garage a few more years, it would only have gotten worse. Dry rot may have set in. A boat is not made to exist permanently in a garage. It is built for the water. It is meant to be used. And if it isn't used, it will deteriorate.

Isn't life similar to that? Life is given to be lived and used. It is not meant to be stored on a closet shelf or packed away in an attic. There's an old prayer that says: "Lord, let me wear out, and not rust out."

Life is matter of using opportunities. If we hesitate, it may be too late. If we say, "I'll get a round to it," most likely life will pass us by. If we are afraid to use our time, abilities or energies on something worthwhile, there may well come a time when we want to use them and we can't. We will have holes that develop because we haven't kept our boat in the water of life.

Jesus once said, "Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake, will find it." A boat in the garage may be safe, but that's not what boats are for.

I would hope that as part of your stewardship, you will use all of the time, abilities and energies that God has given you for God's glory.

*Pastor Laker*

How silent the woods would be if only the best birds sang.

-anonymous-



**Men in Mission  
No Meetings  
June, July, and August  
Have a Great Summer.**

**No  
W/ELCA Board Meeting  
W/ELCA Circle Meeting  
Monday Quilting**

**For the months of June, July and August**



*Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*



**Mark Your Calendars**

**All Church Picnic  
Tuesday August 15th**

Here at Grace Church  
Watch next month's Newsletter for details.



**Wednesday Night  
June 14, 2006  
7:00 p.m.**

Candle light Prayer Service  
for Confession,  
Meditation, and Healing  
at Grace Lutheran Church.  
*People of all faiths welcome!*

*"Mental prayer is nothing else..but being on terms of  
friendship with God, frequently conversing in secret  
with Him."*

*Teresa of Avila*



**nebraska  
synod**

Nebraska Lutherans are  
**Bound For Greater Things**  
June 1 -3, 2006

About 1,000 Nebraska Lutherans will gather in Kearney, Nebraska on June 1-3 for Assembly 2006. The Rev. Dr. Mark Hanson and Rev. Dr. Barbara Rossing will address the assembly.

For three days, voting members from Nebraska Synod congregations will gather in Kearney for the great work that God has placed before us - to be the people of God in Christ Jesus, those who proclaim Christ in our congregations and communities, firmly believing that Jesus Christ transforms lives.

## Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends



- ◆ Jeanette Mendoza - Direction for her life. (Attender)
- ◆ Norene Fitle - Pray for strength, especially at the end of each week.
- ◆ 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 Reerts - Undergoing chemo for cancer. (Brother-in-law and Pam Reerts)
- ◆ Ernie Olson - Ongoing therapy after his stroke.
- ◆ The family of Jason and Kym Bauer - Comfort for grieving the loss of Jason's father. (members)

### Sudanese Church Requests

- Pray for John Munto. He has applied to go to Sudan for two weeks this summer through a community program. His desire is to visit his mother who he has not seen in 18 years.
- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese Sunday School.
- ◆ Pray for the newcomers who have recently arrived as they adjust to live in America.
- ◆ Pray for the ELCA Sudanese leaders across the country as they dialog and make plans to increase God's work.

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.

### *Take a moment for prayer . . .*

- ✧ *Get comfortable.*
- ✧ *Breathe deeply.*
- ✧ *Invite God to be present.*
- ✧ *Read the Bible passage.*
- ✧ *Focus.*
- ✧ *Offer a simple prayer.*
- ✧ *As other thoughts come to mind, gently let them pass.*
- ✧ *Conclude with a prayer of thanks for God's presence.*

**"I am the good shepherd"**  
(John 10:11)





# Outdoor Worship

Every Second Sunday  
June, July and August

This month (Weather permitting)

June 11th  
10:30 a.m.

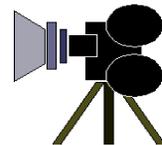
Come as you are  
Bring a blanket, lawn chair  
or sit on one of our chairs.

Worship out on the front lawn under the shade of our gorgeous old tree.

Invite Your Friends and Neighbors.



## Let's Go to the Movies!



After I had purchased movie tickets for myself and my girlfriend, she went inside to find seats while I got some popcorn. By the time I was served, the previews were being shown. I stumbled my way through the dark, sat down, and gave my girlfriend a kiss.

Then I heard a familiar voice say, "John, I'm back here."



Senior Health Foundation in partnership with Douglas Theaters and First National Bank offers

**Special Showings  
at Reduced Rates  
Just for Seniors 50 +**

The movies are offered on the first and third Thursdays of the month.

**General Admission \$4**

**SHF Members \$3**

**Assisted Living &  
Nursing Home Residents \$1**

**20 Grand Theater  
14304 West Maple  
1:30 p.m.**

*Call 827-6001 for information.*

A grandfather and granddaughter were sitting and talking when the young girl asked, "Did God make you, Grandpa?"

"Yes, God made me," the grandfather answered.

A few minutes later, the little girl asked him, "Did God make me too?"

"Yes, He did," the older man answered.

For a few minutes, the little girl seemed to be studying her grandpa, as well as her own reflection in the mirror, while her grandfather wondered what was running through her mind. At last she spoke up.

"You know, Grandpa," she said, "God's doing a lot better job lately."

# Kids At Work 2006



## Kids At Work Welcome Dinner May 16th

*Lots of Fun, Food, and Fellowship*

On May 16, Kids At Work and Grace Lutheran Church Council had their annual welcome dinner. Here are some pictures from the memorable night.



Waiting in the long line – but the food was worth it!



Desert was birthday cake! This was a fun way to help Alexandra Everitt celebrate her 10<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The first Sunday that you have to be in attendance is June 4, worship starts at 10:30a.m. I look forward to seeing everyone bright and early and full of smiles!

Kids At Work Families,  
**Wear Something Red!**  
It's Pentecost Sunday.

Red is the color we associate  
with the Holy Spirit

**Hey You!**  
Why haven't you  
volunteered?

If you are **STILL** thinking about volunteering for the summer program,  
**NOW is the time to let me know!**

**PLEASE give me a call here at church, 341-7730.**

**Brenda Spahr,  
Director of Kids At Work**

### **A VOLUNTEER**

is a person who is a light to others, giving witness in a mixed-up age, doing well and willingly the tasks at hand—namely, being aware of another's needs and doing something about it.

[www.energizeinc.com](http://www.energizeinc.com)

Happening in the Library!



## Take a Hike!

*“Come exercise your mind and see how many miles you can go!”*

*Grace Lutheran Church Summer Reading Contest*

The Contest runs

Sunday, June 4th - Sunday, September 10th, 2006

To be a part of the contest, all you have to do is put your name on one of the hikes on the poster located on the door to the library. Then as you read, record the pages you have completed and add “miles” to your summer journey.

Everyone completing the minimum required reading will receive a certificate, a small consolation prize and free admission to the celebration party in September.

The top readers in each category at the end of the contest will receive an additional prize. The winners will be announced at our fund raiser/celebration party in September.

Minimum requirements for free admission to our party are:

50 pages for the “Read to Me” crowd. (Non Readers and early beginners)

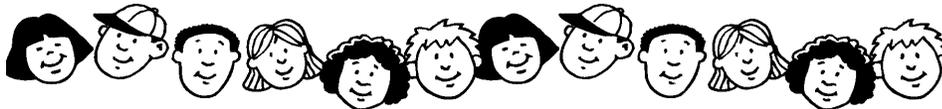
75 pages for the Primary grades (Grades 1-3)

125 pages for the Elementary Grades. (Grades 4-6)

175 pages for Grades 7 - 12.

225 pages for Adults.

*Many new books have been added to our library. Stop by and check them out!*



VBS NEWS

Save these Dates for  
Vacation Bible School

July 17-21, 2006 6:15 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*More details will be available next month.*

Your prayers are appreciated for our VBS program this year. Ask God:

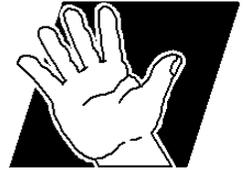
- to bring children to hear about Jesus
- to provide willing workers
- whether He has something for you to do!

*(Contact Grace Traynor to volunteer.)*



# “Helping Hands”

Hope for the hungry, hopeless  
and homeless.



We “Can” Do It!!

## Project Hope

The Theme for June is  
Canned Fruit or Applesauce.

Please bring your donations to the church and leave them in the upper fellowship hall.

Got Some Good Stuff Laying Around?  
**Prizes for bingo are needed for the residents.**  
(Jewelry, stuffed animals, nail polish,  
lipstick, chap stick, etc.)

The Lutheran Home  
530 South 26 Street  
Omaha, NE  
Bring the items to the church office.

## Neighbors South Coalition Habitat For Humanity

The Build Will Begin Saturday,  
June 24th

Build Site: 3020 W Street

Volunteers are needed to help with building this home. Even if you don't have experience, you are welcome. Construction experience is not a requirement! People are needed as helpers, “go fors” and foodservice.

Volunteer forms are available at the back of the sanctuary or through the church office by calling 341-7730.

**HOPE**  
Al Raja



Dancing in Hope  
Dancing for Peace

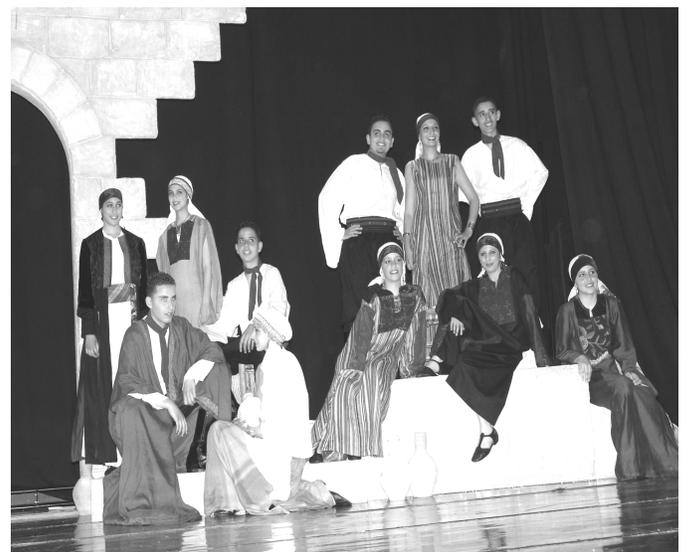
Central High School Auditorium  
124 N 20th  
(20th and Dodge)

A free will offering will be taken.

Join a whirl of motion, color and sound with the young people of the Al Raja Palestinian Folkloric Dance Troupe

Al Raja means “hope.” Christian and Muslim teens from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and our community.

Celebrate with dance the living relationship we share with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land. Together we are standing for justice and peace.



*Al Raja Palestinian Folkloric Dance Troupe*

# Community News

**Join the Neighborhood Association!  
Membership dues  
\$5.00 a year per household!**

Send your money to  
CPNA care of Grace Lutheran Church  
1326 S 26 Street  
Omaha, NE 68105  
Call 341-7730 for more information.

*Columbus Park  
Neighborhood  
Association*



Next Meeting - June 15  
Grace Lutheran Church - 1326 S 26 St.  
Topic - Neighborhood issues, New website plans.  
For more info about CPNA,  
contact Frank Nanfita, President  
345-1700



Need Some Help with Your Life?

**Free Counseling is available  
through the Community Counseling Program**

Allyson Campbell, CMSW, LMHP is available to offer confidential counseling to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. Her office is at St Luke's Lutheran Church, 2315 I Street.

Call 733-0172 to set up an appointment.

## **Hunger Awareness Interfaith Convocation**

Join with others to expand our  
understanding of hunger in our community

**Date: Tuesday, June 6, 2006**

**Location: Kountze Memorial  
Church – 26<sup>th</sup> & Farnam**

**Time: 7:00 P.M.**

**Speakers include:**

Rabbi Aryeh Azriel, Temple Israel  
Father John Schlegel, S.J. Creighton University  
Saidi Liwaru, Islamic Speakers Bureau  
Pastor Liz Connor, Iglesia Cristo Rey Lutheran  
Dr. David Chand, Sudanese Community Dev. Foundation  
Pastor Stephanie Ahlschwede, Dietz United Methodist  
Candace Gregory, Open Door Mission  
Del Bomberger, Stephen Center  
Vic Schoonover, Founder of The Food Bank



**Arts Participants include:**

Hal France  
Members of Omaha Symphony  
Blue Barn Music Festival  
Morning Star Baptist Mime Troupe  
EWS Ensemble  
Kirstin Chavez  
Anne Devries & Mark Motycka  
Christine Sallhany  
Camille Schmidt  
Wendy Shermet, Cantor Temple Israel  
Kathy Tyree

# News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



Congratulations to Amanda Laaker.  
Daughter of Pastor and Mary Laaker.

Graduation Day, May 20, 2006  
Nebraska Wesleyan College,  
Lincoln Nebraska

Pictured: Amanda in the robe, Fiancée  
Juan Vazquez to her right, Juan's family  
to her left, Amanda's family on the right.  
Not pictured, Pastor and Carrie, Micah's  
wife. They were taking the pictures.

Congratulations to Regina Ivo (Mounto)  
On her right is her husband, John Ivo Mounto.

Graduation Day  
May 21, 2006  
College of St Mary, Bachelor's of Nursing.

John is the Director of Sudanese Ministries at  
Grace Lutheran. Regina cleaned at Grace for  
several years while attending school.



## Rhubarb Stir Cake

### INGREDIENTS:

2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon baking  
1/2 teaspoon salt  
1/2 cup shortening or butter, softened  
1 1/2 cups brown sugar  
1 egg  
1 cup sour cream  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
2 1/2 cups fresh rhubarb, cut in chunks

### Topping:

1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup chopped nuts  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 tablespoon melted butter

### DIRECTIONS:

Mix flour, soda and salt and set aside.

In a large mixing bowl, cream together shortening and brown sugar until fluffy. Beat in egg.

Beat in flour and sour cream alternately until blended. Mix in vanilla and rhubarb. Spread in greased and floured 9 - 13 - inch pan.

Mix together sugar, nuts, cinnamon, and melted butter, sprinkle over top.

Bake 350 degrees F. for 40 to 50 minutes. Serves 12

### Very Moist and Delicious

*From Pauline at the Tip Top Thrift Shop in Benson*



Virginia McGill  
Director, (402) 660-6689

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

Since Interfaith Health Services and Douglas County Health Department sponsor programs that assist over 1,000 women and children each month, it was fitting that we hosted a special celebration for Mother's Day last week...and what a celebration it was!

We asked our adult aerobics participants to invite their own mothers or mothers-in-law attend our festivities. Over 120 aerobics participants, seniors children, community members and neighbors attended the day, which was held at Saint Luke's on May 9th.

The event was a wonderful example of teamwork. Rose with Saint Luke's helped us with planning and getting the space ready. Hilda and Aurora led our participants in exercise. Given that Aurora is 7 months pregnant, she was quite an inspiration! Theresa, a registered nurse with the Health Department, along with Pastor Liz from Cristo Rey, led the group in a Tai Chi demonstration and cool down following aerobics. Julie welcomed the Seniors who attended and explained her work with Faith In Action. Gloria and Laura volunteered to work with Gaby and I in organizing a blood pressure check and helped in explaining healthy blood pressure guidelines. Mary and N'dwer, outreach workers from the Sudanese community, helped us set up the tables for our potluck.

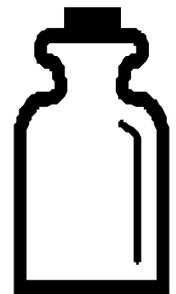
We finished the day with lots of healthy (thankyou Gaby) food and one of Christina's famous cakes. It was as big as a wedding cake, beautiful to see, and even better to taste.

Following the celebration, many of the women who helped out with our planning said how much they enjoyed the day. We were blessed by the mingling of American, Mexican and Sudanese cultures in a fabulous celebration of mother's day.

*Virginia McGill*

## Water Works for Weight Loss

Nothing quells the appetite like water, lots and lots of water. Start out with two quart bottles in the morning and carry one with you to work or wherever you go. If you like, divvy up the 64 ounces of water into eight (8-ounce) bottles or four pint (16-ounce) bottles to carry around with you all day. Freeze half of them the night before and they will last all day, even in a hot car. Keep some unfrozen so they will be ready to drink immediately.



Yes. You will have to make more frequent bathroom trips, but it is worth it. Drink your 64 ounces of water before dinner, if possible, so you're not up half the night going to the bathroom.

Water not only fills you up and lessens your appetite, it prevents those "hungry horrors" we all encounter when our blood sugar drops and we reach for cookies, candy, ice cream, fries or other high-calorie treats. Water also flushes out the system, rids the body of bloat and toxins and roses up the complexion. Now, start splashing.

<http://www.health-fitness-tips.com>



**FAITH  
IN ACTION**

## **Hello, from Faith in Action!**

I'm sure it is not a surprise to any of you that there are members of our community with long-term health needs who are struggling every day to maintain their independence. They are our neighbors, our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers and friends. But all too often, their simple needs are not met, and the ability to stay in their own homes is jeopardized.

Faith in Action/Fe en Acción has an answer to meet these needs.  
And the answer is you!

We're looking for more volunteers to help our neighbors. Faith in Action/Fe en Acción is a part of a national Faith in Action program, which offers interfaith volunteer caregiving through programs just like ours. Our efforts bring together volunteers of many faiths to help people with long-term health needs maintain their independence for as long as possible. How is this done? By providing non-medical assistance with daily activities, volunteers make the difference in the lives of our neighbors right here in this community.

Volunteer activities may include shopping for groceries, providing rides to medical appointments, cooking meals, doing light housework, running errands, and providing companionship through visits or phoning. Volunteers also may provide respite care and relief for family caregivers to give them time to take a much-needed break.

Many volunteers say they get more out of volunteering than the people they help.

We're hoping to see some wonderful relationships develop,  
and we're looking for more people to put their faith into action.

Only a few hours a week can make a world of difference.

I can provide you with more information about the possibilities provided through our program. I believe we can find a volunteer opportunity that fits into your busy schedule, and at the same time helps our care recipients.

We are still collecting forms if you are interested in either receiving care services or know someone you think might benefit from care services or if you are interested in volunteering. You can turn the form in at your church office or mail it to me at:

Faith in Action/Fe en Acción  
c/o Wheeler Memorial Presbyterian Church  
4501 South 23rd Street  
Omaha, NE 68107

If you'd like more information,  
contact me by calling 660-2652 or send an e-mail to: [faithinaction2005@hotmail.com](mailto:faithinaction2005@hotmail.com)

-Julie Chyt il

# Faith in Action/Fe en Acción



**FAITH**  
**IN ACTION**

## I WOULD LIKE:

- \_\_\_\_\_ A Friendly Visitor
- \_\_\_\_\_ A weekly phone call
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone to assist me with grocery shopping
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone to assist me with making meals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help with:
  - \_\_\_\_\_ letter/card writing
  - \_\_\_\_\_ paperwork
  - \_\_\_\_\_ filling out forms
- \_\_\_\_\_ Someone to read to me
- \_\_\_\_\_ To have small chores or light cleaning done
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help with yard work or minor house repairs
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am taking care of someone homebound or disabled and would like a few hours of relief
- \_\_\_\_\_ A ride to services or an appointment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help with mending clothing
- \_\_\_\_\_ I currently receive many of the services listed above

## ICAN:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Be a friendly visitor
- \_\_\_\_\_ Make a weekly phone call
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assist someone with grocery shopping
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assist someone with making meals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assist someone with
  - \_\_\_\_\_ letter/card writing
  - \_\_\_\_\_ paperwork
  - \_\_\_\_\_ filling out forms
- \_\_\_\_\_ Read to someone
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help someone with small chores or light house cleaning
- \_\_\_\_\_ Help someone with yard work or minor household repairs
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tend to someone who is homebound or disabled for a few hours
- \_\_\_\_\_ Drive someone to services or to an appointment
- \_\_\_\_\_ Assist with mending clothing
- \_\_\_\_\_ I am already providing some of the services listed

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to volunteer 1-3 hours per week as a group leader, matching up volunteers to those in need

\_\_\_\_\_ Do you know someone who is in need of assistance?

If so, we will contact you directly for more information

\_\_\_\_\_ My family is willing to volunteer for this project

\_\_\_\_\_ I can't volunteer, but could possibly donate stamps, cards or other program supplies

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Julie Chytil, Program Coordinator  
E-mail address : [jlchytil@hotmail.com](mailto:jlchytil@hotmail.com)

Phone: 672-7334  
Fax: (402) 341-7731 (please call 341-7730 before faxing)



## From the Editor

# The Drying Brook

I have been doing a study during my quiet time on the life and times of Elijah written by Charles Swindoll. As a child, I learned about Elijah the prophet and how God used him to turn Israel back from worshipping the false god, Baal, to worshipping the true God. But, I never thought of Elijah as a man who had the same feelings and fears as everyone else.

The times of Elijah were filled with corruption. (1 Kings 16:29-17:7) Many bad rulers had drained the faith out of the people. Everyone was worshipping fake gods. There was murder and deceit, starting at the top with the royals and filtering down to the common man. Elijah stepped into this situation, speaking out King Ahab and his evil queen, Jezebel.

Elijah was a Tishbite, having come from a land that was harsh and mountainous. Elijah had no special credentials and network of people to call on. His style was simple and direct. He was just an honest man with a passion to do God's will. God instructed Elijah to tell the king and queen that there would be no rain, not even dew, until Elijah (with God's authority) commanded it to resume. Then God sent Elijah away into hiding, both for his protection from Ahab and Jezebel, and for intense "training" alone by the brook at Cherith. I imagine it was very quiet by the brook. God provided food and water there until the *brook dried up, too*. My study guide went on to point out that even though Elijah was perfectly in God's plan, he would have to suffer under God's pronouncement, too.

As I studied, I was impressed by this man who was unwilling to submit to the popular views of the nation he lived in. The popular views of the people, even the rulers were contrary to God's word. God sent this single man to change a nation. Elijah, on his own, had no special training to take on the corruption of the people. It was God who empowered him to do the mighty things that would mark the legacy of Elijah's life as recorded in the Bible. Even though Elijah did exactly what God asked of him, there was a time of harshness by that dry brook.

There was a quote in my study guide from F.B. Meyer that spoke to my heart:

*"Many of us have had to sit by drying brooks; perhaps some are sitting by them now— the drying brook of popularity, ebbing away as it did from John the Baptist. The drying brook of health, sinking under a creeping paralysis, or a slow decline. The drying brook of money, slowly dwindling before the demands of sickness, bad debts, or other people's extravagance. The drying brook of friendship, which for long has been diminishing, and threatens soon to cease. Ah, it's hard to sit by a drying brook... Why does God let them dry? He wants to teach us not to trust in his gifts but in himself. All sufficiency resides in him."*

Often, when there is pain, grief or bewilderment, I automatically assume that perhaps I am not standing squarely in God's will for my life. As I study the life of Elijah, I see that God "sets us aside" for a time, sending us through suffering for the purpose of reminding us that EVERYTHING comes from Him so that we don't rely on ourselves or even the gifts God has given us. God may call us to do difficult things. Before we can be useful to him, he may send us through horribly hard times (boot camp) so that we will be prepared to do the things that will be coming in the days ahead. My responsibility is to only obey, staying close to him by prayer and study of his Word.

*Pam Reents, Editor*

# June is

- Adopt-A-Shelter-Cat Month
- American Rivers Month
- Cancer In The Sun Month
- Dairy Month
- Turkey Lover's Month
- National Accordion Awareness Month
- National Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Month
- National Ice Tea Month
- National Papaya Month
- National Pest Control Month
- National Rose Month
- Fight The Filthy Fly Month
- Zoo and Aquarium Month



## Special Days in June at Grace Lutheran Church

- 1-3** - Synod Assembly in Fremont.
- 4** - **Pentecost Sunday - Wear Red**  
Grace Summer Reading Program Begins.  
Kids At Work Program begins.  
**Every Tuesday and Wednesday- 10:00 - Noon**  
Kids at Work Program
- 11** - Outdoor Worship
- 13** - Church Council Meeting 7:00 p.m
- 14** - Prayer Service 7:00 p.m
- 18** - Father's Day
- 19-24** - Confirmation Camp at Camp CJH
- 24** - Neighbors South Coalition  
Habitat for Humanity Build begins.



### A Blond Joke

A blind guy on a bar stool shouts to the bartender, "Wanna hear a blonde joke?"

In a hushed voice, the guy next to him says, "Before you tell that joke, you should know something. Our bartender IS blonde and the bouncer is blonde. I'm a 6' tall blonde, 200 lb black belt. The guy sitting next to me is a blonde, 6' 2, weighs 225 and he's a rugby player. The fella to your right is 6' 5" pushing 300 and he's a wrestler. Each one of US is blonde. Think about it, Mister. You still wanna tell that joke?"

The blind guy says, "Nah, not if I'm gonna have to explain it five times."

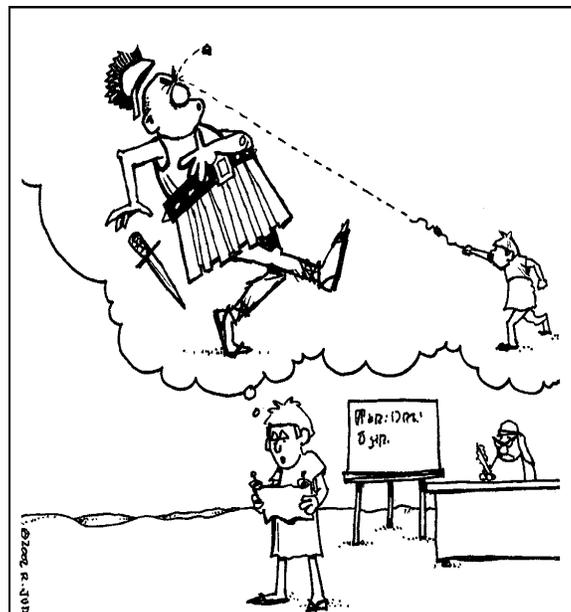
[www.gcfnet](http://www.gcfnet)

### Advice for New Dads How to change your baby's diaper

Spread the diaper in the position of the diamond with you at bat. Then, fold second base down to home and set the baby on the pitcher's mound. Put first base and third together, bring up home plate and pin the three together. Of course, in case of rain, you gotta call the game and start all over again.

Happy Father's Day, Dads!

We Love You



"How I Spent My Summer Vacation"

# Bible Wordsearch

## New Jerusalem

Fit the words in the list into the diagram below reading forward, backward, up, down, diagonally, always in a straight line.

Puzzle #129

Revelation Chapter 21



- |            |           |
|------------|-----------|
| ALMIGHTY   | HOLY      |
| AMETHYST   | IMPURE    |
| ANGEL      | JASPER    |
| APOSTLES   | JERUSALEM |
| BERYL      | JEWEL     |
| BOOK       | LAMB      |
| BOWLS      | LAMP      |
| BRIDE      | LENGTH    |
| CITY       | LIFE      |
| CLEAR      | LIGHT     |
| CRYSTAL    | MOUNTAIN  |
| DAY        | NAMES     |
| DECEITFUL  | NATIONS   |
| EAST       | PEARL     |
| EMERALD    | PURE      |
| ENTER      | ROD       |
| FOUNDATION | SAPPHIRE  |
| GATES      | SHINE     |
| GLASS      | SOUTH     |
| GLORY      | SPLENDOR  |
| GOD        | SQUARE    |
| GOLD       | STREET    |
| GREAT      | SUN       |
| HEAVEN     | TEMPLE    |

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

TOPAZ

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Proverbs 3

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2005 PEACEFULL PUBLICATIONS

### "HEY HARRY!"

by Thomas Ebert



"This is the last time you ever book our vacation!"

From [www.heyharry.com](http://www.heyharry.com)

### A Scary Chinese Fortune...



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