

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

Return Service Requested
Dated Material

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

REGULAR SUNDAY EVENTS

9:00 A.M. Christian Education

10:30 A.M. Worship Service

Pastor - Rev. Dr. Damon D. Laaker
Editor/Church Secretary – Pam Reents
Youth Ministries - Brenda Spahr
Organist - Cody Talarico
Sexton - Ambros Lado/Brian Sutej
Interfaith Health Ministries - Virginia McGill
Faith in Action - Julie Chytil

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

November 2007



THE GRACE MESSENGER

2007 Council Members



Ron Adrian
June Hilmer
Ernest Olson

Andrew Edwards
David Hufford
Brenda Spahr
Pastor Laaker

Sarah Emery
Greg Hula

Officers Serving the Congregation but not on Council:

Financial Secretary: Janet Hula

Treasurer: Margie Sutej

The regular meeting of the Council was held October 16th. The Council members shared their prayer concerns: Care for those in need of healing – Kathryn Reichert, Bernard Jacobs, Jean Matson, Rudy Horowitz, the family of Tony Flatt, care for those within the Grace family that they continue to heal, we pray for safety of Ivo, direction in becoming a multi-racial congregation, where is God moving us in this issue, all of the unrest and conflict in the world and for safety of all of our military personnel, we pray for all the areas that are dealing with the recent flooding and the persistent drought, in praise we pray for the birth of Jonah Laaker, for Ted Olson in his recent promotion, and for David Hufford for a clean bill of health from both doctor visits. Pastor led devotions from Psalm 39:5 and Romans 8:20; which led to discussions how small each of us is in the grand scheme of things.

Visions for Ministry: Council continued sharing in discussion of “One Body One Spirit” by George Yancey, chapters 9 & 10, Intentionality and Personal Skills.

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

Christian Education Sunday School children have started practicing for the Christmas program which is scheduled for Sunday, December 23rd.

Evangelism/Outreach Pastor passed around an e-mail from KETV regarding the opportunity to enroll in a Faith Finding Directory. No action was taken.

Finance NE Synod Capital Campaign information will be arriving soon.

Property No New Report.

Service/Social Ministry The Council was asked to put on our creative thinking caps to find a solution in aiding the Lado family with a newer family vehicle.

Support/Stewardship Faithful, Hopeful, Loving, and Thankful will be this year’s theme for the Fall Stewardship. There will be a luncheon on Sunday, November 25, 2007. \

Worship Joint Thanksgiving Eve Service will be on November 21st at Wheeler’s Presbyterian Church, 7 pm. On the Second Sunday in Advent, the choir will be performing a Christmas Concert, “Prophets and Angels”.

Unfinished Business: Catalogs will be passed around for all to look at different options for communion ware and a processional cross.

New Business: Pastor is looking for help to visit our folks currently residing in Nursing Homes.

Announcements: Pastor and Mary are taking a trip out to California to visit their grandson, Jonah. Pastor Neal Von Seggren will be here on Sunday, October 21st. The Halloween Party will be Friday, October 26th at 7:00 p.m.



Vitality

Two years ago, the council and I read and studied the Alban publication of *The Practicing Congregation* by Diana Butler Bass. In it she wrote, “Congregations that intentionally engage Christian practices are congregations that experience new vitality.”

The sentence combines three components: intentionality, practice, and vitality. Further defining them, she points out that intentionality involves choice and taking responsibility for individual and communal spirituality; that practice is not a program, rather it is a meaningful way of life; and that vitality cannot be measured in terms of numbers as it means spiritual health and maturity. A vital congregation is one where all people—including the pastor—are growing members of an organic community of spiritual practice.

As we enter this time of stewardship reflection around our theme “Faithful, Hopeful, Loving, and Thankful” invites us to consider our growth in intentionality, practice and vitality.

Are we:

Intentional about our plan for giving, in all of its forms?

Practicing the faith, reading our Bible?

Spending time in devotional reading?

Praying daily?

Allowing the Spirit of Christ to touch us in ways that lead to vitality, enthusiasm, and joy?

Sometimes we look at our small church and lament that we are not a congregation of size like Trinity Interdenominational or Rejoice Lutheran. We lament that “if only” we had the large numbers of people and the programs of those churches all would be well. Take a look at what the Pastor of Willow Creek, one of the largest churches in the United States says.

“We made a mistake,” says Hybels. “What we should have done when people crossed the line of faith and became Christians, we should have started telling people and teaching people that they have to take responsibility to become ‘self-feeders.’ We should have gotten people, taught people, how to read their Bible between service, how to do the spiritual practices much more aggressively on their own.”

Notice what Hybels says is missing: intentionality, practice, and vitality. Or, as the Leadership blog put it, “Spiritual growth doesn’t happen best by becoming dependent on elaborate church programs but through the age-old spiritual practices of prayer, Bible reading, and relationships. These basic disciplines do not require multi-million dollar facilities and hundreds of staff to manage.”

May we seek to develop those disciplines that lead to vitality. I pray that you will read your Bible, develop a good devotional life and pray daily. Pray for yourself, pray for our church that we might be the vital, vibrant place God wants us to be, and pray for me.

Pastor Laaker



W/ELCA Board Meeting

Monday November 5th.

1:00 p.m.

Hostess -

Barb Narducci

Circle Meeting

Tuesday, November 20th

November Bible Study -

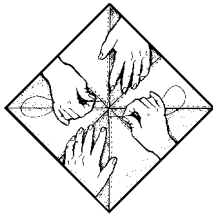
1:00 p.m.

Hostess -

LaVonne Moss



*Women of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*



Join us on Monday Mornings for Quilting!

9:00 a.m.

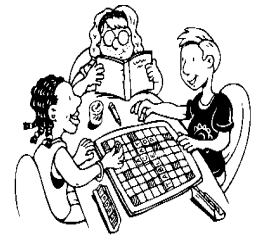
Quilts and lap robes are given to Lutheran World Relief, Hurricane Disaster Relief, the Open Door Mission and local nursing homes.

Drop by and help cut squares and tie quilt tops on to the backs.

Coffee break is at 10:00 a.m. No special skills are needed except the ability to laugh and have fun!

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

Games, Crafts, and Fun
Geared for Elementary Kids!



Free!

If OPS is not in session, the After-School program does not meet!

Director, Brenda Spahr

**After-School
Program**



Thanksgiving Blessing

God of goodness, bless our food!

Keep us in a pleasant mood!

Bless the cook and those who serve us.

With good digestion, Lord, preserve us."

Rev. James M.T. Connolly quoted from the Joyful Noise NL Dec 2007

Prayer Concerns from Family and Friends



- ♦ Frances Campsey - **Update!** Frances is slowly recovering from the injuries sustained in an automobile accident. She is still struggling with severe pain in her wrist. She doing Physical Therapy to regain movement in her hand and arm. The immediate goal is to be able to make a closed fist. Right now, it is a painful undertaking. Pray for strength and progress for this goal. (member)
- ♦ Ambros Lado - Ambros continues to work at the church for an hour or two a week , doing some light cleaning. Pray for more recovery from the severe stroke he suffered a year ago. (member)
- ♦ Kathryn Reichert - **Update and Praise item!** Kathryn has received the report that the tumors in her brain have dissolved and the tumor in her leg is reducing and seems to be dead. She still has to undergo radiation for cancer cells found in her blood. The concern is that the cancer cells will “plant” themselves and cause cancer in another place. (Granddaughter of Don and Norma Olson)
- ♦ Andrew Edwards - Doing dialysis a couple times a week until a kidney can be found. (member)
- ♦ Rex Olson - for healing as he deals with cancer. (relative of members, Don and Norma Olson)
- ♦ Rose Hamilton - Healing for her cancer. (Aunt of members, Andrew and Christi Edwards)
- ♦ Family of Linda Whitney - **Update:** Linda went home to be with the Lord.
(Friend of LaVonne Moss)
- ♦ Ernie Olson - On-going therapy after his stroke. Pray for help as he is trying to find another job that will enable him to continue gaining strength. (member)
- ♦ Betty Coniglio - Continued recovery from heart issues. (member)
- ♦ Seth Goodman -Recovery from addiction issues. (Nephew of Pam Reents.)
- ♦ John Springborg - For treatment of serious viral infection. (Nephew of Don and Pam Reents)
- ♦ Teri Briley - Recently diagnosed with cancer. (daughter of Gloria and Richard Moore)

Pray for our Shut - ins and Nursing Home residents:

Alice Friedlander - Alice fell in mid-August and is recovering at the Good Samaritan Home.

Harlan Morter

Evelyn Reimer

Lola Harsin

Mae Lane

Thelma Harrahill - (In Kansas with her children)

Richard Moore

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

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

Pastor Laaker

Bishop David deFreese, Nebraska Synod

Bishop Mark Hanson, ELCA Bishop, United States

- ♦ Pray for the Sudanese community in general. Pray that the elders in the church community will have wisdom in their counsel. Titus Duli, David Nange and Silas Tuw are the elders for the Sudanese Worshiping Community.
- ♦ Pray for the Botha family. On October 26, their child was born prematurely and was stillborn.

We Need Updates! Please Contact the church office.

Let's encourage each other as we see God's hand in answering our prayers.

Thanksgiving Eve
Wednesday, November 21, 2007
Wheeler Presbyterian Church
23rd & J Streets
7:00 p.m.

Wheeler Presbyterian Church is hosting a Community Thanksgiving Eve Service on November 21. Many churches have been invited to join in a service of Thanksgiving and Fellowship. The friends and family of Grace Lutheran Church are encouraged to attend this service.

Mark your calendar and join in this wonderful opportunity to praise God for His bountiful blessings!

Community



Thanksgiving Service



There is still time to
Be a Part of the Choir for Christmas!

Rehearsals are right after morning Worship!

Rehearsal Dates:
November 4, 11, 18, 25

David Hufford, Choir Director

Last Chance this year!
Benefit for Uta Halle Girls Village

Nuts and Candy
Just in time for Holiday Baking...or snacking! ☺

Place Your order by November 16, 2007
Delivery in Late November.

Payment for your order will be due upon delivery.

A sign up sheet has been placed on the bulletin board.
Contact LaVonne Moss at 556-4131 for more information.



The pastor talked on and on, saying,
"I'm not speaking to this group, I'm talking for future generations."
A voice from the back of the room shouted,
"And if you don't stop talking soon, they'll be here."

Jim Reed JFNL Nov 2007

Kids, Do You Like To Draw or Take Photographs?

Call for entries to benefit the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha

ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2007

RULES:

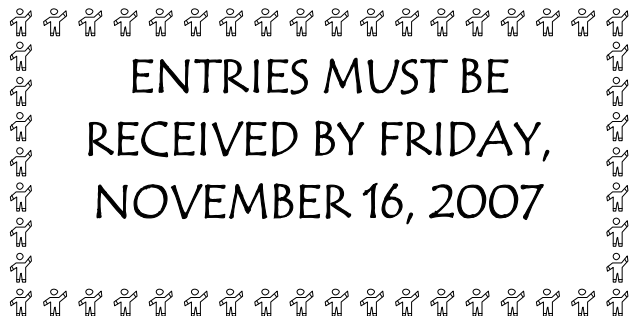
1. All entrants must be between the ages of 8-18.
2. Each entrant may submit no more than ONE entry to:
Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha
115 S 49th Avenue, Omaha, NE 68132
3. First, second and third place winners will be chosen in the following divisions:
Ages 8-10
Ages 11-14
Ages 15-18
4. Winners in each division will receive awards for:
1st Place - \$100
2nd Place - \$75
3rd Place - \$50
Honorable Mention - \$25
5. All winners and runners-up will have their artwork auctioned off at the annual Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha Youth Art Event on Thursday, January 31, 2008. Proceeds from the event support the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha.
6. Any art media is acceptable, such as pencil, watercolor, pastels, crayons and photography.
7. **Artwork MUST reflect either a neighborhood in Omaha, a favorite landmark in the community or a community leader.**
8. Standard 8.5" x 11: paper must be used and images may be vertical or horizontal (portrait or landscape). If submitting a photograph, it should be a 5x7 or 8x10.
9. The entrant's name, address, age, telephone number and title of the artwork MUST appear on the back of the artwork.
10. Entries will not be returned, and become the property of the Neighborhood Center for Greater Omaha, which ensures the right to publication for fundraising purposes. Please make a copy for your own keeping before sending in your artwork.
11. Contest winners will be notified by phone on, or by December 30, 2007.
12. Winner will need to attend the event with their families on January 31, 2008 and will be introduced as their artwork is auctioned off.



For questions or further information, please call 402-561-7581

Raeanna Kuzma
CVA Youth Services Coordinator
United Way of the Midlands
1805 Harney Street
Omaha, NE 68102
402.522.7933 Phone
402.522.7991 Fax

ENTRIES MUST BE
RECEIVED BY FRIDAY,
NOVEMBER 16, 2007



2008 God's Creation Calendar
Fundraiser for the Grace Lutheran Church Library

Only \$5.00!

The calendar shipment has arrived.

**If you pre-ordered a calendar or wish to purchase one, contact
Marsha Moyer
Brenda Spahr or
Barb Nelson**

*These are great gifts for Christmas!
High Quality, Comparable to Calendars at the mall selling for \$12.00!*

*Hurry!
When they're gone...
They're GONE!*



A Christmas tree will stand in the upper fellowship hall in December. The tree is called the Mitten Tree. As the season of Christmas progresses, the tree becomes gaily decorated with warm winter accessories.

Each year, people from Grace Lutheran Church bring donations of mittens, gloves, scarves, and other warm items and place them on the tree. These gifts of warmth are donated to area shelters.

During the special sales in the month of November and December, consider adding a pair of mittens or a scarf or two to your shopping basket.

Calling all Kids!
We're doin' a Christmas Program Again This Year!

Starting November 4th during the Sunday School hour, practice for the Christmas Program will begin.. There are special parts for several young people so come and be a star!!!

Parents!

Bring your children faithfully each Sunday morning so that they youth will be prepared for the program scheduled for December 23rd during the worship service. If you are interested in helping with the production contact Grace Traynor.



A man and his wife were sitting in the living room when the man remarked, "Just for the record, I never want to live in a vegetative state dependent on some machine.
If that ever happens, just pull the plug."
His wife got up and unplugged the TV set.



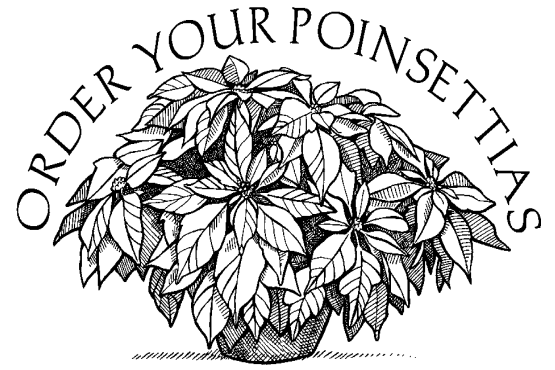
POINSETTIAS

Cost:
\$8.00 each

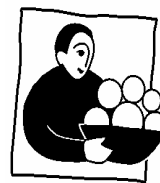
A Sign Up sheet
has been posted on the Bulletin Board

The Deadline for Ordering is December 3rd

Be sure to designate whether you would like to take your flowers home after the holiday or donate them to the church for shut-ins or staff.



**Give Glory to God
through decorating
God's House
for the
Christmas Celebration!**



“Faithful, Hopeful, Loving, Thankful”
Grace Lutheran Church Stewardship Campaign for 2008

Grace Lutheran Church will begin sending information about the 2008 stewardship campaign during November. You will have an opportunity to review your giving from 2007.

Begin now prayerfully asking God about what He would have you do in His service in the coming year. Perhaps circumstances have changed and you have time to be a part of a ministry new to you. You also will receive the Time and Talent form mentioned above where you can indicate what ministries you want to be involved in.

This is a time of planning and great excitement as Grace Lutheran Church explores what God will lead his bride, the church, to do in 2008.



“The Lord Jesus Christ is not as interested in your money or time or activity level as He is in your heart. He wants your wholehearted devotion that is not diminished by time or circumstances.”

Charles Stanley, Enter His Gates, Nelson, 1998



Working Together in God's service

The Theme for Project Hope for November is
Turkey Dinner Trimmings:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ♥ Canned Veggies like corn, carrots, beans, yams, peas. | ♥ Fresh potatoes or instant mashed potatoes |
| ♥ Gravy Mixes | ♥ Stuffing mix or pie crust mix |
| ♥ Marshmallows, brown sugar, spices | ♥ Paper Napkins |
| ♥ Canned Pumpkin | |
| ♥ Canned Cranberry sauce | Put gifts on the pantry shelves in the upper fellowship hall. |
| ♥ Pickles and olives | |

Nebraska Lutheran World Relief Ingathering

Please have your donations to the church by November 5, 2007

What to donate:

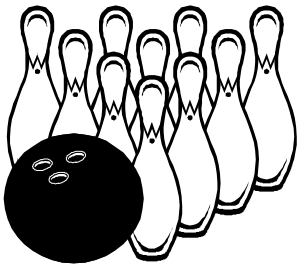
- ♦ Quilts and blankets.
- ♦ Light and medium weight clothing for men and children.
- ♦ Sweaters of all kinds for men, women and children.
- ♦ Pieces of woven or synthetic blend fabric large enough to make a dress.
- ♦ Soap in ORIGINAL wrapper.



We are asking that all donations be at the church by 9:00 a.m. Monday, November 5, 2007 so that the boxes can be packed, labeled and taken out to Brown Transfer. If you wish to volunteer to help get the items ready for shipment, contact Marilyn and Jerry Van Ormer through the church office at 341-7730.



Do You Like to Bowl?



Sarpy Unified Bowling League needs volunteer bowlers. The volunteers with the Sarpy Unified Bowling League bowl with a developmentally challenged partner. All of these partners are also over the age of 18 years. There are two disabled and two volunteers on each team.

For this bowling league, you **MUST** be **18 years of age or older**

- ** Bowling is at Leopard Lanes in Bellevue
- ** Each Sunday afternoon from 12:15 - 2:45
- ** There is an awards celebration in May free of charge to the bowlers
- ** Bowling is \$3.00 each week and if you need bowling shoes they are free
- ** Please contact Jerry Krieg (kriegjr@cox.net) 672-4671 or Don Gowing (dmgowing@cox.net) 292-5950 or Bob Mason 293-0076 for more information or to sign up.

Anyone that is interested and wants to see first hand what this is all about, you can visit the teams during their bowling on Sunday afternoons. You will also be invited to attend the Christmas Party FREE of charge following bowling. Please let them know if you are planning to attend the party so they can provide enough food and beverages.

Younkers Community Day **Saturday, November 10, 2007**

Buy a \$5.00 Booklet and get a \$10.00 Coupon!
Your \$5.00 will go to the Lutheran Pantry.

Each booklet contains a \$10 coupon good on almost any merchandise item priced at \$10 or more (customers spend \$5 for the booklet and get \$10 back on their first purchase!), plus eight 20% off coupons and offers for three great bonus items, available on Community Day only. All coupons are valid on top of our already low One Day Sale prices.

Contact the Church office or Pastor Laaker
for Coupon Booklets!



Day **November 10, 2007** **at Younkers**

It's a great day to shop!

Lutheran Service Corps **Spaghetti Supper Benefit**

Sunday, November 11, 2007
St. Timothy Lutheran Church
510 N 93rd St (93rd and Dodge)
5:00 p.m.- 7:00 p.m.

Adults \$6.00; Children 5 - 12: \$4.00; under 2: \$2.00
Max - \$18.00 per family.

For more information, call 457-5890
See You There!



All proceeds help support the social ministry of Lutheran Service Corps!



Together Inc.'s Annual Gift Drive

Together Inc of Metropolitan Omaha is inviting the public to donate new, unwrapped toys and gifts to be given directly to pre-registered families, who would otherwise have no resources for gifts this holiday season.

Here's how:

1. Purchase toy or gift that you would have liked to receive when you were between the ages of 3 and 16. (A list of gift ideas is posted on the church bulletin board)
2. Bring your gift to Together Inc. at 1616 Cass Street. They will be accepting new, unwrapped gifts between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday, until December 8th. (Special arrangements to pick up your toys can be made by calling 345-8047 ext 209.)
3. Together Inc. will distribute your gift to parents the week of December 10th.

Together Inc is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.
www.togetheromaha.org

Community News



Columbus Park Neighborhood Association

Call 345-1700 for more information.

Grace Lutheran Raised
\$345.00 so far
for Hunger Relief and
the Lutheran Pantry
at the Crop Walk!

Have you paid your pledge to your walkers?

National Donor Sabbath November 11, 2007



Thousands of Americans are in need of vital organ and tissues. For many, the chance to live a full life won't come unless many more of us consider organ and tissue donation. Discuss organ donation with your family and friends (after worship, work etc.). Help others find a chance to live a full life.

What can be donated?

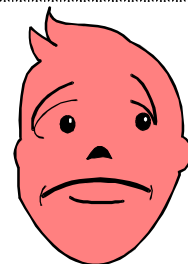
- ◆ Organs
- ◆ Tissue
- ◆ Stem Cells
- ◆ Blood

How do I become a donor?

- ◆ Designate your decision on your driver's license. Do this when you obtain or renew your license.
- ◆ Sign a donor card now. Carry the donor card with you until you can designate your donation decision on your driver's license or join a donor registry.
- ◆ Tell your family about your decision.

	Organ/Tissue Donor Card	
I wish to donate my organs and tissues. I wish to give:		
<input type="checkbox"/> any needed organs and tissues	<input type="checkbox"/> only the following organs and tissues:	
Donor Signature _____ Date _____		
Witness _____		
Witness _____		

***Got the
Holiday Blues?
Free Counseling
is Available.***



If you would like more information or to set up an appointment, please call Allyson Campbell at South High at 557-3675 or St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church at 733-0172.

Allyson is the counselor for the South Omaha area. The service is made available to members of the community through the support from the Nebraska Methodist Hospital Foundation.

The Lutheran®

***Subscribe or renew your subscription to
The Lutheran magazine!***

The cost is \$15.95 for the year.
Contact the church office to
renew or subscribe.
We will mail them all together.



News from the Families of Grace Lutheran Church

- ♦ The church air-conditioning project has been completely finished. All the units that were in the front of the church have been replaced with units on the roof. Special thanks to the fellows from the church who helped haul off the old equipment. Thanks to God for providing the finances through the Endowment to keep the church warm in the winter and cool in the summer!
- ♦ Thanks to Jerry Van Ormer, Bob Moss and the others who helped dismantle old equipment stored in the basement furnace room. These men spent a great deal of time disassembling an old motor from our last organ. It was a big job taking it apart and getting up and out of the church. The men also spent time on Monday mornings doing church ground maintenance. Ken brought his special lawn edging equipment to clean up all the sidewalk edges. The men spent several hours getting the church lawn ready for winter.
- ♦ Thanks to all the people who made the church Halloween party such a success. Over 150 people attended. A big **thank you** to all the folks who donated money, time and items for the party.

Davey and Goliath's Devotions for Families on the Go

The Winter 2007-2008 Edition is Here!

Each week has four fun-filled pages of Bible-based activities. Set aside 10-15 minutes at the beginning of the week to read the Bible story and say the prayer on the first page. Some weeks that may be all you can do! If you have more time, try the rest of the faith-filled activities during the week.

Grace Lutheran Church offers this magazine on a first come, first serve basis to 10 families. Pick up your copy next Sunday from the table at the back of the sanctuary and begin sharing a little time with your children or grandchildren and telling them about the wonderful gift of God's son, Jesus Christ.



Thank You!

I want to thank everyone for the delightful appreciation celebration on Sunday October 28. The cards were wonderful to read and think of the many ways that we've shared life together. The cookies were delicious. Like the old saying, "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach."

I truly appreciate your
kindness, love and care.

Pastor and Mary Laaker



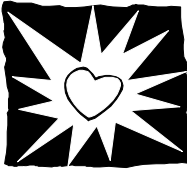
To my friends and family at Grace Church,

Thank You for your prayers, cards and kind words of caring and encouragement at the recent passing of my mother-in-law, Darlene Spahr.

Your care for my family was a blessing.
Brenda Spahr

Thanksgiving dinners take
eighteen hours to prepare.
They are consumed in twelve minutes.
Half-times take twelve minutes.
This is not coincidence.

~Erma Bombeck



*A Neighbor's
Independence
Depends On You*

**FAITH
IN ACTION**

Faith in Action to Partner Again with Methodist College of Nursing

*Do You Know a Senior Citizen
Who Would Benefit from a Home Visit?*

Faith in Action of Interfaith Health Service had the opportunity this fall to partner with Methodist College of Nursing students who visited three seniors in the program for six weeks. The goal of the partnership was to give nursing students the opportunity to not only meet seniors living in their own homes, but also getting to know their stories. Many times during nursing school, nursing students only see seniors who are very sick and in the hospital. This partnership gives students a chance to see how many seniors live out in the community, many of whom are isolated and lonely.

We plan to partner again in January and if you are someone you know would like to visit with a pair of nursing students, please let me know. This is a wonderful opportunity for someone who is in need of a friendly visit.

If interested, please let me know.

Julie Chytil
Faith in Action of Interfaith Health Service
660-2652
faithinaction2005@hotmail.com

Faith in Action volunteers shop, cook, drive or
just check in on the millions of Americans with long-term health needs.



Banana Sour Cream Bread

*This is one of my favorite recipes!
This moist bread melts in your mouth.*

Pam Reents

INGREDIENTS

- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3/4 cup butter
- 3 cups white sugar
- 3 eggs
- 6 very ripe bananas, mashed
- 1 (16 ounce) container sour cream
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3 teaspoons baking soda
- 4 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C). Grease four 7x3 inch loaf pans. In a small bowl, stir together 1/4 cup white sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Dust pans lightly with cinnamon and sugar mixture.
2. In a large bowl, cream butter and 3 cups sugar. Mix in eggs, mashed bananas, sour cream, vanilla and cinnamon. Mix in salt, baking soda and flour. Stir in nuts. Divide into prepared pans.
3. Bake for 1 hour, until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.

<http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/Banana-Sour-Cream-Bread/>





A few weeks ago, I met up with Rosa, one of our first Interfaith Volunteers, at the Mexico Independence Day Party on 24th and Q. Rosa positively glowed when filling me in on her college career. She is maintaining an excellent grade point average, has made numerous friends, and is enjoying her time in college to the fullest while still working several part time jobs to help pay for school.

At only 17 years old, Rosa assisted me and Gaby with childcare for our morning Interfaith and Douglas County exercise programs before we found grant money to cover child care expenses. Rosa also assisted Pastora Liz at Cristo Rey with their wonderful children's summer program. Rosa's mom attended and helped start our Latinas en Accion exercise program, and Rosa's sisters also took part in classes and in volunteering with Interfaith on special projects.

Now 20 years old, Rosa is a beginning her Junior year at the College of Saint Mary's. She is majoring in Nursing. She is a first generation college student, something her mom and dad had many conversations with me about prior to her enrollment. Rosa's mom and dad moved to the United States with the goal of seeing all of their children getting excellent educations and going to college.

I was lucky enough to be asked by Rosa's parents to accompany Rosa to her preliminary admission interviews at several colleges. I had many discussions with Rosa and her entire family about scholarship packages and the pros and cons of Rosa being allowed to live on campus. For an entire summer, Rosa visited me two or three evenings a week and together we worked on her applications to various colleges. I still have some of her college essays saved on my computer's hard drive. When she graduates, I intend to print them out and share them with her and her family.

The same week I caught up with Rosa, I also happened to see the President of the College of Saint Mary's, Dr. Maryanne Stevens, RSM, at a downtown gathering. Maryanne, a former teacher of mine from my own college days, immediately talked about Rosa and what a tremendous leader Rosa is on campus. I was impressed that Maryanne knew Rosa by name and accomplishments. It isn't often that the President of a College can note specific student accomplishments. But Rosa is that type of student-- very memorable!

I know that in some small ways, the Interfaith Programs were instrumental in helping Rosa along in her college experience. Pastor Laaker donated Rosa and her family their first computer, making it easier for Rosa to save first drafts of her college essays to disk. Rosa cited her volunteer work with Interfaith as her motivation to attend college and work in Health Care. Rosa was nominated by Interfaith for Outstanding Youth Leader at Central High School, an award she won, and an award which was noticed by the colleges she was interested in attending.

In the months ahead, I hope to be taking a few more of our Interfaith Latinas En Accion Youth Group members on college tours. I hope they enjoy their college experience as much as Rosa is enjoying hers.

Virginia McGill, Interfaith

And though I ebb in worth, I'll flow in thanks.

~John Taylor



Sip, Dip or Grip

From the Editor

Thanksgiving is just around the corner! Our activity level is going to increase. Cleaning to do, shopping lists to make, food to gather, special holiday dishes to prepare and then the gathering for family and friends. We all know that even after the Thanksgiving fun is over, we begin right away with Christmas preparations, doing many of the same things we did for Thanksgiving except adding the extra stress of shopping for the perfect gift for each loved one on our list.

For me, the added activity usually causes me to neglect my spiritual well-being as well as my physical and emotional needs. I struggle to find quality time with God when life **isn't** so hectic! I wonder why our time with the Lord is the first thing on our to-do list that we tend to ignore. A quick "sip" of scripture, a little "dip" of devotional, a prayer on the run and...Ta Da! We're done for the day as far as our time with God. We have fulfilled our "duty" to time alone with Him. How that must grieve Him! Imagine acting like that with one of our family members or our spouses. How meaningful would my relationship be if I used my busyness as an excuse not to communicate with my husband, Don or our daughter, Kate? Separation and resentment would surely be the end result.

As I was thinking about my "sip and dip" devotions lately, I thought of a email closing that Charles Farber sent me once. He signed his email "In His Grip." It stuck me again. What does it mean to be in God's grip?

The dictionary describes **grip** as,

"the act of grasping; a seizing and holding fast; firm grasp" or "competence or firmness in dealing with situations in one's work or personal affairs."

The question is, "Do I really want to be held fast in God's grip or is being held like that only convenient when I **need** something from Him? God has given each of us a free-will. Because of this, God will not grab at us without our permission **and** our submission. Most of us would give lip-service that we would want God to be **in** (permission) our lives but **in control** (submission) of our lives? That would take a effort and commitment on a daily basis.

My willingness to be held "In His Grip" is in direct proportion to my submission/commitment to knowing Him. As believers, we cannot know Him without spending time with Him, both in His Word and listening to Him as well as asking Him for requested blessings in our prayers.

So...for the coming two months, do you just want a "sip and dip" relationship with God? I know I don't! When I submit to Him, relying on being fully in His grip, power for living flows from Him to me. The worries of the day fall away. I have the confidence of knowing that because I have submitted my life to Him, He has me firmly in His grasp. He is more than competent in dealing with my life situations.

Have you submitted your life to His grip? If not, tell God you want to give over the control of your life. Tell Him how willful you have been. Tell Him that you want to know Him more than just a "sip and a dip." Tell Him you want to be gripped in His loving arms and that you want to do **exactly** what He tells you to do. That's the beginning of a wonderful, personal relationship. Problems will still come but you will have the assurance that you are **In His Grip!**

Pam Reents, Editor



Update on California Wildfires

More than 20 wildfires continue to burn and grow across southern California, fueled by the strong and persistent Santa Ana winds and drought conditions across most of the region.

At this emergent stage in this disaster, Lutheran Disaster Response and its affiliate agency, Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest, are assessing the needs of the affected communities. Lutheran Disaster Response coordinator Tempie Beaman has been in near constant communication with local clergy as well as representatives from the ELCA Pacifica and Southwest California Synods and the LCMS Pacific Southwest District. Additionally, she has coordinated a number of Lutheran chaplains to provide spiritual care to evacuees at a number of shelters in the area.

Recent news reports state that nearly 1,500 homes have been completely destroyed with the worst of the damage concentrated in San Diego County. Perhaps more astoundingly, nearly one million people have been ordered to evacuate their homes as fires continue to spread unpredictably. Some of those evacuees are seeking temporary shelter at places like Qualcomm Stadium, home of the NFL's San Diego Chargers, as well as at schools, churches, and homes of family and friends. With thanksgiving, it is also being reported that the volunteers who have organized at local shelters to help those displaced nearly outnumber the evacuees themselves.

Bishop Murray Finck, ELCA Pacifica Synod, reports that a number of clergy from the synod have been part of the evacuation orders as well as countless members of Lutheran congregations. At this time, Bishop Finck is not aware of any church structures that have been affected, but he and his staff continue to monitor the news for information. Leaders from the Southwest California Synod and Pacific Southwest District are also reporting that no church structures have been reported as affected at this time.

Contrary to some news reports that seem to be focused on the wealthy, this disaster is likely to have an impact across economic classes. Southern California, like other densely populated areas, is home to many who are underprivileged, including a large population of undocumented persons. While the full extent of this tragedy is yet to be seen, there is likely to be a need for Lutheran Disaster Response to assist in the long-term recovery process, and it will be our mission to seek out those who may otherwise be overlooked or underserved.

Seven counties in total have been declared both federal and state emergency areas, and emergency responders, namely fire crews from around the state, continue to battle the fires, assist families in evacuating, and care for any injured. The weather continues to be uncooperative with wind gusts reaching near-hurricane speeds and dry, hot air continuing to blow in from the desert. Cooler air and moisture are expected to arrive towards the end of the week which will be a welcome relief to residents wanting to return home and firefighters struggling for containment.

At this time, we pray for the many communities in southern California that continue to watch and wait for the fires to be contained. We pray for the local, state, and federal officials who are aiding in the early response to this tragedy. And we pray for the hundreds of thousands who are displaced from their homes and feeling uncertainty about what exactly the future holds.

For information on how you can give in support of the response to the wildfires, please visit www.ldr.org/donate.

Grace Lutheran is also collecting money for the Disaster Relief effort. If you wish to donate, please make your check to "Grace Lutheran Church" and put "California Disaster" in the memo line. You may mail your gift to the church or drop it in offering plate on Sunday.



November

- ◆ November is the 11th month of the year.
- ◆ Named for Tiberus Caesar.
- ◆ The Anglo-Saxons referred to November as the “wind month.”
- ◆ One of four months that has 30 days.
- ◆ November begins on the same day of the week as March every year.
- ◆ November’s Birthstone is the Topaz or Citrine.
- ◆ November’s Flower is the Chrysanthemum.

Special Days at Grace Lutheran Church In November.

- ◆ 5 - Shipment for LWR. Have your donations to the church.
- ◆ 9&10 - Confirmation Class at Grace.
- ◆ 13 - Church Council Meeting.
- ◆ 14 - Monthly Prayer Service.
- ◆ 21 - Community Thanksgiving Service at Wheeler Presbyterian.
- ◆ 22 - Thanksgiving Day.
- ◆ 27 - On Being Lutheran Bible Study.
- ◆ 27 - Grace Messenger Assembled.

Looking Ahead

December 23 - Grace Sunday School Christmas Program. Please bring your children to S.S. on Sundays for practice!

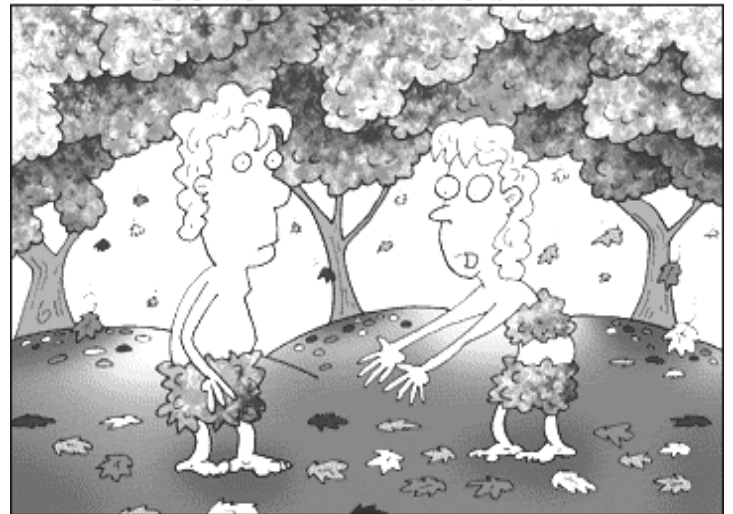


Veterans Day

November 11, 2007

Pray for all soldiers everywhere.

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10-06-2006

WILL YOU PLEASE PICK UP ALL YOUR CLOTHES?



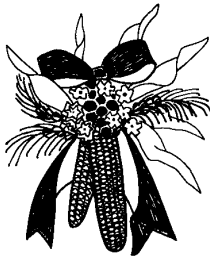
“Well, Moses, I’m not totally sure, but to me it looks like a staff infection.”

Seriously, friends,
Because of all the problems with staph infections in the news, let’s encourage each other to wash our hands and stay **HEALTHY!**

Be Thankful

Find each word from Colossians 3:15 in the word search puzzle.

Let the peace of Christ
rule in your hearts, since
as members of one body
you were called to peace.
And be thankful.



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

Thanksgiving Toast

May your stuffing be tasty,
May your turkey be plump,
May your potatoes and gravy
Have nary a lump.
May your yams be delicious,
May your pies take the prize.
May your holiday meals
Stay off your thighs.

Lowell Yoder quoted from JN NL Nov 2007



November woods are bare and still;
November days are clear and bright;
Each noon burns up the morning's chill,
The morning's snow is gone by night.

Helen Hunt Jackson -
Taken from World Book Millennium 2000

