Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church 1326 South 26 Street Omaha, NE 68105-2380

Return Service Requested Dated Material

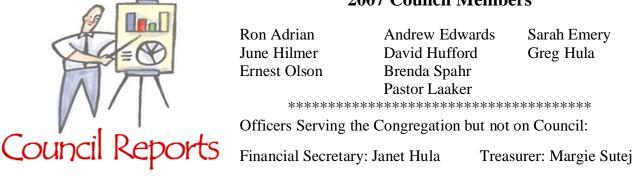
Email: graceluth@graceluth.com Web Site: www.graceluth.com

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 Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr Organist - Cody Talarico Sexton - Ambros Lado/Brian Sutej Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill Faith in Action - Julie Chytil Non-Profit Org. U.S. Postage PAID Omaha NE Permit No. 39



2007 Council Members



The regular meeting of the Council was held July 10. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Darlene Rogers, Connie Chandler, Kathryn Reichert, Frank Favarra, Dennis Saint, Bruce Smith, Bernard Jacobs, Darlene Spahr, Costello Family, care for those within the Grace family that they continue to heal, direction in becoming a multi-racial congregation, where is God moving us in this issue, all of the unrest and conflict in the world and for safety of all of our military personnel, we pray for the weather, some areas need rain and other areas need time to dry, in praise we pray for Sarah and Tom Emery and their new addition, a daughter, Madison, we pray for Andrew's nephew Michael who will be graduating in August, we pray for a friend of David's, for their son, Mr. Gronstahl, to get the job offer at the South Pole, Antarctica.

Pastor led devotions from Isaiah 46:13 and Matthew 10:7; which talks about big questions, no easy or simple answers, but we are surrounded by God's love and care.

<u>Visions for Ministry</u>: Council continued sharing in discussion of "One Body One Spirit", chapter 5, the Seven General Principles for Building Multiracial Churches.

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

<u>Christian Education</u>: Vacation Bible School will be held the week of July 16th. Confirmation Camp at Carol Joy Holling included 3 youth from Grace Lutheran Church, 9 youth from First Lutheran and 6 youth from Cristo Rey.

Evangelism/Outreach: 80 people attended the All-American Prayer Picnic on July 1st at St. Luke's.

<u>Finance:</u> Discussion for ways memorial gifts may be used is ongoing. Received a report from the Endowment board.

<u>Property:</u> Currently receiving bids to replace air conditioning units. Brian Sutej doing a great job keeping up with all the responsibility of sexton. Ambros Lado will be able to do light work tasks in the Upper Fellowship Hall starting in August.

Service/Social Ministry: Kids At Work has 13 youth involved in the program this summer.

Support/Stewardship: Mo new report.

Worship: July 8th service was moved indoor due to extreme heat. The next outdoor worship is scheduled for August 12th.

Unfinished Business: None.

<u>New Business:</u> Tri-council meeting with St. Luke's and Cristo Rey for July has been cancelled due conflict in scheduling.

<u>Announcements</u>: Tuesday, August 21^{st} will be the Fall Stewardship/Leadership Gatherings held at Resurrection in Gretna from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.



From Your Pastor

I had the privilege of attending the "Spirit of Wholeness in Christ" a Racial Ethnic Multicultural event sponsored by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the Reformed Church in America. This event has been held every two years. This is the first time that it was jointly sponsored with ecumenical partners.

"Wow!" This word only begins to capture the amazing feeling of participation in this event. There were people, served by these three denominations and others, from every point on the globe. There were Asian, In-

dian, African, Arab, Latino, South American, Native American and people of European descent. No one culture was dominant in number or in presentation.

We sang songs, we listened to passionate, articulate speakers, we participated in informative workshops, we found new connections with people we'd never met before. We renewed friendships with those we'd connected to the past.

Many of the speakers began by saying, "This is what heaven will look like. This is the church of Jesus Christ."

The expressed purpose of the event was to affirm the authenticity of God's people working together in solidarity, focusing on education, justice, and inclusiveness in multicultural settings in the life of the church and society.

The goals of the event were:

- 1. To learn to value and appreciate racial/cultural differences.
- 2. 2. To provide leadership development opportunities for our constituencies.
- 3. 3. To provide tools for dismantling racism.

In my estimation, the event truly lived up to its purpose and goals. It is hard to put into words the feelings that flooded over me at various times throughout the event. The cultural celebration on Saturday evening was truly awesome. Two Native American women signed the Lord's Prayer, a Palestinian dance group shared their interpretation of life in dance, four Laotian women danced a beautiful routine ending in scattering rose petals (a sign of peace) over the audience, a Latino worship team led us in song, a Korean women's drum team played in beautifully choreographed precision, and many others led us in native songs.

I dream that somehow God might show us how to become a piece of this wonderful tapestry that the Spirit weaves. Pray diligently that God gives us clear vision and strength to become such a place where all people gather in glorious praise to our Almighty God.



If you would like to help make this event even more successful, would you consider providing cupcakes, cookies or bars? The Lutheran Home is also asking for donations of trinkets and toys for game prizes. If you would like to donate, please sign up on the bulletin board or contact the church office at 341-7730.



Julia Traynor and team leader, Kathy Hayek from St. Matthew's (above) are working hard at the Lutheran Home kitchen. Brothers, Shaban and Shedu Lado (right) really enjoy their work at the Lutheran Home, too. Look Moms, they really know how to help out at home now!



Amber Morlan (above) knows how to connect with the little ones at Precious Memories! She will be ready to open her own babysitting dynasty soon!



Kids At Work 2007



Kids At Work in Action!

It's time to share some pictures of the kids and all the hard work they have been doing this summer!

> Brenda Spahr, Director of Kids At Work (402) 341-7730





Both Danny and Jacob Quandt (above & left) like to relive their younger days and play with the toddlers at Precious Memories! The Quandt brothers are awesome ball players and are ready to share some of their baseball techniques with the kids!

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Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

ask and it will be given you ...

- Frances Campsey Frances was involved in a car accident. Her wrist is broken and her face is bruised from the air bag deployment. (member)
- Ambros Lado Pray for Ambros and his rehab team as they practice skills to enable him to go live at home with his family. **Praise Item!** Ambros was able to work at the church for an hour this week, doing some light cleaning under the watchful eye of his physical therapist.
- Moyer Family Pray for the family as they continue the process of mourning and the life transitions.
- Costello Family Pray for the family as they mourn the passing of Jim on June 20th.
- Kathryn Reichert Healing for her cancer. (Granddaughter of Don and Norma Olson)
- 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. (relative of members, Don and Norma Olson)
- Rose Hamilton Healing for her cancer. (Aunt of members, Andrew and Christi Edwards)
- Linda Whitney Struggling with on-going cancer. (Friend of LaVonne Moss)
- Ernie Olson On-going therapy after his stroke. Pray for help as he is trying to find another job that will enable him to continue gaining strength (member)
- Alice Friedlander For ongoing strength related to health concerns. (member)
- Darlene Spahr COPD, Darlene has been allowed to go home but still struggles with breathing issues. (member, Brenda Spahr's mother-in-law.)
- Harlan Morter For ongoing strength related to health concerns. (member)
- Betty Coniglio Continued recovery from heart issues. (member)
- Mae Lane Recovering at daughter's after being hospitalized. (member)
- Ana Lopez Teen with long term medical needs. (Family involved in ESL food basket project)
- Seth Goodman -Pray for courage and strength to overcome his addiction. (Nephew of Pam Reents.)

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

Pastor Laaker

Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod

Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

Pray for wisdom for your Church Council here at Grace Church.

Sudanese Church Requests

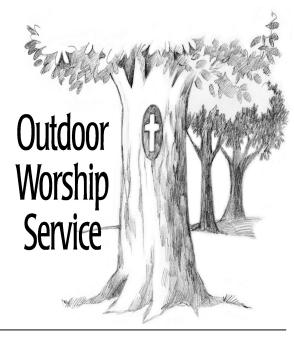
- One of our former ESL students. Bernadita, asks for prayer for her daughter, Julia who has had to come to the States to get treatment for a severe adrenaline gland problem. Julia's husband is still in Sudan. Pray that this family can stay together through this illness.
- Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Pray that the elders in the church community will have wisdom in their counsel. Titus Duli, David Nange and Silas Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.
- Pray for the women's organization forming to help meet the needs of our immigrant Sudanese women. The organization, SOTRU, will be working to help these women find funding for home based business opportunities. **Praise item!** Strategic planning is well under way. The organization plans to send out a magazine the first part of 2008. There are many details to be organized. Pray for wisdom and for God's guidance to ask the right people to be involved.

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

Sunday, August 12, 2007 10:30 a.m.

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

Invite Your Friends and Neighbors.





Happenin' in the Church Library

"Climb to New Heights"

Race to the Top! The Summer Reading Club Continues.

The "Climb to New Heights" 2007 Summer Reading Club is heating up with competition. Our climbers are racing to make the summit by the September 2nd deadline.

We have 14 climbing participants this year.

Following closely are Diane Ortiz (daughter of our Interfaith Health worker, Gabby), and brother and sister, Marissa and Donavan Halfhill. Not far behind and gaining quickly are Shedu Lado, Jesus Ortiz and Andrea Spahr. Watch this race closely! This one is sure to be a close finish.

In our adult climbing division, Barb Nelson has take the early lead. There is very close three way race for the 2nd place position between Eva Martin, Julia Traynor and Brenda Spahr. Others climbing to the top are Pam Reents, Gertrude Hufford and several others who are off to a slow but easy start.

There is a little over a month to get your pages read and climb the mountain to success. September 2 is the deadline so there is still time to read a good book and be a part of the fun.

Stop by the library after worship and check out a book. Many new titles have been added in the past 3 months so there is sure to be something for every taste in literature.



If you ordered a t-shirt, polo or sweatshirt and have not picked it up, please contact Marsha Moyer.



Project Hope 4205 Boyd St Omaha, NE 68111

"Helping Hands" Working Together in God's service Pantry Needs

Project Hope The Theme for August is Personal Care Items

Shampoo, Deodorant, Tooth Paste, Toothbrushes, Hand Soap and Body Wash, Brushes, Combs, Nail Clippers, Hand Lotion, etc.

Wanted!! New and used children's books to share with their clients when they come for food.

Project Hope always needs boxes of zip lock bags in quart or gallon size, soup, peanut butter, macaroni, pasta, rice, diapers, bathroom tissue, baby supplies and feminine hygiene items.

Place your donations on the pantry shelf in the Upper Fellowship Hall at the church.

Project Hope's Board of Director's requests your presence as we bid farewell to Mary Ann Johnson.

Please join us at St. Mark Lutheran Church 1821 N 90th St On Sunday, August 19th from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

In lieu of gifts, a non-perishable food item for the pantry would be welcomed. Please RSVP to St. Mark Lutheran Church, 391-6148



Lutheran Family Services (LFS) and Lutheran Refu-Lutheran Family Services (LRS) of Nebraska invites anyone interested in in learning how to help new refugee families to an informational meeting on August 4th, 2007, at the Omaha LRS office and International Center of the

Heartland from 9:00 a.m. to noon at 1941 South 42nd Street, Suite 402, (northeast side of Center Mall) for congregations and individuals to learn more about how the con contribute to building communities of hope for these new Americans.

From sponsorship, co-sponsorship, the collection of personal care items, or setting up an apartment, LRS has developed very flexible ways to become involved.

If you plan to attend, please send an RSVP to Lacey Studnicka at lstudnicka@lfsneb.org or call (402) 536-3509.



News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church Got an item to share? Let the church office know about it!

- Congratulations to Tom and Sarah Emery on the birth of their daughter, Madison Rose, born on July 9, 2007 weighing 8 lb, 2 1/2 oz. Sarah is the daughter of Pastor Damon and Mary Laaker. Want to see a picture of the "most beautiful baby on earth"? Just ask the proud grandparents. :-)
- Job well done to Grace Traynor, Janet Hula and all the folks that worked to make this year's VBS program "Make the Plunge" a success. Thanks to the youth who helped with the games; Julia Traynor, Amber Morlan, Jeni McPeck, Shaban Lado and to the people who did the kitchen work; Norma Olson, Ernie Olson, Grace Traynor, Janet Hula, Brenda Spahr and Eva Martin. Look in this month's newsletter for a fuller report on what happened at the VBS "Take the Plunge" summer program.
- "Well done" to the youth participating in the Kids At Work Program this summer. The program will conclude on August 1 with the Awards Ceremony and the distribution of the Super Saver money during morning worship on Sunday, August 5. Please take the opportunity to tell the kids what a great job they did and thank their families for joining us in worship this summer. Don't forget to give Brenda Spahr an "atta girl" for the awesome job she did as director.
- Special thanks to Eva Martin for her invaluable help in the church library. Eva has been processing books and keeping track of who has checked out materials for our summer reading program. She has also faithfully helped Pam with collating the bulletin each Thursday.
- Thanks to Marilyn Van Ormer and Barb Nelson. Even though the quilters have taken a break for the summer, Marilyn Van Ormer and Barb Nelson have continued to piece quilt tops to be backed and finished in September. Monday morning quilting resumes September 10th at 9:00 a.m.
- Kudos to Jerry Van Ormer and Ken Hilmer for their faithful lawn care this summer.
- Great News! Ambros Lado was able to come to the church do an hour of light cleaning in the church with the assistance of his physical therapist. Ambros suffered a stroke in October of 2006. People from the Sudanese community, Grace Church, the church community and friends have been praying for his condition. Even though Ambros tired quickly, his face was glowing with joy at working on his tasks. He said, "God is good. Thank you for your prayers for me" as he left to go back to the rehab center. Please continue to pray for Ambros. He wants to be able to move out of the rehab facility and back home with his wife, Elizabeth, and his five children within the next several months.



Friend of Grace Church and Interfaith Health Service Opens New Restaurant

The Faith in Action Program of Interfaith Health Service is proud to announce that Olga Jaimes, who is the bi-lingual Community Health Worker for the program, has just opened a new restaurant with her family.

As De Oros, located at 3034 South 20^{th} Street (on the corner of 20^{th} and Vinton) is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday from 10 am - 10 pm.

Closed Wednesdays. **Special weekend hours** Friday from 10 am – 12 am Saturday from 10 – 2 am

Stop in and enjoy some great Mexican food and say hello to Olga!

Confirmation 2007



Family of Shaban Lado

L-R Back row - Aunt Regina Ivo, brother Shedu, father Ambros, Confirmand Shaban, mother Elizabeth. L-R front row - sister Omaima, cousin Telly, brother Sheriff and sister Sonia.





Family of Julia Traynor

L-R father David Traynor, Confirmand Julia Traynor, and mother Grace Traynor. Julia is the granddaughter of members, Don and Norma Olson.

Confirmands and Pastor Laaker L-R Julia Traynor, Pastor Damon Laaker and Shaban Lado.

"Lord, may your children be desirous of a close ongoing relationship with you through the years to come. Help us all, Lord, to be faithful examples of your love to each other and to the ones who don't know you. Amen."

All-American Joint Worship Service and Picnic at Cristo Rey on July 1, 2007





David Hufford Speaking, Congregations from Grace Lutheran, St Luke and Cristo Rey worshiping together.

Long-time advocate for the Hispanic community, Louisa Brokering talking with the kids.



Praise God for a Great Vacation Bible School Thanks to all who made it a success!



Craft time (right) is always a challenge with glue, scissors and a stapler! Pictured from left to right: Maurico, Sheriff, Olivia. Outside Games (left) include a water balloon toss and hot potato. The game leaders then had fun with water guns! Pictured from left to right: Shedu, Sheriff, David, Jessica, Olivia, and Andrea.





Finale Night, for the parents a concert with favorite songs learned during Vacation Bible School and Take The Plunge With Jesus. Pictured from left to right: Sonia, Amber, Andrea, Olivia, Maurico, Melessa, Brenda, Jessica, Telly, Grace, and Sheriff.

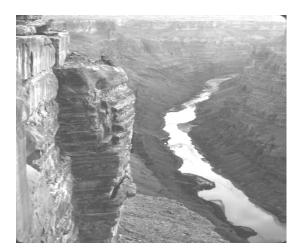
From the Editor

He Hideth My Soul Hymn A wonderful Savior is Jesus my Lord, A wonderful Savoir to me; He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock, Where rivers of pleasure L see.

He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock That shadows a dry, thirsty land; He hideth my life with the depths of His love, And covers me there with His hand (and covers me there with His hand).

Written By Fannie Crosby (1890)

He Hideth Me



Grand Canyon

"He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock that shadows a dry, thirsty land." That phrase of music went through my head over and over during our family vacation to The Grand Canyon this summer. I've only been in Arizona one time in my life in Phoenix to visit a friend. Though she took me on a day trip through the "desert," I don't remember the land being so forsaken. This trip, we spent a great deal of time driving through the desert, through rocky hills, scrub brush and extremely dry grasses. Even in June, it was already blazingly hot. The sun beat down unmercifully as we toured the various sites around the Grand Canyon area. Everywhere I looked, the land was parched. All creation seemed to slow down and seek shelter in the heat of the day.

Standing out in the intense sun in the desert can be extremely taxing, even to the point of death. One information marker at a lookout point featured a young woman who had died in 2004 from exposure. This young woman and her friend were athletic women, having run a major marathon. Both were in tip-top shape. They took off for a short hike without much water or provisions, thinking it wouldn't be a big deal. The two women became lost. They split up to try to find help. One woman hid from the scorching sun until it was evening, found help and survived. The other kept pressing on in the brutal heat...and died of heat stoke.

Many times I have felt the "heat" of life beating down on me. Sometimes I foolishly think that if I press on without looking for the shelter that God has provided in His precious Son, that somehow I will win the race more quickly. Like the Veggie Tales song says, "I'm busy, busy, frightfully busy. You've no idea what I've got to do," I rush out into heat of the immoral world, unprepared. Perhaps it is sin that I have allowed into my life that has caused the parched feeling or even involvement in too many good things that has siphoned off my joy. Whatever the cause, I am hot and weary. Like the young hikers, I head out unprepared, forgetting to take the refreshing Word of God which is the only map that can guide me. I'm not prepared to face what's next because I am unwilling to follow God when He directs me to the cleft of the rock to be covered until the worst of the heat has passed. No wonder I fail!

I have been going back to Psalm 119 often recently. It's a great <u>long</u> Psalm and a prayer that entreats God to continually remind the writer to help and train him to be carefully listening to God's plan. It has been my prayer this summer. Evaluate your life. Read the Psalm. See what God says to you about where you are going.

Virginia McGill Director, (402) 660-6689 Gema Wolde Gabriela Ortiz Douglas County Health Department Se habla español.





Interfaith's Latinas in Action Program Continues to Celebrate Summer

Interfaith's Latinas in Action participants took part in a family outing to Chop's Bowling Alley in South Omaha this month. 30 families attended the event and filled the bowling alley.

As has been the case with 2007 Summer family events in the Interfaith program, Patty Falcone with the Health Department and I both enjoyed meeting the husbands, brothers and family members of our women. We were also pleased to have time to get to know our participants outside of regular exercise classes.

Our group bowled with six people on each team. Two of the bowling lanes were set up with children's "bumpers" so that it was impossible for some of our smallest bowlers to bowl a gutter ball. Patty and her family, along with Paul and I, were some of the only families who had bowled before--most of our families had never gone bowling together.

I was on a team with Andrew, age 2, Maria, one of our faithful evening participants and mother of Andrew, Vince, Patty's son who is a fourth grader, Martha, the cousin of Maria, and Martha's son, Freddie, age 7.

I'm an average and slow bowler on the best of days. I have not been bowling since Jack Pablo arrived on the scene and lack of practice did not improve my game. However, I did manage to compete with the under ten year olds on our team!!!! Patty and I were actually neck in neck for the highest score of the entire day. It came down to the very last frame and Patty lost by ONE pin, scoring a 118. This is something I am not letting her live down. I will only respond to her work e-mails and calls if she addresses me as "Bowling Champ".

Our Latinas in Action families had none of the competitive edge that Patty and I joked about. They were far more interested in taking turns and in simply rolling the bowling ball than in knocking down pins or finding out who was bowling well. Maria and Andrew actually left two frames before our game ended because they had a birthday party to attend. Maria noted in saying good-bye "This was really fun. I'm so glad we came today. We did well as a team!" She did not look at her own score, or the score of her cousin or son, once. But she certainly clapped for every person on our team each and every throw, and even clapped when I missed the pins completely!

Patty and I were both pleased with the turnout for the event and happy that our families took part in something that they had little experience doing. We actually brought in small prizes for the highest scoring members on each team (an entire case full) but after seeing that the participants really didn't care about scores, we decided to save the prizes for our Kids Club Summer Program. We saw that our families had fun just being together and trying a new sport.

Our next Summer event will be a family swim day at the end of the month. I hope our participants will continue to enjoy the activities and fellowship in our Saturday outings!



"A neighbor's independence depends on you"

Faith in Action of Interfaith Health Service Open House

Start your Saturday off right! You are invited to learn more about how you, your family, your church or school can become involved with Faith in Action!! You'll also be able to meet someone who has been helped through the Faith in Action program.

Faith in Action's mission is to foster caring relationships between volunteers of all faiths and their neighbors with long-term health needs. Faith in Action matches volunteers from faith congregations and the community with individuals who are homebound (either permanently or temporarily) to assist with basic non-medical needs in order to allow individuals the opportunity to remain independent in their homes. Millions of older Americans struggle with common, every day activities such 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.

Informal care and help might include:

•Friendly visiting •Grocery shopping •Meal preparation

•Light housework •Telephone reassurance •Rides to the doctor

<u>Join us!</u>

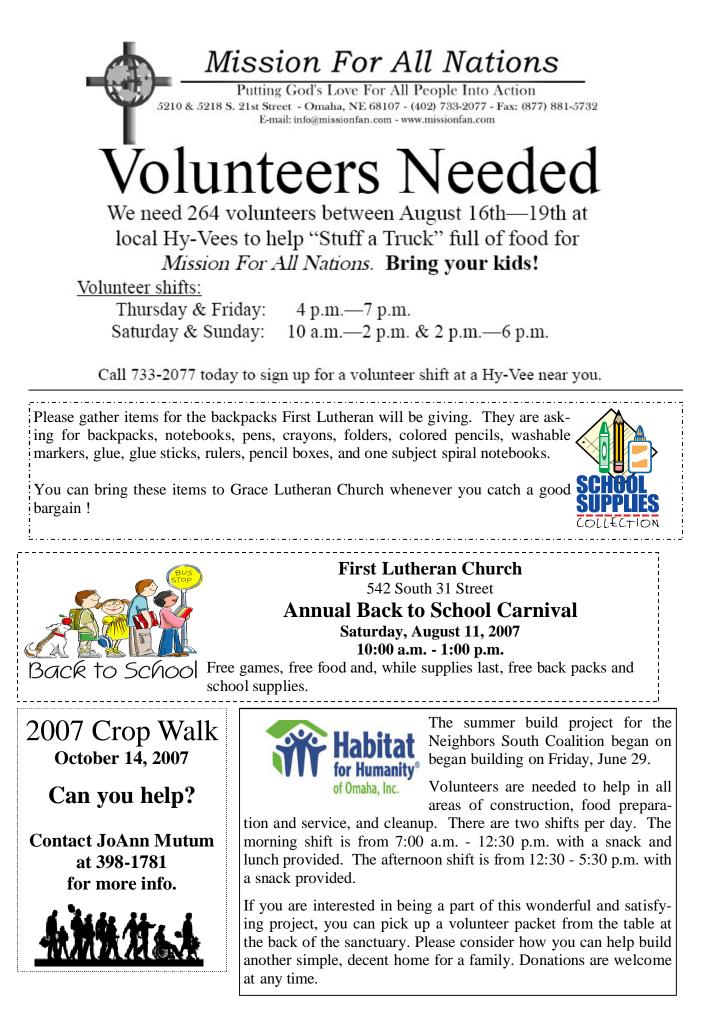
• Saturday, August 11th • 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

 Social Settlement of Omaha • 4860 "Q" Street Continental Breakfast Included

Program will also be available in Spanish

Please RSVP to Julie Chytil at the Faith in Action office at: 660-2652 or e-mail: <u>faithinaction2005@hotmail.com</u>

www.fiavolunteers.org or www.faithia.org





August Trivia

- has 31 days
- 8th month of the year.
- Named in honor of Augustus, known as Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, one of the most important Roman Emperors. (Octavian)
- Flower gladiolus or poppy.
- Birthstone peridot, sardonyx, or sapphire.

Try Explaining this one to the insurance company.....





The Obituary of the Pillsbury Doughboy

Please join me in remembering a great icon. Veteran Pillsbury spokesperson, the Pillsbury Doughboy died yesterday of a yeast infection and trauma complications from repeated pokes in the belly. He was 71.

Doughboy was buried in a lightly greased coffin.

Dozens of celebrities turned out to pay their respects including Mrs. Butterworth, Hungry Jack, The California Raisins, Betty Crocker, The Hostess Twinkies, and Captain Crunch.

The gravesite was piled high with flours. Aunt Jemima delivered the eulogy and lovingly described Doughboy as a man who never knew how much he was kneaded. Doughboy rose quickly in show business, but his later life was filled with turnovers. He was not considered a very smart cookie, wasting most of his dough on half-baked schemes. Despite being a little flaky at times he was a crusty old man and was considered a positive roll model for millions.

Doughboy is survived by his wife Play Dough, two children, John Dough and Jane Dough, plus they had one in the oven. He is also survived by his elderly father, Pop Tart.

The funeral was held at 3:50 for about 20 minutes.

http://www.homeschooloasis.com/

Matthew, Chapter 28

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Do It Yourself

The other day it was my turn to prepare dinner so I asked my wife to go over to the local market and buy some organic vegetables. She came back rather upset. When I asked her what was wrong she said, "I don't think I like that produce guy. I went and looked around for your organic vegetables and I couldn't find any. So I asked him where the organic vegetables were. "He didn't know what I was talking about so I said, these vegetables are for my husband. Have they been sprayed with any poisonous chemicals?" And he said, "No, ma'am. You'll have to do that yourself."



http://www.geocities.com



There was a knock at the door. It was a small boy, about six years old. Something of his had found its way into my garage, he said, and he wanted it back.

Upon opening the garage door, I noticed two additions: a baseball and a broken window sporting a baseball-sized hole. "How do you suppose this ball got in here?" I asked the boy.

Taking one look at the ball, one look at the window, and one look at me, the boy exclaimed, "Wow! I must have thrown it right through that hole!"

http://www.kcbx.net/