

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

THE GRACE MESSENGER

September 2006



Back to School

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

1326 South 26th Street
Omaha, NE 68105-2380

Return Service Requested

Phone: (402) 341-7730

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

Sudanese Ministries - John Ivo Mounto

Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr

Organist - Cody Talarico

Sexton - Ambros Lado

Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill

Faith in Action - Julie Chytil

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

Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:		
Financial Secretary: Janet Hula	Treasurer: Margie Sutej	

The regular meeting of the Council was held August 8. The Council members shared their prayer concerns which included safe travel for Emily Martin, an end to the violence in the Middle East, direction for St. Luke's as they seek an interim pastor and care for those in physical need: Charles Moyer (surgery) Frances Campsey, Thelma Harrahill, Tom Vondra (heart), Mary Vondra (carpal tunnel), Tim & Trudie on the death of Trudie's mother (Ernie Olson friend). Pastor led devotions from Deuteronomy 26:7 which encourages us to know that the Lord hears us and Ephesians 1:9-10 which asks God to make God's will known. We prayed for God's presence and direction for our lives and ministry.

Visions for Ministry: The Council reflected on the meetings held thus far with the councils from Cristo Rey and St. Luke's. The Council then had discussion on the fifth chapter of "Becoming a Blessed Church." It focused on being open to God as Power. The work of the Holy Spirit was discussed.

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

Christian Education reported that Pastor will meet with Amy Serflaten from First Lutheran and explore the combining of our Confirmation program which may include St. Luke's and Cristo Rey, as well. A special word of thanks was expressed for Grace Traynor's leadership for Vacation Bible School. Over thirty students participated throughout the week. David will proceed with Adult Bible Study on an evening in the fall.

Evangelism/Outreach reported on the success of The Kids At Work Program. A special thanks was expressed for Brenda's leadership. A lock-in for youth will be held Friday, September 8-9. Invitations will be sent to First Lutheran, Cristo Rey and St. Luke's youth.

Finance reported on the thank you note from Grace Lutheran, New Orleans.

Property reported that a leak has developed on the tower. A roofing company will be called to examine.

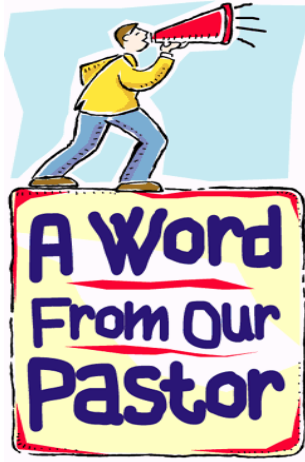
Service/Social Ministry reported that Janet Hula had created a new memorial thank you note. A word of thanks was expressed for her creativity and donation.

Support/Stewardship had no new report.

Worship reported that the ELCA will be releasing a new Hymnal in the fall. It was consensus that we would not explore purchase at this time.

Unfinished Business: Pastor asked if anyone had the desire to pick up work on the NCD emphasis?

New Business: None.



The opening question for review in the fifth chapter of “Becoming a Blessed Church,” asks, “To what extent do you sense that your church is truly open to God’s power?” This is an intriguing question. I can attempt to answer it in at least three ways.

My first response is to say, “Not much.” This seems harsh. Yet, when I look at the signs of whether the Spirit is pervasive in all aspects of Grace Church life, I have to be honest and say, I don’t see much of it.

My second response is to say, “More than it used to be.” Again, that may seem harsh. Yet, I have to be honest and say, “I see more signs of the work of the Spirit in and among us, today, than I did fifteen years ago.”

My third response is to say, “A lot.” Now, this feels better. I can point to the work of connecting with the young people and their families through the Kids at Work program. I can point to the work of our efforts to tutor and mentor Sudanese women. I can point to the work of our efforts to tutor Sudanese children. I can point to our Health Ministry efforts to provide hospitality for Latino women and others. These are truly signs, to me, of Grace being open to God’s power.

The author says, “God wants our churches to thrive, and to be places of deep love, grace, and the power of the Holy Spirit. God wants our churches to succeed, but for that to happen we have to believe it, be open to it, and depend upon it in faith. A man once said to me: ‘God never sets you up to fail.’ I’ve discovered the truth of this promise. When we trust in God and rely on God in faith, believing and acting on that faith no matter what obstacles appear before us, God comes through. Our part is to trust and act on that trust. When we do, God doesn’t let us fail.”

I am convinced of the truth found in the author’s words. I am convinced that God wants us to succeed in being a place where the love of God is shown in word and deed. I know that for this to happen, I must be plugged in to God’s Spirit otherwise I can be easily discouraged.

I would like to ask you to do something. I would like you to pray. Pray not just once but daily. Pray that God would open our eyes to the opportunities that God would have us act upon. Pray that God would so fill us with the Spirit that we’d see opportunities and not obstacles. Pray that God would help shape this community as God wants. Pray that God helps me be the leader God needs and uses in this place.

Pray believing. Pray trusting. Pray ready to act on God’s leading.

Pastor Laaker

Holy Spirit Rain Down

Chorus:

Holy Spirit rain down, rain down!
O Comforter and Friend
How we need Your touch again!
Holy Spirit rain down, rain down!
Let Your power fall, let Your voice be heard,
Come and change our hearts,
As we stand on Your Word,
Holy Spirit rain down.

Bridge:

No eye has seen, no ear has heard,
No mind can know what God has in store.
So open up heaven, open it wide,
Over Your church, and over our lives.

Repeat Chorus

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W/ELCA Board Meeting

Monday, September 11, 2006
1:00 p.m.
Hostess, Gertrude Hufford

Circle Meeting

Tuesday, September 19, 2006
1:00 p.m.
Bible Study - Gertrude Hufford
Hostess - LaVonne Moss



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

**Quilting will resume on
Monday,
September 11th
at 9:00 a.m.**

The Grace Quilters will begin creating quilts for Lutheran World Relief on Monday, September 11, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to noon. 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.

*2006-2007 Women of the ELCA
Bible Study*

Theme:

***Hope in God in
Times of Suffering***

Suffering is a fact of life; nearly everyone suffers at some time. Why is that? Suffering can be personal, as in a serious illness or accident, or it can be communal, such as this nation experienced after Hurricane Katrina or the attacks of September 11.

Our Bible Study writers, Faith and Terence Frehiem, make distinctions among the types of suffering, causes of suffering, and the ways we can respond to it. The key question is "What will we do with our suffering?"

This Bible study will be held during Circle Meetings on the third Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at the church in the Library.

Overview of the Bible Study

September 2006 - Big Questions
Bible Study - Making Sense of Suffering.
October 2006 - Rich Relationships
Bible Study - A relationship with God.
November 2006 - In Process
Bible Study - Suffering as Becoming
December 2006 - In the Flesh
Bible Study - Suffering as a consequence
of Sin.

January/February 2007 - Mouthing Off
Bible Study - Voicing our Laments
March 2007 - Always with You
Bible Study - God is with us in
our Suffering.
April 2007 - Let us Pray
Bible Study - The God to Whom we Pray.
May 2007 - Living Hope
Bible Study - Suffering as a Vocation.

A more detailed outline is available on line at <http://www.lutheranwomantoday.org/bible/biblestudyfall0607.html>. A copy of the information on line is also posted on the Women's Bulletin Board in the Upper Fellowship Hall.



**Next Grace Lutheran
Men in Mission Breakfast
Saturday,
September 17, 2006
8:00 a.m.**

**Halloween Party,
Friday Evening, October 27th, 2006**

Are you cleaning out your closets? Maybe you love the Dollar Store! Start thinking about game prizes for the party on October 27th. Look for things that would please both adults and kids.

Beginning in early September, a Halloween box will be placed in the upper fellowship hall to collect your desirable give-aways. Here are some prize ideas: Knick knacks, useful household items, home decorations, games, puzzles and toys, new or in good playable condition, and naturally, Halloween items.



We'll be asking for candy, cakes and cookie donations as the date gets closer. Cash donations are always appreciated.

Also, if you would like to volunteer to be a part of this really FUN evening, please contact Janet Hula @ 733-1142.

Sweet Treat Social

Awards for Summer Reading Club
Ice Cream Banana Splits with all the toppings.

**September 17, 2006
After Worship**

*Cost - 50 cents for youth age 12 and younger
\$1.00 for 12 and up.**

*Free for all in the reading club who completed the required pages .

Stop by after worship and have an Ice Cream Treat in celebration of the accomplishments of our Summer Reading Club Members. Everyone who completed the required number of pages for their age group will received free ice cream, a certificate and a prize. Awards will be given to the readers with the most pages read in each category. Look in next month's Grace Messenger for a list of the participants and the winners in each category.

Funds raised go to purchase more books for the library.

Kids At Work 2006



KAW 2006
Wrapping Up.
Thanks for a Great Summer!

I had loads of fun this summer and I hope that some of you did too! There has been lots of growth this summer, from youth learning how to work with one another, learning how to do something for the first time and completing their work correctly doing the best job they could and learning the values of teamwork.

I'm so glad that all of you were part of Kids At Work 2006. I hope that you will be back and visit all of us here at Grace during the year...it will be way too quiet without you! Remember services start at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday.

Check out additional photos on our community web site at southo.org

Brenda Spahr, Kids At Work Director.



Alexandria, Nick, Taylor and Alexa gather around the table to get their lunch.
Yum, Yum!!!

After lunch, we enjoyed a friendly water balloon toss, which turned out to be a water balloon squirting contest. Pictured are Bianca, Alexandria, Nick, Julie, Julia and Bradley.



Pictured from left to right in the back row: Julie, Nick, Taylor, Kim, Angela, Alexa, Samantha, Julia, Shaban, Linda and Liz.

Pictured in the front row from left to right: Bianca, Jake, Danny, Alexandria, Alexandra, Shedu, Andrea, Brenda, Louise and Marilyn.

Great Job Everyone!!!!
Come back and see us soon.

Grace Church Member, Family and Friend Requests

- ◆ Thelma Harrahill - Recovery from on going illness in the Hillcrest nursing home. (member)
- ◆ Francine Wise - ongoing health issues. (Pastor 's office person at Lutheran Metro Ministries)
- ◆ Jeanette Mendoza - Direction for her life. (attender)
- ◆ 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 - In Remission, Pray for continued healing. (Brother-in-law Pam Reents)
- ◆ Ernie Olson - Ongoing therapy after his stroke. (member)
- ◆ Ralph Fitle - Mourning the loss of wife, Norene Fitle. (Norene was a member)
- ◆ Mae Lane - Mourning loss of son, John (Mae is a member)
- ◆ Alice Friedlander - Healing for a back injury. (member)
- ◆ Darlene Spahr - Back surgery and healing. (member, Brenda Spahr's mother-in-law.)
- ◆ David Hufford - Recovery from surgery for blood clot in his shoulder. (member)



Sudanese Church Requests

- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese leaders in the city as they work to grow the city's African churches.
For the leaders as they pursue more Christian education.
For creativity and energy to do the things God is asking of them.
For boldness as they educate the Sudanese families in the ways of God.
- ◆ Ivo Munto - still trying to get home to Africa to see his mother who is aging and ill. (Ivo is the lay Pastor for the Sudanese Church worshipping at Grace)
- ◆ Pray for the Sudanese Women as they try to form an Christian Women's Association.

Thanks to God

- ◆ Paul and Virginia McGill and their new son, Nick. After much red tape, Nick is in the US and living with his new family. (Associate staff)
- ◆ For the youth group of Trinity Hope Foursquare Gospel Church for collecting clothing for our Sudanese Room. Thanks to Youth Director, Lisa Green and her youth.
- ◆ For the people of Bethel Lutheran Church from Holdrege, Nebraska for providing clothing and fresh produce for our Sudanese.

◆
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.

Pray for the members of the Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in New Orleans as they recover from the effects of Hurricane Katrina. See the separate article in this newsletter regarding Grace/Omaha's involvement.

If you're going through hell, keep going. ~Winston Churchill

Confirmation Class



Calling All Youth Entering the Seventh Grade!

Do you want

- to have a deeper, stronger faith?
- to know more about the Bible and what it teaches?
- to understand why we worship the way we do and what it means?
- to be connected to God and to your church in a closer meaningful way?

Join our Confirmation Class!

Parents and youth are invited to come to an orientation class on September 10 from 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. New and exciting activities are planned for this year's confirmation experience. Contact Pastor Laaker or the church office for more information..

Grace Lutheran Youth Lock in September 8, 2006



Friday, September 8, 2006, Grace Lutheran will have a Lock-In for youth in 7th - 12th grades. Anyone who would like to join in the fun is welcome. Youth from First Lutheran, Cristo Rey and St Luke's are invited to participate with Grace Lutheran. The doors of the church will lock at 7:00 p.m. on Friday September 8th and be unlocked at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 9th.

Volunteer Leaders are needed! If you want to help out with this adventure, contact our director of youth and fun, Brenda Spahr.

First Lutheran Church invites the Grace Lutheran to Another Lock In!!

Grace Lutheran has been invited to First Lutheran's Lock-in on October 6th and 7th. Check the bulletin and the bulletin board for more details.

Confirmation Retreat at Camp Carol Joy Holling September 29 and 30th



The youth in the confirmation classes from Grace Lutheran, First Lutheran and Cristo Rey are invited to an overnight retreat on September 29 and 30. Youth will participate together on working on confirmation assignments, have instruction in catechism and enjoy fun activities at the camp.

Youth Retreat

Anyone entering 7th grade (and older) is welcome to participate. Contact Pastor Laaker through the church office for information or to register.

Join us for Sunday School!
9:00 a.m. every Sunday

Bible Stories, Singing, Crafts and Fun

Come learn about God!

Rally Day is September 10th.

**Awards will be given on
during worship service.**

Superintendent of Sunday School
Grace Traynor



To all the folks who
helped with VBS

Special Thanks to

Norma Olson
Julia Traynor
Janet Hula
Susan Pedersen
(friend of Janet Hula)
Lori Vasquez
Nick Fredrickson
Allisia Fredrickson
Andrew Edwards
David Hufford
Gertrude Hufford (cookies)
LaVonne Moss

Shaban Lado
Pamela (Lori's daughter)
Greg Hula (pizza)
Marsha Moyer
Margi Sutej
And all the people that prayed
for VBS to be a success!
VIVA!!

Thanks!
Grace Traynor, VBS Director

Free

Afterschool Program
Monday - Thursday
4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Starts Monday, September 18th
Fun
Crafts
Snack

Safe place to hang out
Ages Kindergarten through 6th grade welcome!

Brenda Spahr, Director of Youth and Fun



**JOIN US
AFTER
SCHOOL**



"Helping Hands"

Working Together in God's service

Pantry Needs

Project Hope
4205 Boyd St
Omaha, NE 68111

Project Hope
The Theme for September is
Toilet Paper, Paper Towels and Diapers

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

We Need Empty Ice Cream Buckets!

Project Hope puts baby items in them when they fill pantry orders.

"Make us worthy, Lord, to serve those throughout the world who live and die in poverty and hunger. Give them, through our hands, this day their daily bread; and by our understanding love, give peace and joy. Amen."

Mother Teresa of Calcutta

24th Annual Crop Walk 2006



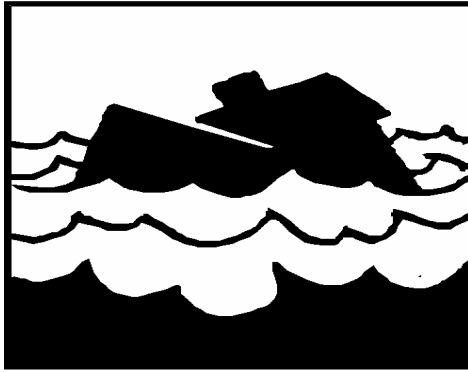
October 8, 2006
1:30 p.m.

Starting from First Christian Church
6630 Dodge Street
Omaha, NE

As a walker - The CROP walk is for the entire family from baby to grandparents. There are routes of 1, 2, and 5 miles. You choose how far to walk. Parents can push strollers or pull wagons. There are rest and water stops along the way and transportation back to the start if you need it.

As a Sponsor - Even if you cannot walk you can participate by sponsoring someone who can. Offer to sponsor a walker with a pledge per mile of a donation and make a real difference in meeting hunger needs at home and abroad. Crop Walk Sponsor Sheets will be available in the church office and at the back table in the sanctuary the week of September 8th.

Eva Martin is Grace Lutheran Church's Crop Walk Coordinator. If you would like to help or walk, please contact her.



Grace From Grace

The Grace Lutheran Church Katrina Relief Project

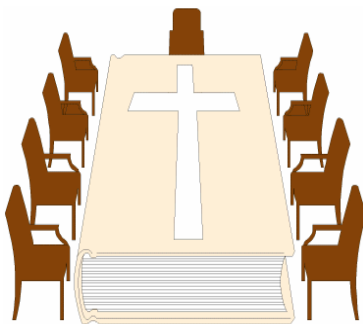
Saving Grace Lutheran Church of New Orleans, Louisiana

Grace Lutheran Church (Omaha) has been invited by Grace Lutheran Church (Conroe, Texas) to join other Grace Lutheran Churches all over America to help repair Grace Lutheran Church of New Orleans, which was hit by Hurricane Katrina.

In response, our Church Council prayerfully requested our Disney Endowment to help us with a donation of \$1000.00. Our Endowment Board has approved this amount, and has prayerfully asked that the Congregation be given the opportunity to give additional help in a special offering.

Therefore, we, the Church Council of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church (of Omaha) will provide a luncheon after the outdoor service on Sunday, September 10, 2006, where you will be able to give a free will offering—of any size. Additionally, a fund has been set up so that gifts can be given any-time through the church by marking your donation “Grace From Grace.”

Want to help us with the luncheon? We will need people to help prepare and/or serve the meal. If you are willing to help, contact David Hufford at 614-0735.



Bible Study/Lutheran Catechism Refresher Course

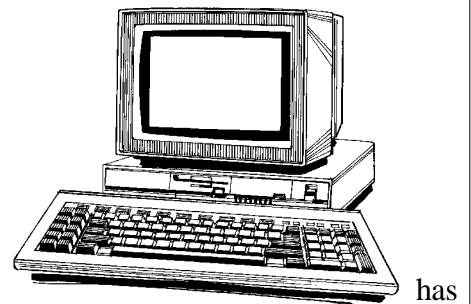
Do you want to study the Bible more in depth?
Has it been awhile since confirmation class?

David Hufford is looking for folks interested in starting a Bible study this fall. If you are interested in participating, contact David or sign up on the bulletin board outside the church office.

Keeping your Kids Safe on the Internet

Even with the best supervision, children are logging on to community websites to chat, write a personal diary (called a blog) and meet people on line. To check if your child may have shared too much personal information:

- Go to Google.com and type in your child's first name, last name and state of residence. If your child has a web site or been mentioned in a friend's website, it will appear.
- If you find such sites, visit them. Ask your children for passwords.
- Realize that although the Internet is worldwide, it is also local since all a sexual predator has to do is type in his own zip code on MySpace and all his potential victims within a designated radius pop up.





Annual Fall Festival Of Colors
October 21-22, 2006
First Lutheran Church
31st and Jackson

Saturday, October 21
9:00 a.m. - 700 p.m.

Crafts, Bake Sale and Silent Auction

4:00 p.m. - 7:00p.m. Pork/Sauerkraut Dinner (adults \$8.00, Children 5- 12 \$4.00)

Reservations by October 15th

Sunday, October 22

9:30 a.m. Worship

10:30 a.m. Crafts, Bake Sale and Silent Auction

11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Chuck Wagon Lunch, Donkey Rides, Horseback Rides, Face Painting
Proceeds will support the Lutheran Service Corp, Inter-City After School Program, Seminary Training in Russia, Medical Needs in Tanzania and the ELCA Disaster Fund.

Thrivent Financial for Lutheran will match.

More Information, Tickets or Questions?

Call 345-7506



Hanscom Park United Methodist Church

(1 Block south of Center on 45th and Frances)

Saturday

September 23, 2006

9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Used Book Sale (by the pound)

Lunch

Garage Sale

Bake Sale

Gift Basket Raffle



Westminster Presbyterian Church

34th and Woolworth

September 22, 2006

Screening for Stroke /Carotid Artery, Abdominal Aortic Aneurism, Peripheral Arterial Disease, and Osteoporosis. Test costs - \$35.00-\$45.00 each

Sign up for all four screenings and pay \$129! Savings of \$41.00

Check to bulletin board for more details.

Pre-registration is required. Call 1-800-9693



Habitat House
at
3020 W Street

*Dedication Planned
September 16, 2006*



The House that the Neighbors South Coalition Built

(With God's help and people like YOU!)

The home on W Street is almost completed. Most of what needs to be finished are a few items on the punch list. Many thanks to the men and women who gave of their time and money to help make this home available to the family.

More funds are needed to help pay for the building costs. If you wish to contribute, please use an envelope and designate your gift for Habitat. You may drop your gift in the offering plate, in the wooden house in the front entry or leave it at the church office.

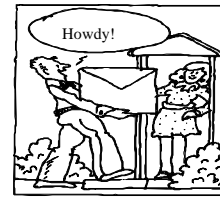
A dedication of the home is planned for September 16th. Look for more details in the church bulletin in the coming weeks.

THANK YOU!
THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!
THANK YOU!

Thanks to the folks who helped serve lunch for the Habitat volunteers on Saturday August 12th.

- To Marsha Moyer for her coordination with Alice to get the food to the site.
- To Margie Sutej for providing the grill.
- To Marsha and Loren for grilling hamburgers at the work site. The volunteers said they were delicious!
- To Janet Hula, Gertrude Hufford, Arlone Farber, Louise Alsager and Barb Nelson for providing baked goodies to top off the meal.
- To Alice Friedlander for her willingness to organize the meal. Alice sends her thanks to all the volunteers for making this meal happen.

Community News



Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

September 21
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 345-1700 for more information.

See You at the Pole™ 2006: Be Still and Know

Morning of September 27, 2006

In a world full of chaos and endless activity, God is calling for us to slow down and listen to Him. Intent on making their lives count, millions of teenagers will pause to do that at **See You at the Pole™** (SYATP) this September.

“Be STILL and KNOW that I am GOD” is the theme for See You at the Pole this year, with the event scheduled for Wednesday, September 27.

See You at the Pole is a student-initiated and student-led movement that started in the Ft. Worth suburb of Burleson, Texas, in 1990. It originated with just one youth group, who met at night at several schools around Burleson during a weekend retreat. SYATP brings students to their school flagpoles to intercede for their leaders, schools, and families, asking God to bring moral and spiritual awakening to their campuses and countries. Last year, over 5 million youth participated in the quiet time of prayer at the flagpole. Participants don't have to pay anything to participate in See You at the Pole.

Check with your local elementary, high school or college to see if this event is scheduled. Most of the high schools and some the elementary schools in Omaha have scheduled this event in years past.

News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church



Regina Ivo, wife of lay pastor and staff member, Ivo Mounto, has passed her state boards to become a registered nurse. This is the completion of a long six year journey. Regina is one of the first Sudanese immigrant women to become a nurse here in the Metro. Her nursing abilities, her compassionate heart and her ability to speak both Arabic and English will make her an asset to the Alegent Health Care System.

Regina says that God has been faithful in helping her achieve this goal. She thanks God and all the people who have been praying for her during these many years of education.

Church Directory Changes:

Steve McDermott
5414 S 16 Street
Omaha, NE 68107-3043

Georgia Alsager and her son, Ryan
927 2nd Ave.
Council Bluffs, IA 51501

Rick and Jennifer Sampson & family
11235 Sahler St
Omaha, NE 68164-2320

Additions to the directory

Linda Pafford
3644 Vinton
Omaha, NE 68105-3940

Rev and Mrs. Glen Schacht
Spouse: Ronnie
9818 N 34 Street 68112-1367

The address listed in the Directory for David Wallace is no longer valid. For now, send your correspondence to his mother, Margie Sutej's address.

Update on Sandra Templeton

Sandra Templeton, who served here at Grace Lutheran Church as our Associate in Ministry, has begun her new job at Lutheran Church of the Master in Lakewood, CO. She has been an Associate in Ministry for 10 years, beginning her ministry here at Grace Church and moving Illinois to serve in the Chicago area for several years.

Parish member, David Hufford recently visited his son who attends Lutheran Church of the Master in Colorado. David brought back a copy of "The Master's Voice," Lutheran Church of the Master's newsletter, which features a picture and an article about Sandra.

We have posted the newsletter and her new address on the church bulletin board.

Sandra would love to hear from you! Also, remember her in your prayers as she begins a new chapter in her service to God to the people of Lutheran Church of the Master.

Excerpts from a thank letter received from Project Hope

Dear Members of Grace Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your donation of shampoo and school supplies for Project Hope. It's so nice to get donations in the middle of the summer. We tend to see a lot of families during the summer. We have been averaging about 480 families each month. By the end of the month, there were days that we helped 60-75 families a day! We received many back to school items to give out. The looks on the children's faces warm our hearts.

Please use our post office box address when mailing to us. The post office will start returning letters that are not addressed to our mail box. Please address mail to Project Hope PO BOX 111312.

Thanks for your help with our mission in North Omaha. Thank you for caring about the needs of others. God continues to bless us through people like you.

Mary Ann Johnson, Executive Director, Project Hope

Amanda Joy Laaker &
Juan Antonio Vazquez,
together with their parents



invite the people of Grace Lutheran Church to share in the joy of their wedding as they celebrate the beginning of their new life together

**Saturday, September 30, 2006 at 4:00 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26 Street, Omaha, NE**

A reception will follow at 6:30 p.m. at the Bel Air Banquet Room located at 12100 W. Center Road, Suite 520. If you plan to attend the reception, please RSVP to Pastor or Mary Laaker.

Thanks from the family of John S. Lane III

Our mom, Mae Lane, requested this thank you be included in the Grace Messenger. This letter includes comments from the family members to the people of Grace Lutheran Church.

“We want to know how very much we appreciated everything done at the time of our brother’s death. Our thoughts:

- Pastor Laaker brought great comfort to us in our time of loss and need. We praise God for Pastor’s patience and empathy in helping us remember those precious memories of our brother.
- Pastor asked each one of us to share a favorite story about our brother, John. For me, it was a moment close to Christ; it was the first time I laughed that day.
- Pastor was open to us for our input as to what scriptures, hymn and songs to use in the Burial Service. Several people participated as reader, song leader and soloists. God’s Word came through very powerfully as commented by a number of attendees afterward. Pastor was able to weave it all together. We felt comfortable with him.
- Pam, Pastor Laaker’s secretary was very able and gracious as information and material was left to include in the Burial Service.
- Grace Lutheran’s Women’s group sent an early card of written expression of love. They did a fantastic job. The meal was delicious; it was graciously served; it was well-coordinated. Their smiles, hugs and well wishes all helped us throughout that day. We felt your love. Thank you.
- Grace Lutheran Church provided wonderful place for us to gather as a family and friends afterwards.
- Mom (Mae Lane) said she praised God for the way it went and she thanked everyone for their prayers for her strength through the time.”

Thank you again and God’s Blessings,
The family of John Lane III

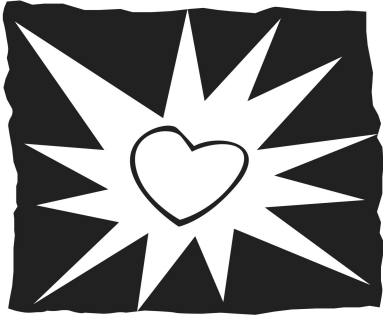
Pastor Laaker Quoted for Article

Pastor Laaker was recently featured in a Fremont Tribune article about the 10,000 Sudanese immigrants living in Nebraska. To read a copy of the article, stop by the bulletin board outside the church office or log on to

www.fremonttribune.com/articles/2006/08/05/news/news7 prt

Title of the Article

“10,000 Sudanese call Nebraska home”



**FAITH
IN ACTION**

A neighbor's independence
depends on you"

Do your loved ones know
what you want
if you can't speak for yourself?

Learn more about Living Wills
&
Advance Directives

You are invited to a free light luncheon and a presentation given by Anne Marie Aita from the Visiting Nurse Association about living wills, advance directives and answers to your questions on how to make sure your wishes are carried out.

You will also learn first hand how the Faith in Action program can help people remain independent in their homes and more about volunteer opportunities.

Join us!

- Monday, September 18th
 - 12:15 p.m.
- Grace Lutheran Church
1326 South 26th Street
(26th St between Woolworth and Poppleton Avenues)
- Light lunch will be served. (Free)

Please RSVP to Julie Chytil at the Faith in Action office 660-2652
Or call your church office

faithinaction2005@hotmail.com

“Love thy neighbor as thyself”

From the Editor

The Father and The Daughter

The Father:

I sing to you, my beloved daughter.
I have called you by name.
You are mine.
I delight in you.
I created everything about you
and I see that it is good.
Rest in me.
Your imperfections were covered when
my Son died on the cross.
I see you as perfect.
Precious daughter, lean back.
Relax in me.
You are an important part of my plan.
No one else can do exactly what you do for me.
Unusual and beautiful daughter.
Most worthy of my love.

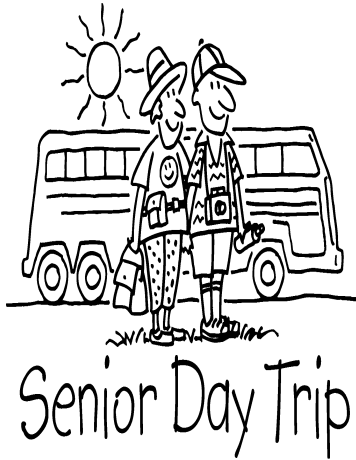
The Daughter:

Father, I await
your calm.
The peace that passes understanding.
your passion.
The ability to really love others as you do.
your forgiveness. How I must bring you sadness when I sell myself short...
when I don't see myself as you see me and don't live as the princess of the
King of Kings.
your leading. Make it clear...the who, the what, the when, the where.
I will leave the why in your hands.
your Holy Spirit. Rain down and cover me with the shimmer of holy perfect light.
your fertilizing and pruning. Make me grow in the exact direction you want me
to grow in. Make me a beautiful flower in your garden.
Whether big and showy or small and dainty, water and care for me.
Make my fragrance so intoxicating that it draws people in to marvel
at the gardener who has created such a masterpiece. Be glorified in me!

Take over all that I am.
All I have to give is myself and the things you created in me.
Use them as you see fit.



*By Pam Reents, August 15, 2006,
while sitting among the flowers at the botanical gardens, talking with God.*



Fall Senior Mystery Bus Trip

Tuesday, September 19

Leaving at 7:00 a.m. from St. John's Lutheran Church in Bennington, NE

Returning to St. John's between 5:00 and 5:30 p.m.

*Trip includes continental breakfast,
lunch and admission to mystery destinations.*

Cost - \$30.00 per person.

Make checks to Dave Clark

Mail to 410 North Molly Street. Bennington, NE 68007

Reservations and payment due by September 8th.

Sponsored by St. John's Lutheran Thrivent Congregation

Lutheran Marriage Encounter Weekends

Called To Be Family

Lincoln, NE

Sioux City, IA

Grand Island, NE

Sioux, SD

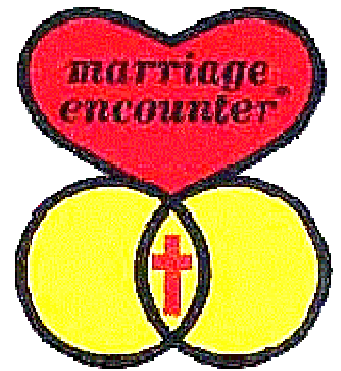
October 27-29, 2006

November 3-5, 3006

February 23-25, 2007

March 3-5, 2007

For reservation information, check the bulletin board at the church or contact the church office at (402) 341-7730.



5 Ways to Cope With Worry

1. **Take Care of Your Physical Self.** You are special and worthy of care. Eat well, get plenty of sleep and be active. Take your children to the park. Take a nightly walk with your children or spouse. Even 15 daily minutes of brisk activity helps release stress-fighting chemicals and ease tension.
2. **Take Care of Your Spiritual Self.** Pray. Make quiet time each day. Give thanks for the blessings you do have. Choose joy.
3. **Take Care of Your Social Self.** Even when you're at your lowest, God does not intend for us to be alone or entirely self-focused. Accept the support God sends you through other people. Why not volunteer for a service project?
4. **Seek Solace in the Word.** Read stories of God helping people triumph over their troubles by turning to Isaiah 40:31; Matthew 8:23-27; Matthew 11:28-30; Romans 8:28; I Thessalonians 5:16-24; and Philippians 4:13.
5. **Seek Professional Counseling.** If you begin to feel demoralized, utterly overwhelmed, feel you can't go on or have thoughts of hurting yourself or others, seek help immediately. Waiting and worrying do nothing to promote health or positive change.

From www.thrivent.com

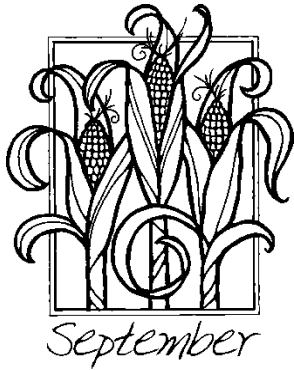


Two lions broke loose in the zoo and were eating a clown.

One lion said to the other ...

"Does this taste funny to you?"

- Unknown



Self Improvement Month
 Be Kind To Editors Month
 International Square Dance Month
 Cable TV Month
 National Bed Check Month
 National Chicken Month
 National Courtesy Month

National Honey Month,
 National Mind Mapping
 Month, National Piano Month
 National Rice Month,
 National Papaya Month
 Classical Music Month

It Is Good To Be Average!

- The average person drinks about 16, 000 gallons of water in a lifetime.
- The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.
- The average person is about a quarter of an inch taller at night.
- The average person laughs about 15 times a day.
- The average person loses an average of 40 to 100 strands of hair a day.
- The average person produces 25,000 quarts of spit in a lifetime, enough to fill two swimming pools.
- The average person releases nearly a pint of intestinal gas by flatulence every day. Most is due to swallowed air. The rest is from fermentation of undigested food.
- The average person's scalp has 100,000 hairs.
- The average person uses the bathroom 6 times per day.
- The average person walks the equivalent of twice around the world in a lifetime.
- The average person's hair will grow approximately 590 inches in a lifetime.

<http://www.corsinet.com/trivia/average.html>

Sometimes I lie awake at night,
 and I ask,
 'Where have I gone wrong?'
 Then a voice says to me,
 'This is going to take
 more than one night.' "

Charlie Brown.

The kindergarten teacher asked the students in her class to bring something related to their families' religions to class the next day.

She asked for volunteers to show what they had brought to the rest of the class.

One boy came forward and said,

"I am Muslim, and this is my prayer rug."

Another child came forward and said,

"I am Jewish, and this is my Star of David."

Another came forward and said,

"I am Catholic, and this is my Rosary."

The last little boy came forward and said,

"I am a Lutheran and this is my Covered Dish."

Via email from Lynn Venghaus



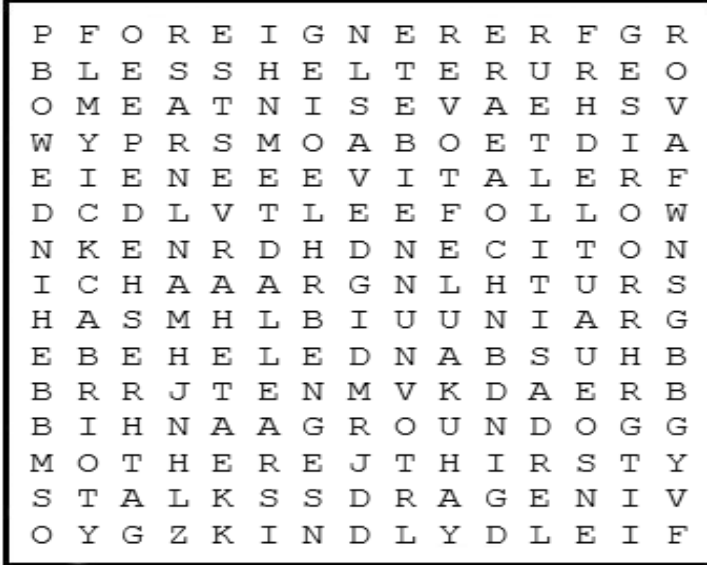
Bible Wordsearch

Ruth & Boaz

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

Puzzle # 131

RUTH CHAPTER 2



- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| BACK | GROUND |
| BARLEY | HARVESTS |
| BEHIND | HOMELAND |
| BLESS | HUSBAND |
| BOAZ | ISRAEL |
| BOWED | JARS |
| BREAD | KINDLY |
| BUNDLES | LEFTOVER |
| DAUGHTER | MAN |
| DEATH | MOAB |
| DIP | MOTHER |
| DRINK | NOTICE |
| ELIMELECH | RELATIVE |
| FATHER | RUTH |
| FAVOR | SERVANT |
| FIELD | SHE |
| FOLLOW | SHEAVES |
| FOREIGNER | SHELTER |
| GLEAN | STALKS |
| GOD | THIRSTY |
| GRAIN | THRESHED |
| GREETED | VINEGAR |

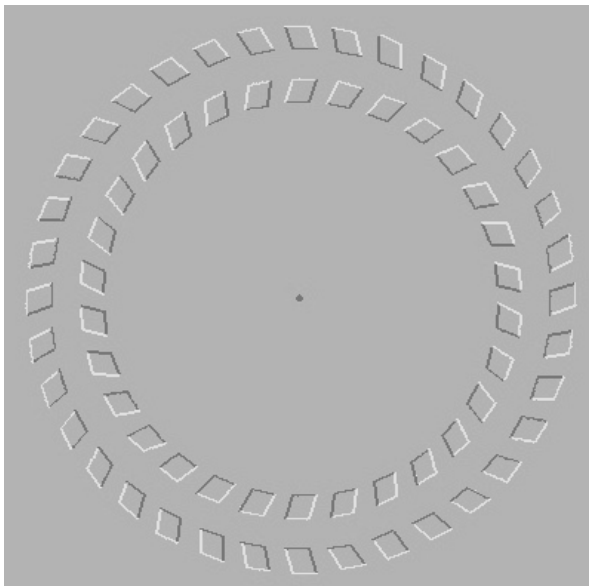
After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right

 ----- PROVERBS 27

MORE PUZZLES AT: <http://biblewordgames.com> COPYRIGHT 2006 PEACEFULL PUBLICATIONS

Optical Illusion

To see the illusion, you need to stare intently at the small black dot in the centre of the image and move your head slowly toward then away from the paper...



Is it a moving image or are your eyes playing tricks on you?

<http://www.comedy-zone.net/pictures/illusions/illus01.htm>

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT GCI, INC.



Thanks to Richard Germain (See Jonah 1-4)

08-14-2006

OH JONAH, YOU'RE FINALLY HOME AGAIN ...
AND JUST IN TIME FOR A FISH DINNER