

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

# THE GRACE MESSENGER



*Love  
your neighbor  
as yourself.*

*Leviticus 19:18*

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

**Return Service Requested**  
**Dated Material**

**Email:** [graceluth@graceluth.com](mailto:graceluth@graceluth.com)  
**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 Mounto**

**Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr**

**Organist - Cody Talarico**

**Sexton - Ambros Lado/Jason Bauer**

**Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill**

**Faith in Action - Julie Chytil**

**February 2007**

**Non-Profit Org.**  
**U.S. Postage**  
**PAID**  
**Omaha NE**  
**Permit No. 39**



2007 Council Members		
Ron Adrian	Andrew Edwards	Sarah Emery
June Hilmer	David Hufford	Greg Hula
Ernest Olson	Brenda Spahr	
Pastor Laaker	John Ivo Munto	
*****		
Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:		
Financial Secretary: Janet Hula		Treasurer: Margie Sutej

The regular meeting of the Council was held January 11. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Ambros Lado, Darlene Spahr, Olive Laaker, Jim Horwath, Donna (Marsha’s sister-in-law) a desire for positive changes in Iraq, continued safety for Ivo Munto, care for those within the Grace family that they continue to heal and for safety of all of our military personnel. Pastor led devotions from Exodus 15:2 and Luke 1:49 which spoke about God’s strength and salvation and the blessings of great things that God works in our lives.

Visions for Ministry: Council shared some of their individual learning from our discussion of “Becoming a Blessed Church.” “Greater appreciation for the Holy Spirit, faith and learning to fall in love with God.” “More aware of the things that are going on around me.” “I got deeper into my own spiritual discipline.” “Greater appreciation for what God wants and calls us to do.”

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

Christian Education had no new report.

Evangelism/Outreach reported the Sudanese Women’s ESL program will begin again on Saturday.

Finance presented a proposed budget for 2007. Council approved presenting it to the congregation at the Annual Meeting. Property had no new report.

Service/Social Ministry had no new report.

Support/Stewardship had no new report.

Worship reflected on how special the Christmas Eve service.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business: Nominating Committee reported on its work to secure new council members. The Council nominated Marsha Moyer to serve on the Endowment Board. An Audit Committee will be secured to review the records prior to the Annual Meeting.

Announcements: The next joint meeting with St. Luke’s and Cristo Rey councils will be Thursday, January 18, 6 pm. Pastor and Mary will host the Council for dinner in appreciation of their service. Special Thanks was extended to outgoing council members, Arlone Farber, Marsha Moyer and Barbara Nelson. Pastor shared briefly the plans for his Sabbatical in March and April.

# *From the Pastor*

In my devotions for the week of January 21 was this prayer that was found in the clothing of an unknown Civil War soldier:

I asked God for strength, that I might achieve...  
I was made weak that I might learn humbly to obey.  
I asked for health, that I might do great things...  
I was given infirmity, that I might do better things.  
I asked for riches, that I might be happy...  
I was given poverty, that I might be wise.  
I asked for power, that I might have the praise of men...  
I was given weakness, that I might feel the need of God.  
I asked for all things, that I might enjoy life...  
I was given life, that I might enjoy all things.  
I got nothing that I asked for...  
But everything that I hoped for...  
Almost despite myself, my unspoken prayers were answered...  
I am among all men most richly blessed. Amen.



As I read this prayer, I was so touched in my spirit. I can only begin to tell you the sense of blessing that I feel. Oh sure, there are days that I am quite frustrated, extremely tired, worried, and even angry. However, when I stop to consider all the ways that my life is blessed, there is a rush of the Spirit over me that just fills me with such overwhelming blessing that all of those things fade away.

I seem to encounter these moments more in passing years. Maybe it is because I am trying to get as many things lined up as I can for ministry coverage while I am on Sabbatical. Maybe it is because I am more reflective now than I ever have been before. Maybe it is just coincidence. Whatever the reason, it is a powerful sense of being richly blessed.

I can't help but believe it is part of the ministry of Grace Church. There are untold ways this congregation is a blessing. Whether it is the joy of celebrating birthdays of young and old alike; whether it is the joy on the face of those who receive a warm welcome and cup of coffee by office staff; whether it is gentle voice of caring that asks how one is doing after battling and illness; all of these small things are rich blessings for the life of the one they touch.

I want to thank you for the kind remembrances that were shared with Mary and I over the holiday season. All of you are woven into the fabric of our lives in ways that bring wonderful blessings. Thank you!

May this same rich blessing of God's love and care permeate all that we do as the people of God in this place.

*Pastor Laaker*



**Next Grace Lutheran  
Men in Mission Breakfast  
Saturday  
February 17, 2007  
8:00 a.m.**

## **W/ELCA Board Meeting**

**February 5, 2007.  
1:00 p.m.**

## **W/ELCA Circle Meeting**

**February 20  
1:00 p.m.**



*Women of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*



**Lutheran Women of Omaha Luncheon  
Lutheran Memorial Church, 6099 Western St.  
February 13, 2007**

**Program** The Stephen Center  
**Project** Monetary to the Stephen Center

**Reservation Required by February 11**  
Call Lorraine Palma at 455-4342  
Cost is \$5.00 per person

## **Mitten Tree Project Brings Winter Warmth to Needy**

The Mitten Tree Project concluded in January, bringing in over 100 gloves, scarves, hats and other winter accessories. All the items collected have been donated to local shelters and agencies for distribution. Thank you to all the people of the congregation who donated items to help keep others warm. Many items were handmade.

**Your Warm Hearts and Generous Hands Collected:**

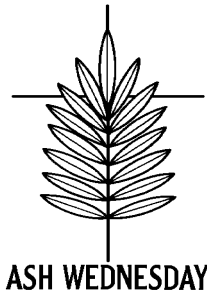
8 pairs of slippers  
1 3 piece fleece set  
6 hat and scarf sets  
1 hat and glove set  
1 hooded scarf

10 scarves  
18 pairs of gloves  
21 pairs of mittens  
33 hats  
13 ear warmers





## Come and Examine Your Relationship with God.



Ash Wednesday, February 21  
6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper  
7:15 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service

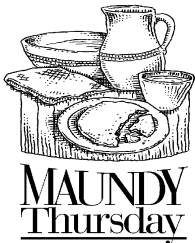
Lent begins with Ash Wednesday (Aschermittwoch) and ends on Easter Eve. It commemorates the forty days of fasting and prayer by which Jesus prepared himself for his ministry. (St. [Matthew 4:1-11](#).) Since the 7th Century it has been the beginning of a period of Christian fasting and prayer. It is called Ash Wednesday because, if they wished, penitents could have ashes placed onto their foreheads at the communion rail.

Wednesday Nights beginning with February 28 and ending on March 28.

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



The word LENT (Lenz) is actually the old Anglo-Saxon word for "Spring." The "40 days of Lent" is a period of preparation leading up to the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ.



Thursday, April 5  
6:00 p.m. Lenten Supper  
7:15 p.m. Maundy Thursday Service

Maundy Thursday is the day when Jesus had his last meal with his disciples, was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, and put on trial through the night. The word 'Maundy' comes from the latin word 'Mandatum' meaning commandment and Christians remember Jesus' famous commandment to his disciples to "Love one another as I have loved you." John 15:12



Good Friday April 6  
7:15 p.m. Good Friday Service

The Friday before Easter is known as Good Friday or Dark Friday. In this day we remember the cruel death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. He loved us so much that he was willing to take on the sin of the world and die for us, so whom ever believes in Him can have eternal life. Jesus was Crucified on Good Friday and died on the Cross for the Sin of the World. He rose from dead on Easter Sunday.



# Lent Schedule



**Ash Wednesday**  
**Supper at 6:00 p.m.**  
**Worship at 7:15 p.m.**

**Pastor Laaker's last service**  
**before his Sabbatical.**

*More Lenten speakers will be announced in coming weeks.*

## Prayer to Begin Lent

"Lord, protect us in our struggle against evil. As we begin the discipline of Lent, make this season holy by our self-denial. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen."

[www.hearts2heartnetwork.org](http://www.hearts2heartnetwork.org)

Suppers	Hosts/Hostesses	Donations for
February 21 Ash Wednesday	Grace Traynor and the Grace Lutheran Sunday School	Sunday School Events Supplies
February 28	Lutheran Men in Mission	LMM Projects

## Volunteers are Needed to Serve and Prepare Lenten Dinners

Hosts and Hostesses are needed to prepare and serve the Wednesday Night Lenten Supper. If you are willing to help, a sign up sheet has been posted on the bulletin board.



## African Lenten Story - "I Had Lunch With God"

A little African boy wanted to meet God. He knew that it was a long trip to where God lived. So he packed his suitcase with small cakes and a six-pack of soda and started his journey. When he had gone about three blocks he met an old woman. She was sitting in the park just staring at some birds. The boy sat down next to her and opened his suitcase. He was about to take a drink from his can of soda when he noticed that the old lady looked hungry so he offered her a small cake. She gratefully accepted it and smiled at him. Her smile was so pretty that the boy wanted to see it again. So he offered her a soda. Again she smiled at him. The boy was delighted!

The little African boy and the old woman sat there all afternoon eating and drinking and smiling, but they never said a word. As it grew dark the boy realized how tired he was and he got up to leave. But before he had gone more than a few steps he turned around, ran back to the old woman and gave her a big hug. She gave him her biggest smile ever.

When the boy opened the door to his own house a short time later, his mother was surprised by the look of joy on his face. She asked him, "What did you do today that made you so happy?" He replied, "I had lunch with God." But before his mother could respond he added, "You know what? She's got the most beautiful smile I've ever seen!"

Meanwhile the old woman, also radiant with joy, returned to her home. Her son was stunned by the look of peace on her face and he asked: "Mother, what did you do today that made you so happy?" She replied, "I ate small cakes and drank soda in the park with God." However, before her son could respond she added, "You know, he's much younger than I expected."

*[www.afiproverb.org](http://www.afiproverb.org) (East Africa adaptation of a universal story)*



## Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends

*"The prayer of a person living right with God  
is something powerful to be reckoned with."*

*James 5:16b*

- ◆ Thelma Harrahill - Recovery at home from on-going illness. (member)
- ◆ 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 members, Andrew and Christi Edwards)
- ◆ Frances Campsey - Health concerns. (member)
- ◆ Linda Whitney - Struggling with on-going cancer. (Friend of LaVonne Moss)
- ◆ Dan Reents - Because his immune system is low, he is very vulnerable to infection. Pray for healing from his chronic respiratory infection (Brother-in-law of Pam Reents, Church Secretary)
- ◆ Ernie Olson - On-going therapy after his stroke. (member)
- ◆ Alice Friedlander - Healing for a back injury. (member)
- ◆ Darlene Spahr - COPD, hospitalized and very sick. (member, Brenda Spahr's mother-in-law.)
- ◆ Evelyn Reimer - Recovery after her lower leg had to be amputated. (member)
- ◆ Harlan Morter - Recovering at home after being hospitalized. (member)
- ◆ Betty Coniglio - Continued recovery from heart issues. (member)
- ◆ Ron Andersen - Tests being done for tremors. (member)
- ◆ Mae Lane - Recovering at Lutheran Home after being hospitalized. (member)
- ◆ Ana Lopez - Teen with long term medical needs. (Family involved in ESL food basket project)
- ◆ Ambros Lado - Long term rehab ahead for recovery from a stroke. Ambros has been moved to a nursing/rehab center for continued therapy. (member)
- ◆ David Jacobs - Recovery from major surgery on his back. (Brother of member, June Hilmer)
- ◆ Seth Goodman - Guidance and strength to overcome his addiction in rehab.

(Nephew of Pam Reents, Church Secretary.)

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 here Grace Church.

### **Sudanese Church Requests**

- ◆ Please pray that John Ivo Mounto returns home safely from his trip to Sudan. Word was received in late January that Ivo had made it to see his mother in Mabaan county and was back in Malakal city down by Uganda. Pray that the civil unrest will not further delay his return to the states.
- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese women in our Survival English for Sudanese Women class. The women are having difficulty coming to class each week because of their enormous responsibilities from their jobs (many are working 7 days a week!) and families. In addition, several of our students are pregnant. Pray for the tutors as they work to fit the program with the needs of the Sudanese women. An opportunity has come for the Sudanese women to connect with African American women from a church here in Omaha. Pray that a bridge of trust and friendship can be formed for the Sudanese women to be mentored.
- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Pray that the elders in the church community will have wisdom in their counsel. Cultural roles of men and women are difficult to change. Domestic violence is also an issue in some homes.

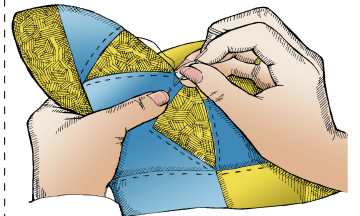


4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Monday thru Thursday

Games, Crafts, and Fun Geared for Elementary Kids!

Free!

Director, Brenda Spahr



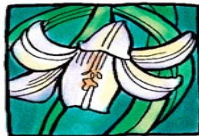
QUILTING GROUP

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

If you have the morning free, drop by and help cut squares  
and tie quilt tops on to the backs.

Coffee break is at 10:00 a.m.

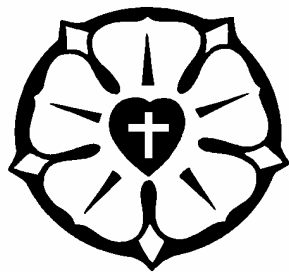
### • F L O W E R   C H A R T •



*The 2007 Flower Chart has been posted on the  
bulletin board outside the church office.*

**The Chart is filling fast!**

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, in memory of someone dear to you or in thankfulness to the glory of God. The cost to sponsor flowers for a Sunday is \$12.00.



**"The Bible is the cradle  
wherein Christ is laid."**

**Martin Luther**

### **"On Being Lutheran" Study**

**"Reflections on  
Church, Theology, and Faith"**

*Understanding the words of Martin Luther  
and applying them today.*

Selected Tuesday Evenings 7:00 p.m.

In the Upper Fellowship Hall

Come to one session or all of them! **Drop-in's Welcome!**

#### Session Topics:

February 6 - "Yardstick of Faith"

February 20 - "Defining the Mystery"

March 6 - "Judgment on Careless Belief"

March 20 - "Claiming our Catholic Heritage"





# Happening in the Library!

## Donate your used books

The Library Board is collecting used books, videos, CD's and cassettes in good condition as a fund-raiser for the Library during Lent.

A sale table will be set up in the Upper Fellowship Hall.

Why not use this opportunity to pass on materials collecting dust on your shelves at home to help provide money to buy new books for the library?

A box for your donation has been placed in the library.

## Show Church Unity!

During the month of February, the Library Board will be taking orders for monogrammed T-shirts, Sweatshirts and Polo Shirts. The monogram incorporates Grace Lutheran's Name in the design. Information on colors, styles and cost per style will be posted on the Library door very soon.

---

## American Cancer Society's Daffodil Days.

March 11, 2007

The American Cancer Society is calling upon you to participate in this very special project again this year. You are invited to order fresh cut daffodils for friends and loved ones as tributes, memorials or gifts. The daffodils will be displayed in the sanctuary on "Daffodil Sunday" March 11, 2007. Donors are welcome to enjoy them at home after the service.



There are several products available for purchase.

- ◆ Hugh R. Hope, a special Boyd's Bear designed exclusively for Daffodil Days and approximately 10 daffodil stems for \$25.00.
- ◆ Sunshine Bouquet, comes with an official American Cancer Society glass vase and 10 stems for \$15.00
- ◆ Individual Bouquet, approximately 10 daffodil stems for \$10.00.

The last day to sign up to sponsor daffodils is February 20, 2007. A poster with pictures of the different items and sign up sheet are displayed on the church bulletin board.

For more information, or if you would like to help with the Daffodil Days project at Grace Lutheran Church, please contact Jennifer Talarico.

---

If I keep a green bough in my heart,  
then the singing bird will come.

Chinese proverb

---



# "Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

## Project Hope

The Theme for February is Can Openers/Soup or Stew.

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

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

We always need paper or plastic bags.

## Can You Spare a Buck or Two?

Our youth will hold soup pots at church doors on  
Souper Bowl Sunday  
February 4, 2007.

They will join young people in churches all across the country to collect money for those who are hungry and hurting. In 2004, 12,759 groups in all 50 states and outside the United States participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring generating \$4,260,941.



All of the money collected is donated to a charity selected by the participant. None of the money is sent to Souper Bowl headquarters. 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.

Since the Souper Bowl of Caring became a national grassroots event in 1993, more than \$24 million has gone to help those in need.

Please support the youth of our church in this effort to "love our neighbors" by dropping your dollar in the soup pot on February 4, 2007.

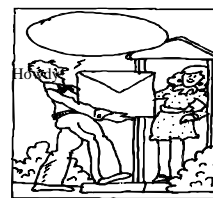


## Do you have a heart for World Hunger?

Pick up a free desktop box bank to put on your dresser, desk or kitchen counter. Your spare change can make a difference in the lives of the millions who will go hungry without our help. When you have collected your change, put it in an envelope marked "World Hunger" and drop it in the offering plate.

The banks are located on the table at the back of the sanctuary.

# Community News



## *Columbus Park Neighborhood Association*

Next Meeting - February 15, 2007 7:00 p.m.  
Grace Lutheran Church - 1326 S 26 St.

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

CPNA  
1326 S 26 Street  
Omaha, NE 68105

Call 341-7730 for more information.

## **Hymn Festival 2007**

Pacific Hill Lutheran Church  
90th and Pacific

Sunday, February 18  
3:00 p.m.

Dr Jeffery Blersch, DMA, Organist  
Music Department Chairman,  
Concordia University, Seward, NE

Freewill Offering Taken.  
Reception Following Festival.

You are invited to attend the  
**Jumble Shop 60th Anniversary**  
Community Agency Open House

Wednesday, Feb 7th  
5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Jumble Thrift Shop  
3038 N 90th Street, 1 block north of Maple  
Appetizers served

**All guest will receive a 60% off coupon**  
Fund raiser for the Junior League of Omaha.

## **Omaha Together One Community**

*Presents*

### **Formation for Prophetic Mission Leadership Lenten Retreat**

*Prayer, Reflection & Strategies  
for Prophetic Mission based on the writings of  
scripture scholar and theologian,  
Walter Brueggeman*

Saturday, February 24  
9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

No cost to attend  
*Freewill donation for lunch*

First United Methodist Church  
Cary Hall, 70th and Cass Sts.

This one day retreat will prepare the attendee for  
the March 23rd and 24th event when Walter  
Brueggeman will speak in person at First United  
Methodist Church. The cost for the two day  
seminar is \$45 for the weekend.

(\$65 after February 23)

Call 312-7546 for more information.

## **King of Kings Lutheran Church** 11615 "T" Street Omaha, NE 68137-1211 333-6464 ext 9018

Anchor Ministries offers several small group sessions for conquering problems on your life journey. All are free, and open to anyone with a need. You do not have to be a member of King of Kings to attend.

On-going groups (join anytime)

Mondays:

- ♦ Caregivers Support Group - 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Celebrate Recovery - 12 step - 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Anger Management - 6:00 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

- ♦ Grief Group - 1:00 p.m. Sundays

Call King of Kings for more information.



## Two Great Fund-Raising Events for Omaha Habitat for Humanity

### Community Dance

Benefit for  
**Omaha Habitat for Humanity**

**First United Methodist Church**  
7020 Cass in Cary Hall

**Saturday, February 17, 2007**  
**7:00 - 10:00 p.m.**

Live Music by  
**Rivertown String Band**  
Squares, reels, waltzes

*No experience necessary  
&  
No partner necessary*

Eric Manley, Caller

**Suggested Donation**  
**\$5.00 per person**

**Refreshments served.**



### Spiritual MARDI GRAS 2007

**Hanscom Park United Methodist  
Church**

4444 Frances Street, Omaha  
*One Block South of 45<sup>th</sup> & Center Streets*

**Sunday, February 18 2007**  
**4 p.m.**

### Freewill Donation

Mission Project -  
**Habitat for Humanity**  
South Omaha Neighbors Coalition



### Chili Cook-Off

**Bring your secret recipes to be judged...  
or just bring your appetite!**

Sample Great Chili.

Chicken Noodle Soup will be available  
for the weak stomached  
and the scardy cats!

Please invite your friends and family who live  
in the Omaha area to join you at the church for  
the supper featuring specialty chili recipes and  
chicken noodle soup!

**No Reservations Are Needed!**

# News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

- ◆ Thanks to Barb Narducci, the very first person to turn in her annual report! Thanks to all of you who worked hard with the office to insure the Annual Report would be as accurate as possible and ready on time. Special thanks to Jack Williams for his dedicated effort and time to help Pam and Pastor produce a clear and concise report.
- ◆ Thanks to all of you who participated in the Mitten Tree Project. Many people will be warmed both physically and emotionally by your gifts.
- ◆ Thanks to the people who generously gave money to the World Hunger Appeal/Disaster Relief in 2006. Our giving to this fund for the year was \$ 2,808.75.
- ◆ Thanks to the mystery person who came and shoveled the snow on the church property after our first major snowfall before 8:00 a.m. in the morning!

*To the wonderful folks at Grace Lutheran,*

*Thanks so much for the gifts and notes of encouragement during the Christmas and Annual Report season. I found little surprises on my desk and in my mailbox.*

*You are in my prayers and on my mind as I go through the day. I often breathe a prayer for you as I come across your name!*

*Thanks for the privilege of serving God together with you,  
Pam Reents, Church Secretary*



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

With Pete soon to celebrate his 50th wedding anniversary at the church's marriage marathon, the minister asked him to take a few minutes and share some insight into how he managed to maintain his marriage with the same woman all these years.

The husband replied to the audience, "Well, I treated her with respect, spent money on her, but mostly I took her traveling on special occasions."

The minister inquired "Trips to where?"

"For our 25th anniversary, I took her to Beijing, China."

The minister then said, "What a terrific example you are to all husbands, Pete. Please tell the audience what you're going to do for your wife on your 50th anniversary?"

Pete smirked and says, "I'm going to go get her."

A couple had been looking at new cars for months. He wanted a simple truck and she wanted a fast little sports car so she could zoom through traffic and look like a princess. He would have settled for almost any old truck, but everything she wanted was way out of price range.

"Look!" she said. "I want something that goes from 0 to 220 in 5 seconds or less. My birthday is coming up and you should surprise me!"

The husband lived a few short seconds after he watched his wife unwrap her brand new bathroom scale.

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



Virginia McGill  
Director

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

Interfaith Health Services is pleased to welcome two new volunteers, Azucena and Liset, to our exercise and educational programs. Azucena enjoys music, working with children and reading. Liset and also enjoys music, movies and dancing. Azucena will be joining our long-time Childcare Coordinator, Sara Flores, in providing childcare activities during our morning classes at St. Luke's, Wheeler and Grace Lutheran. Liset will be working with me and Gema to provide childcare at Grace Methodist on Wednesday and Friday evenings.

Our group was very sad to say good-bye to Adriana and Ani who worked in childcare prior to Azucena and Liset. Both brought a profound love of children and teaching to our children's programming. Adriana gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Juan Francisco, this summer. She still stops by with Juan every once in a while to say hello to our groups and to let us dote on Juan. Adriana was a member of the Mama's Mother's Group and it was through this program that I met her. She was a stand-out in the group, offering gentle leadership and guidance to other expectant mothers.

Ani was offered a full-time childcare position. Ani was a graduate of Central High School and made the most of her time in school by assisting others in volunteer projects. Ani worked closely with Sara to help build our childcare program from the ground up. She was with Interfaith as our childcare numbers grew from 4 to triple that number of children. Her skill at facilitating numerous activities and games, all while holding and comforting a crying infant made her a favorite of the children.

Our childcare crafts program is getting underway thanks to Sara's desire to have the children truly engaged while they are on site. Sara worked with Azucena in helping all of our 3-5 year olds make Christmas cards out of construction paper for their families. She also taught the children a few Christmas songs along the way.

We are blessed to have such committed volunteers and staff working with us and our programs.

Virginia McGill, Director

### Give Kids A Smile Day @ Creighton University!

When ~ February 3rd

Time ~ First Session: 8:30-10:30 a.m.

Second Session: 10:30-Noon

Location ~ Creighton Dental School

2802 Webster St. Omaha

What ~ Dental care for 3 years to mid-teens

Clown, Storyteller, Fun and Games!

Cost ~ Free

To Register call: 213-9788

### OneWorld Community Health Centers

OneWorld Community Health Centers has  
opened a Quick Sick Clinic.

No appointments are necessary.

*The clinic is located in the  
Livestock Exchange Building at 30th & L Streets.*

Hours of operation

Monday through Thursday - 1:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Saturday - 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon.

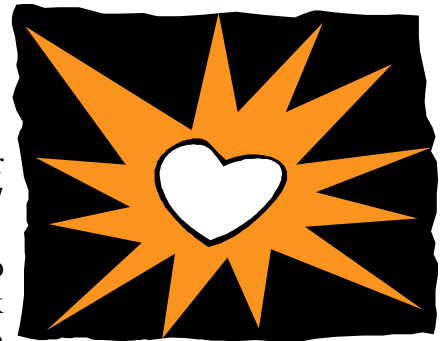
For more information, call 502-8855



*This article appeared in a local newspaper, The Bellevue Leader, in January featuring Julie Chytil and the Faith in Action Program*

## Lending a helping hand

By: Erin Leick, Leader Staff Writer  
01/10/2007



**FAITH  
IN ACTION**

Pat Prouty, a south Omaha resident, has had two back surgeries to help her spinal stenosis. The first was unsuccessful, and her back still causes her pain. She is also very limited in her activities: She cannot do any lifting, which makes grocery shopping difficult and said even vacuuming is painful. But thanks to the Faith in Action project by Interfaith Health Services, Prouty is able to get the help she needs at the grocery store each week. "It's great when they take me to the store," she said. "I have real bad problems with my back and I can't lift much. I really appreciate it."

The program, which was limited to southeast Omaha, started in the summer of 2005. They recently received a grant to expand into Sarpy County and will start with Bellevue.

"We received a grant from the Sarpy/Cass Department of Health and Wellness to expand into Sarpy County, and we decided to start with Bellevue," said Julie Chytil, the program coordinator. The Faith in Action project matches volunteers from churches and community groups with individuals with long-term health needs to help them remain independent. "They help out with non-medical needs," Chytil said. "Rides to the doctor, weekly grocery shopping or just a friendly visit or phone call." The program information sheet also says help might include light housework, meal preparation, helping with paperwork or letter writing, and simply reading to someone.

Chytil said the program is mainly geared toward matching seniors, but anyone with a long-term health need can get help. The addition of a new staff member is helping the program reach out to more people. "Because of the grant, we were able to hire a bilingual community health worker," she said. "We are working to reach out to Spanish speakers. We have the Spanish-speaking volunteers, but we don't have anyone for them to help."

Chytil said she hopes to work with churches, even ones that already have similar projects, to spread the word about the program. "It's very hard for people to admit that they need help," she said. "You can get referred, but people don't know about the program." Individuals or groups who are interested in volunteering or using the services provided can call 660-2652. Both English and Spanish speakers are available.

"You may not know if someone down the street needs help," Chytil said. "But we want to bring out those needs and start matching up the services."

**Want to help? Need some help?**

Contact the church office at 340-7730 or call Julie directly at 660-2652.

*A Neighbor's Independence Depends on You!*





Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.

Jeremiah 33:3

## From the Editor

The deep freeze of winter has changed our routines. It is cold outside. Nature is quiet. The seed sleeps in the earth. Everything is hunkered down in an effort to survive. Even though I have a warm house, I want to hibernate, too. However, the expectations of the people around me does not diminish. There are still responsibilities to manage. There are still things to be done and people who count on my faithfulness.

As I contemplated the many things I need to do, should do and have to do, I felt shame at my lack of motivation. Over and over, I mulled where I should start and what I should be doing. The key word here is “I.” Even though God and I have gone over this again and again, my first inclination is to work it out for myself. “Maybe I could...” “I just need to...” “Maybe I could try...” I sank lower and lower into those feelings of inadequacy. Interestingly, I wasn’t spending as much time in my quiet time with God. I tried to follow my habit of reading a short devotional (Well, at least every other day...or maybe every couple of days) The farther I sunk, the less I wanted to spend time alone with Him. Like Adam and Eve after realizing their sin, I hid from Him, not really wanting to face what it was that I knew I should confess.

As I was contemplating my situation, a Bible verse that I had learned many years ago came back to mind. As I child, I learned this verse in the King James version but I like how the Amplified Bible puts it.

“Call to Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, fenced in and hidden, which you do not know (do not distinguish and recognize, have knowledge of and understand). Jeremiah 33:3

As I was still trying to work my troubles out for myself, the verse kept popping in to my head. “Call to me and I will show you!” Like a stubborn mule, I tried to ignore it and keep working it out for myself. “Great and mighty things” Naw, I can figure out something great and earth shaking to turn this around. The more I tried, the less success I had in balancing my thoughts and actions. Again, I had to take my sin of self-sufficiency and confess it to God.

What does it mean to “call to God” and how is it different than prayer? They are both communication with God. I believe that to call on God denotes a sense of urgency, like calling 911. “Help me! Forgive me!

My moment to moment talks with Him are on ongoing conversations. These prayers are vital to my spiritual health. Like a chat with your best friend or spouse, the communication lines have to stay open! But a time always comes when an impassioned plea is necessary. “I really blew it! Can you forgive me?” “I can’t do it without you. Will you help me?”

Do you need to call on God today for something? Is it a confession of self-sufficiency? Of willful disobedience? Of unconfessed sin in your life? God has said that He is waiting to show you something great. You just need to call out to Him.

*Pam Reents, editor.*



## **Update on the Ice Storm Recovery Effort in Central Nebraska**

Thank you everyone!

"People have been so gracious and understanding and supportive, and that's really what it's all about!" Pastor David Sites, who serves Bethel Lutheran Church in Holdrege, wants to share with the people of the Nebraska Synod thanks from Bethel, himself, the volunteers and those assisted in Holdrege and the surrounding area.

Nebraska Lutheran Disaster Responders - trained volunteers from across the state - organized helpers, triggered fundraising, and consulted with community leaders involved in providing widespread assistance to those affected by the January Ice Crisis in mid-Nebraska.

"We are so thankful for prayers and expressions of concern, and for people actually coming and bringing things to us. We have had lots and lots of financial support. That has been a huge help for meeting immediate needs and concerns of people involved. We appreciate so much all the kind gestures, gifts of cash, in-kind donations and assistance that have been extended to this community and area. People from all over the state have responded," the Rev. Sites said on Tuesday, Jan. 23.

"We have power back and the businesses were hooked up last Friday for which we all are very grateful," Pastor Sites said. "Funk and Wilcox still don't have power hooked up yet, and are still on generators. The Red Cross closed down the emergency assistance center last Friday, Jan. 19, and the Holdrege Ministerial Association put together a sheet of information to hand out detailing where people need to go for additional assistance."

The funds that came to Bethel from the Nebraska Synod congregations, individuals, and from Nebraska Synod Disaster Fund were channeled into the Holdrege Ministerial Fund which will support what the leaders in Holdrege foresee to be a long-term assistance program. Pastor Sites noted that some people are going to be needing help for a long time, and more financial obligations will pop up for rent and utilities as people strive to cope with the accumulated loss of wages.

### **Will You Help?**

As mentioned above, the long-term effects of this storm will be felt for many months. If you want to provide help for our central Nebraska neighbors, put your gift in an envelope and mark it "Ice Storm Relief." You may drop it off at the office, mail it or put it in the offering on Sunday.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind ...  
you shall love your neighbor as yourself ...  
when you did this to the least of these my family, you did it for Me."

Matthew 22



## Special Days in February

2 - Happy Groundhog Day!  
 6 - On Being Lutheran Study  
 14 - Happy Valentine's Day!  
 Every Wednesday (beginning February 21 )  
     Lenten dinners at 6:00 p.m.  
     Worship Service at 7:15 p.m.  
 19 - Presidents Day  
 21 - Ash Wednesday  
 28 - Lenten Worship

National Blah Buster Month  
 National Embroidery Month  
 National Grapefruit Month  
 National Snack Food Month  
 National Weddings Month  
 Responsible Pet Owner Month  
 Return Carts to the Supermarket Month  
 Creative Romance Month,  
 International Twit Award Month  
 Canned Food Month

"Black History Month is an annual observance, in February, of the past achievements and current status of African Americans. It coincides with the birthdays of the great black leader Frederick Douglass (February 14) and of Abraham Lincoln (February 12).



People often refer to the second day of February as Groundhog Day. According to many old stories, the groundhog, or woodchuck, comes out of its burrow on February 2 to look for its shadow. If the sun is shining and the groundhog can see its shadow, it goes back to sleep for a while, and winter is not over. If the groundhog cannot see its shadow, it begins its springtime activities

Two of America's greatest leaders, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, were born during February. Washington's birthday is celebrated as a federal holiday on the third Monday in February. Some states also honor Lincoln and other American Presidents on this day and call the holiday President's Day. President's Day is celebrated in the United States.



## Coats



A woman stood inside the front door, her arms full of coats. Four small children scurried around her. Her husband, coming down the stairs, asked why she was standing there.

"Here," she said, handing him the coats.

"This time you put the children into their coats, and I'll go honk the horn."

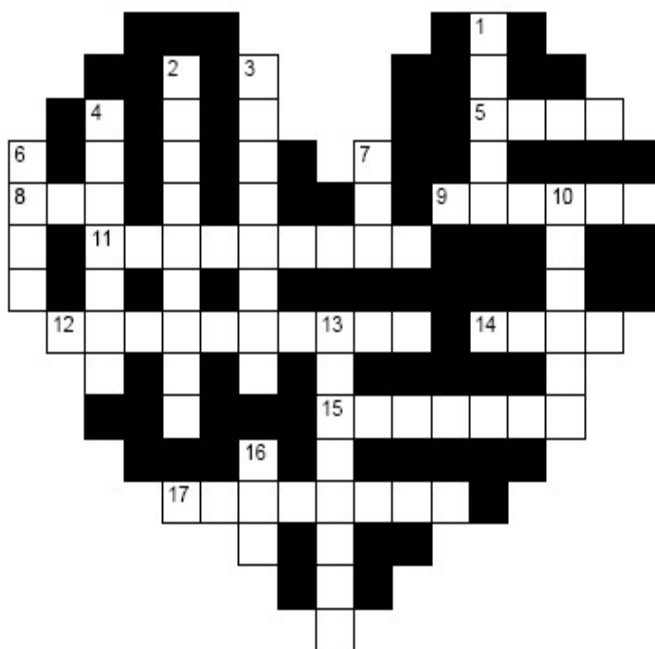


"Now that we've taught you how to love yourself, Brother Mickey, let's take it a step further...."

## Valentine's Day -- 1 Cor. 13

### Across

- 5. affection
- 8. no
- 9. loud instrument
- 11. bad-tempered
- 12. comprehend
- 14. not here
- 15. express joy
- 17. ringing



### Down

- 1. wholly
- 2. flawed
- 3. best
- 4. long-suffering
- 6. comprehend
- 7. everything
- 8. at present
- 10. grew to be
- 13. haughty
- 16. person

### WORD LIST

all	became	fully	irritable	man	patient
arrogant	clanging	greatest	know	not	rejoice
away	cymbal	imperfect	love	now	understand

Copyright 2003 by Christian Ministry Resources, PO Box 2301, Matthews, NC 28106, 800-222-1840, [www.churchsecretarytoday.com](http://www.churchsecretarytoday.com).  
Only churches or organizations with a current active subscription to Church Secretary Today are authorized to copy this page.

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



"If you'd like a healthy alternative, we can wrap your cheeseburger, french fries, and fruit pie in a low-fat tortilla."

A man was recovering from surgery when a nurse asks him how he is feeling.

The man replies, "I'm alright, but I didn't like the **FOUR-LETTER-WORD** the doctor used in surgery."

The nurse asked, "What did he say"?

"OOPS!!!"

## Very Puny!



A very small female janitor (4'10", 90 pounds) worked at an amusement park and was told to go out and sweep up the trash.

As she was getting ready to start cleaning up her supervisor noticed her putting rocks in her pockets.

When the supervisor asked her what she was doing, she said, "It's very windy out there and I'll get knocked over by the wind... So, now I weigh me down to sweep."

### Why did the cows go to church?

They heard there was a new pasture!