

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

# THE GRACE MESSENGER



January 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  
Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill  
Sexton - Regina Ivo Mounto

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Council Members		
Ron Adrian	Vicki Cox	Arlone Farber
Greg Hula	Brenda Spahr	Barbara Nelson
Richard Settgast,	Grace Traynor	Jack Williams
	Pastor Laaker	
*****		
Serving but not on Council:		
Financial Secretary: Janet Hula	Treasurer: Margie Sutej	

The regular meeting of the Council was held December 13. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Richard Settgast, Norene Fitle, Frances Campsey, Asina, Jamie, Rose Hamilton, for our troops deployed, for those hungry and homeless, for those traveling during the holiday time, for those suffering from depression during the holiday time and for our Sudanese brothers and sisters. Pastor led devotions from Isaiah 64:6 and I John 1:9 which spoke about our deeds as filthy rags and our need for confession.

Visions for Ministry: Pastor led the council in a discussion of “What would a South Omaha Parish look like?”

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

Christian Education reported that youth would be attending a movie in December 18. The question was raised about the ability to support the Sunday School efforts with the Sudanese Worshipping Community. This seems to be possible from current resources. The Sunday School Christmas program will be held on Sunday, December 18, during worship.

Evangelism/Outreach reported that the ESL program would begin in mid-January once again. Groups are sponsoring some of the Sudanese families for Christmas.

Finance reported on the recent Endowment Board actions. Council ratified the proposed expenditures from the Disney Fund.

Property had no new report.

Service/Social Ministry had no new report.

Support/Stewardship reported that the fall response was in its final phase.

Worship reported on the planned joint worship with our Ecumenical partners in South Omaha on Sunday, January 22.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: The council voted to provide gift certificates for the staff for Christmas.

Announcements: The Urban Cluster Assembly is Saturday, February 18, 10 am at Kountze. The Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 19. Dinner will be provided by the Moore family in celebration of Richard and Gloria’s 60<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary.



# KEEPING CHRISTMAS

by

**Verna S. Teeuwissen**

Is Christmas the smell of evergreen,  
The jingle of bells on a sleigh;  
Is Christmas the laughter of children,  
The greeting of friends in the way?  
Is Christmas the lighting of candles,  
The hanging of wreaths on the door;  
Is Christmas the welcome of loved ones?  
Yes, Christmas is this, and more.  
For Christmas echoes from angels  
Its message of peace, good will;  
And Christmas tells of a manger  
On a calm Judean hill,  
Where shepherds bowed and worshipped  
As God incarnate slept,  
And it's only as we kneel with them  
That our Christmas is truly kept.

Dear Friends and Members of Grace,

The author speaks powerfully of the true meaning of Christmas. God has entered into our life and has become one like us in Jesus, our Christ. We are invited to the stable. We can kneel and adore.

I invite you to take time and come. Come and marvel at this gift given. Come and experience the rich blessing of God. God offers each of us a gift full of hope and strength.

My family and I are blessed by your love and care. We cherish your prayers. You bring rich blessings to our hearts. We thank you for being such a rich part of our lives.

We invite you to join us in celebration of the birth of our Christ.

December 24, 4:30 p.m. Carols, Communion, and Candle lighting  
December 24, 11:00 p.m. Carols, Communion, and Candle lighting  
December 25, 10:30 a.m. Lessons, Carols, and Communion

May Christ Jesus, bring you peace and joy. Merry Christmas!

*Pastor and Mary Laaker and family*



**Next Grace Lutheran  
Men in Mission Breakfast  
Saturday,  
January 15, 2004  
8:00 a.m.**



Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America

**W/ELCA Board Meeting**  
January 9 at the church.  
1:00 p.m.

**W/ELCA Circle Meeting**

January 17  
1:00 p.m.



**Reminder:**

If you sponsored a poinsettia for Christmas, the cost per plant is \$8.00.

If you are paying by check, make it out to Grace Lutheran Church Women and give it to the Women's Ministry Treasurer, Norma Olson.

**There has been only one Christmas - the rest are anniversaries.**

*~W.J. Cameron*

Our Mitten tree is filling up thanks to the generosity of our church family. Many hand made items have been donated as well as lovely store-bought items. The tree will continue to stand until at least the end of December/early January when the items will be divided among several organizations. Look for more details in the February Newsletter.

If you see a great buy on warm winter accessories after the mitten tree program is over, don't forget our Sudanese friends. Drop off any winter items at the church office and we will see that a needy family gets them. We have been able to give many of them gloves and hats but there is always a need for more.

When one has faith that the spring thaw will arrive,  
the winter winds seem to lose some of their punch."

-- Robert L. Veninga





**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.

No special skills are required  
just the desire to help  
and have FUN!

## Quilter's Beatitudes

- ◆ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will create lovely things.
- ◆ Blessed are those who tie, for they shall make comforters.
- ◆ Blessed are those who seek fat quarters, for their stash will be filled.
- ◆ Blessed are the meticulous, for all their seams will match.
- ◆ Blessed are those who rip out and redo, for they will be pure in technique.
- ◆ Blessed are those who quilt for others, for without them there would be many backless tops.
- ◆ Blessed are the young beginners, for they will perpetuate our art.
- ◆ Blessed are the poor in stash, for theirs is the fun of building it up.
- ◆ Blessed are those who design new rulers and tools, for they help keep us accurate.
- ◆ Blessed are those who teach, for they encourage us to try new things.
- ◆ Blessed are the quilt-owners, for they keep us inspired and supplied.
- ◆ Blessed are you with wild winds blow bringing snow and hazardous driving conditions, and you can't make it to work of school or outside to work on your yards, for then you will get to stay home and sew!

*Thanks to Gertrude Hufford for sharing this.*

# Rejoice in the Glory OF CHRISTMAS



## Candle Light Services

4:30 p.m.

§

11:00 p.m.

Adult Choir  
Candles  
Carols  
Readings



## Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

Willie Aponick - for God's guidance in his life. (Grandson of Frances Campsey)  
Janice Beno - for her health. (Sister of Frances Campsey)  
Jim Beno - Health concerns. (Francis Campsey)  
Dawn Fusselman - for this child's health concerns. (Granddaughter of Frances Campsey)  
Rachel Moss - for health concerns. (Bob and LaVonne Moss)  
Ryan Shomers - for on going health concerns for this child. (Ron and Donna Adrian)  
Rex Olson - for healing as he deals with cancer. (Don and Norma Olson)  
Jeanette Mendoza - Back problems. (Attender)  
Norene Fitle - Pray for strength, especially at the end of each week. Wednesday is chemo day so she is extremely tired on Thursday and Friday.  
Dean Bauer - Health Concerns. (Father of Jason & Kym Bauer)  
Richard Settgest - Strength as he undergoes chemo for lymphoma.  
Callie Meyers - Suffered a stroke. (Friend of Frances Campsey)  
Andrew Edwards - Doing Dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)  
Rose Hamilton - Underwent surgery for cancer. (Aunt of Andrew and Christi Edwards)

- ◆ Pray for Brenda Spahr as she directs After School Program and for Frances Campsey, her assistant. Pray for the word to get out about the program and for the children to come to this safe, fun environment. Brenda is also organizing a youth group.

### Sudanese Church Requests

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese Sunday School. Regina Ivo is leading the children and needs more volunteers. Pray that God would raise up leaders to help with the Bible education of their children. The Sudanese church is trying to organize a children's choir as well.
- ◆ Pray for the newcomers who have recently arrived as they adjust to live in America. Pray for Doto and her family who have just arrived in the US. They are overwhelmed and homesick.
- ◆ 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.

Come, Holy Spirit,  
Spirit of God, Spirit of the Risen Christ,  
Be with us today and always.  
Be our Light, our Guide, and our Comforter.  
Be our Strength, our Courage,  
And our Sanctifier.





# **JOIN US AFTER SCHOOL**

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

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

**Free!**

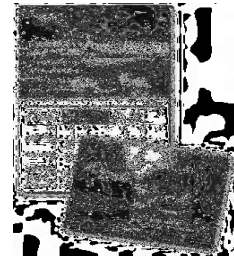
Director, Brenda Spahr  
Assistant, Frances Campsey

There will be no After School Program during winter break.  
The program will resume on January 3, 2005.

**Buy Your 2006 God's Creation Calendar Today!**  
Fundraiser for the Grace Lutheran Church Library

**Only \$6.00!**

Contact Marsha Moyer or Brenda Spahr to purchase yours!



**Each calendar contains beautiful scenic photography enhanced with inspiring  
Scriptures from the Holy Bible.**



The 2006 Flower Chart has been posted on the  
bulletin board outside the church office.

The Flower Chart sign-up is your opportunity to sponsor flowers for a  
special Sunday in honor of an important event in your family's life or in  
memory of someone dear to you. The cost to sponsor flowers for a Sunday  
is \$12.00.

**Operation SOS (SAVE OUR SECRETARY)**  
(from being frazzled, pressured, grumpy and generally anxious!)

**The Annual Meeting has been set for  
January 29th.**

To all Chairpersons:

I know that after the Christmas Holidays are over, the **FIRST** thing  
will have on your to-do list is to write your annual report:-)

**Please turn your reports in by January 15 at the lat**





# "Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

## Project Hope

The Theme for January  
Soup or Stew

Please bring your donation  
to the church and  
leave your gift on the Pantry Shelves.

Project Hope is located at 4205 Boyd Street here in Omaha.

*This is an excerpt from a email received from Professor Ana Cruz about her interaction here at Grace Lutheran Church. Professor Cruz's students were assigned to Grace Lutheran's SESL as tutors for their Service Learning Project.*

"I was very happy that you were able to witness the student's presentation on Thursday. As you could tell, the students fell in love with the Sudanese women. I believe this was life-altering for them because some told me that they will never forget this experience. As you know, Victoria will continue working with the ladies next semester.

I will be teaching the Intercultural Communication class in August. You can bet that I will make Grace Lutheran Church a must-have community partner. You and the rest of the staff are the most gracious, giving, wonderful, Christian women I have met. It was a pleasure entering your building. I could feel the love and fellowship. You are doing God's work, and I was proud to be part of it.

I don't recall how I ended up partnering with Grace Lutheran. I recall talking to you, but I don't know who gave me the number. Well, whoever it was, it was truly a God send. When I was able to attend and work with Tereeza (and others), I left the Church filled with love and joy. It is such a wonderful feeling to help others and share one's blessings.

I believe the interaction between the Sudanese women and my students was truly a win-win for all. The fact that my students continued to attend Grace Lutheran on Saturday mornings (even after they met the stated four-Saturday requirement) was a testament to their commitment to these wonderful women.

Best wishes to you and yours. Merry Christmas!"

Professor Ana M. Cruz  
University of Nebraska at Omaha  
School of Communication - Arts and Sciences 107-F



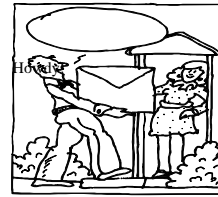
## Sudanese Christmas Gift Project

On Saturday, December 17, laundry baskets full of socks, undies, mittens and gloves and toys were delivered to our Sudanese families. Our ladies were sponsored by folks from UNMC, UNO, The Knights of Columbus, various families in the community and members of Grace Lutheran Church who provided a wonderful assortment of gifts for each family member.

We are so grateful to God and the people of the community and church who helped make this a memorable Christmas for our Sudanese friends.



# Community News



Next Meeting - January 19, 2006 7:00 p.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church - 1326 S 26 St.

Topic: Nominations for  
Election of Officers in February.

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

CPNA  
1326 S 26 Street  
Omaha, NE 68105

Call 341-7730 for more information.

## Ecumenical Worship Service

In celebration of the  
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Wheeler Presbyterian Church  
4501 South 23 Street  
Omaha, NE

Worship Service is at 10:30 a.m.

Churches participating:

**Wheeler Presbyterian**  
**Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**Iglesia Luterana Cristo Rey**  
**Southside Christian Church**  
**Grace United Methodist Church**

*What is the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity?*

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity a worldwide movement of Christians of many denominations, languages, and great diversity of race and culture, who are engaged in praying and working for the unity of Christians in the service of the wider redemption, unity and peace of all peoples. Every year the dates are the same, 18 to 25 January, regardless of the days of the week. Praying for unity does not involve prayer for any specific schemes for unity. It is about being faithful to the prayer of Jesus Christ, as seen in John 17, 'that they may be one'.

**Everyone from all denominations are welcome!**

## Daffodil Days



Monday: March 12, 2006

The Sarpy County Units of the American Cancer Society will bring a touch of Spring with its Daffodil Celebration. Sunday, March 12 has been designated as Daffodil Sunday. Members of the congregation are invited to place fresh cut daffodils on the altar or in their home as a memorial to the loved ones who have lost the battles, or as a tribute to those who have survived.

Daffodils are available for a donation of \$10.00 per bouquet (10 daffodils per bouquet). A sign up sheet has been placed on the bulletin board.

The order deadline is February 17, 2006.

Make your check payable to the American Cancer Society and drop it off at the church office.

None of us can be free of conflict and woe. Even the greatest men have had to accept disappointments as their daily bread - the art of living lies less in eliminating our troubles than in growing with them."

Bernard M. Baruch

# News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



- ◆ Thank you to all the folks who participated in the Sudanese Christmas Project. The response from the people of Grace and the community was moving. Gifts were delivered to all of the ESL women and their families.
- ◆ Thank you to Grace Traynor, Brenda Spahr and the youth for the wonderful job they all did for the Sunday School Christmas Program!
- ◆ Special thanks to Bob Newton for providing the candy and goodies for the Christmas bags given to the kids after the Christmas program.
- ◆ Thank you to all the folks who have been providing the warm winter accessories for the mitten tree. The gloves, scarves, mittens and booties will be distributed shortly after the New year begins. Many people will be blessed by your gift!
- ◆ Thank you to the Endowment Board for helping us get a new copier/printer all-in-one machine for the church office. After working with the old “antique” machine, the staff is thrilled at the new one’s capabilities. Thanks to the installers and to Pastor Laaker, Jerry Van Ormer and Bob Moss for running cable and getting all the computers working on the same network to connect to our new machine. Way to Go!

To my dear friends at Grace,

Thank you so very much for the cards and prayers for me during my stay in the hospital. I am at home recuperating.

Your love and concern lifted my spirits. I am grateful to God for each of you.

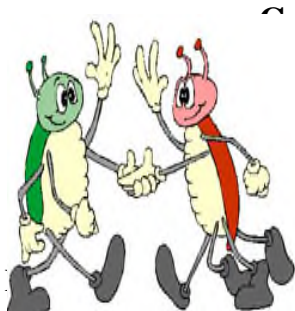
God Bless,  
Louise Alsager



## Basic Budget Planning Classes available for Sudanese Families.

Classes in How to Manage Your Money and Budgeting will be offered to Sudanese Families during the months of January, February and March in 2006. At the time of this printing, the details on exact time and date were still being scheduled.

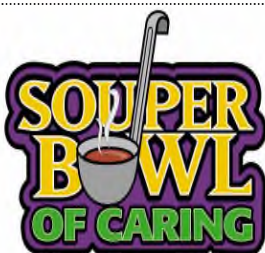
For more information, contact Ivo Mouto at 933-4726. More details will be posted on the bulletin board as they become available.



**Celebrate**  
Gloria Moore's  
Wedding  
Anniversary.  
at Worship  
on January 29, 2006

Family of Richard and Gloria.

Stay after the dinner for our Annual Meeting!



Our youth will hold soup pots at church doors on Souper Bowl Sunday, February 5, 2006. They will join young people in churches all across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. Organizers only ask that each participant report their collection so national totals can be determined and announced. Our church will donate the Souper Bowl collection to the Lutheran Pantry. Please support the youth of our church in this effort to “love our neighbors” by dropping your dollar in the soup pot on Souper Bowl



Virginia McGill  
Director

Gabriella Ortiz, Assistant  
Douglas County Health Department  
Se habla español .

### **Latinas en Accion, (Latinas in Action)**

Every Friday from 9:15 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church Lower Fellowship Hall  
1326 South 26 Street

Our women's exercise group (the group has decided on the name, Latinas en Accion, which means Latinas in Action) has asked to hold their Christmas gathering at Grace next week. It was a blessing to know that our women feel so at home at Grace that they want to be with one another and celebrate inside its doors.

Most of our women who are part of Latinas en Accion have family members living far away, in Mexico, Guatemala, California, Texas and other parts of the United States and Latin America. Our women have shared with me that Christmas in their homeland is a time of being together with family, sharing food, singing, opening a pinata, and attending church to celebrate Jesus' birth. Since many women have family living outside Nebraska, they have come to look at the other Latinas en Accion participants as a source of support, encouragement, friendship and accompaniment.

At our celebration this Christmas at Grace, we will be having a potluck with some traditional Latin American fare--chicken, rice, salad, tamales, and cake. I was asked to bring the drinks, and while I hope this request does not reflect upon my cooking skills, I am thrilled to be small a part of the fiesta. I will join the women in celebrating for the ways in which God has blessed our lives through the birth of Jesus and the ways in which our group has been blessed with the gift of friendship in one another.

Virginia McGill



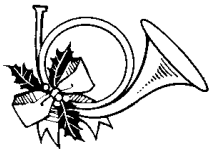
### **Get Ready to Move!**

Beginning Yoga

Theresa Murphy, Certified Yoga Instructor:

and Douglas County Health have teamed together to offer FREE yoga at Cristo Rey Church. The classes are an hour and begin at 5:15 p.m. 40 South 25<sup>th</sup> Street. For more information, call Virginia McGill at 660- on January 9th after the holiday season.

*For more information on these programs or any of the others offered by Interfaith Health Service, contact Virginia McGill at 660-6689 or Gabriella Ortiz at 660-1035 (Spanish)*



# Glory to God

## From the Editor

And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Isaiah 40:5

Have you ever gotten a melody stuck in your head? As you go about your daily tasks, the melody goes 'round and 'round in your mind. I've had a song in my mind for several days now. It started about a week ago when I found a cassette containing the Christmas portions of Handel's Messiah at the thrift store. Since my car is the only place I listen to cassettes, I clicked it in on my way home. The first song began with a beautiful tenor voice singing, "Comfort ye. Comfort ye my people." I was moved to tears as I longed for comfort during this Christmas season. The music went on as the various solos and choir pieces played, literally musically quoting the passage of scripture above. This song has repeated through my mind all week; *"And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."*

Every time I went to prayer or read my Bible this week, the phrase "Glory of the Lord" jumped out at me. I heard it Christmas programs, in the prayer my mother spoke as she asked God to comfort us in our grief over the loss of Dad, in the selection of Handel's Messiah that repeated over and over in my mind. Glory to God. I realized that my mind "loop" was God trying to impress something on me. I stopped fighting to get the song out of my mind and began to meditate on the words.

What is glory? Glory is admiration and honor. It is a response to the revelation of who God is. Christmas is a wonder in that even as God sent His Son into the lowly world, the plan wouldn't be complete until this Son died as my replacement, to cleanse me from my wickedness and to make a personal relationship with God possible. As precious as the Christmas portion of this story is, it is not complete until the Easter portion. Christ was sacrificed for my sins and the sins of the world. Then...he conquers death and destruction! Eternal life with Him is possible through His redeeming work!

Isaiah 6 talks about seeing the Lord seated on the throne with His robe filling the temple. The seraphim cry out, "Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." Isaiah's response is one of shame. "Look at me. I am unworthy to witness this because I am a man of unclean lips. At that realization, Isaiah is cleansed by a piece of coal placed on his lips. His sin was purged. Isaiah's next response is service. "Here I am. Send me."

Note the process.

1. I see the Lord as He is. I become aware of His glory and worthiness.
2. I see myself as I am in relation to God. Unworthy and unclean.
3. My awareness leads me to repentance. God purges my sin.
4. I want to tell others about who God is and what He has done in changing me from an unworthy sinner into His beloved child. "Send me! I want to do what you ask!" Obedience.

If we have really had an encounter with God like this, the natural response is service, not out of obligation but of the desire to glorify God and the desire to bring others into the same relationship with God.

Evaluate where you are. Has the glory of the Lord been revealed to you? Have you acknowledged your unworthiness and been purged of your evil ways? If this has changed your life, are you in God's service, going and doing what He asks? Are you listening to Him about the things He would like to change in you? Are you obeying? It is a life changing, mind altering experience to come face to face with the glory of God. What is your response?

*Pam Reents, Editor*



## January is

- National Careers in Cosmetology Month
- National Eye Health Care Month
- National Fiber Focus Month
- National Hobby Month
- National Soup Month
- Hot Tea Month
- Oatmeal Month
- Prune Breakfast Month



**Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**Observed  
January 16, 2006**

### Special Days at Grace In January

- 1 - Happy New Year!
- 3 - After School Program Resumes.
- 14 - Survival English for Sudanese Women Classes Begins.
- 16 - Church Council Meeting (Note different date.)
- 22 - Joint Worship Service at Wheeler Presbyterian Church.  
**(No Services at Grace Lutheran)**
- 29 - Grace Lutheran Church Annual Meeting.  
Celebration for Gloria and Richard Moore's 60th  
Wedding Anniversary before the Annual Meeting.

"Now, I say to you today my friends, even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: - 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.'"

### Happy New Year Acronym

- H**old fast to your faith (Heb 4:14)
- A**ssemble with the Saints (Heb 10:25)
- P**ray earnestly everyday (1 Thes 5:17, 18)
- P**ray for great blessings (Mal 3:10)
- Y**ield not to temptation (1 Thes 5:22)
  
- N**eglect not your talents and opportunities (Gal 6:10)
- E**xamine yourself daily (2 Cor 13:5)
- W**ork diligently for the Lord (1 Cor 15:58)
  
- Y**ield your members to righteousness (Rom 6:11, 16)
- E**xercise yourself in Godliness (1 Tim 4:7)
- A**im at sinless perfection (Heb 6:1)
- R**edeem the time (Eph 5:15, 16)

<http://www.clean-funnies.com/>

### He Keeps Calling!

A man calls his lawyer. The lawyer's secretary picks up the phone and explains that the lawyer is dead. The man hangs up.

The next day, the man calls his lawyer again. Again the secretary explains that the lawyer is dead. The man hangs up.

The following day, the man calls his lawyer yet again. This time the secretary gets angry and says, "Look, I've told you twice already. Your lawyer is dead. Why do you keep calling?"

"I just like to hear it," responded the caller.

## Luke, Chapter 02, Puzzle 1

### WORD LIST

Anna	purification
anxious	question
astonish	Quirinius
baby	sacrifice
Caesar	search
consecrated	sign
decree	soul
devout	stature
dismiss	time
dove	told
fast	town
favor	word
find	
governor	
grow	
home	
host	
inn	
law	
line	
look	
Mary	
news	
obedient	

y z c v y e n c l s s i t x h  
s t p x t b v i d f e u h s d  
i e f u y q a o y n o a t p w  
y r y c r u k b d v i a r a y  
m g i n t i m e e b t f o c e  
o s q c g r f d e u f a n r h  
y p d e c i f i r c a s r w o  
a r q c o n s e c r a t e d s  
q u e s t i o n e a q o v u t  
i v x h o u b t d t t n o g e  
d i s m i s s l w o e i g m r  
r f d r o w k m i w x s o o g  
k z g u t e o a n n a h v n m  
t o l d j n o r a s e a c n s  
o g j c w a l y g o f q q i m

### New Year's Wishes From the Staff at Grace Lutheran To You!

May your hair, your teeth, your face-lift, your abs, and your stocks not fall; and may your blood pressure, your triglycerides, your cholesterol, your white blood count and your mortgage interest not rise.

May you get a clean bill of health from your dentist, your cardiologist, your gastroenterologist, your urologist, your proctologist, your podiatrist, your psychiatrist, your plumber, and the IRS.

May you find a way to travel from anywhere to anywhere during rush hour in less than an hour, and when you get there may you find a parking space.

May this evening, December 31, find you seated around the dinner table, together with your beloved family and cherished friends, ushering in the New Year ahead. You will find the food better, the environment quieter, the cost much cheaper, and the pleasure much more fulfilling than anything else you might ordinarily do that night.

May what you see in the mirror delight you, and what others see in you delight them.

May the telemarketers wait to make their sales calls until you finish dinner, may your checkbook and your budget balance, and may they include generous amounts for your church and charities.

May you remember to say "I love you" at least once a day to your spouse, your child, and your parent(s). You can say it to your secretary, your nurse, your butcher, your photographer, your masseuse, your seamstress, your hairdresser or your tennis instructor, but not with a "twinkle" in your eye.

May we live as intended, in a world at peace with the awareness of the beauty in every sunset, every flower's unfolding petals, every baby's smile and every wonderful, astonishing, miraculous beat of our heart.