

Voice of Grace

We are called to proclaim the Word and celebrate the sacraments. We gather in Christian community for nurture and support. We are sent out in service to others.

A Monthly Newsletter

November 2014

Grace Lutheran Helps Build Habitat House



Members of Grace Lutheran Church turned out with hammers and weeders to help prepare the land and build the framing for a new Habitat for Humanity House in Port Townsend. It turned out that hard work and fellowship go hand in hand

when Grace volunteers show up to help build a home for a needy family. More photos illustrating the day's activities can be found on page eight.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.



Adult Forum & Sunday School 9:15 a.m.



The Toolbox

by Joshua Harris

Recently my dad and my younger brother Joel attended a birthday party for Stephen Taylor, one of Joel's best friends. It was a very special occasion. Stephen was turning 13, and his dad wanted Stephen's entrance into young adulthood memorable. Nice presents wouldn't suffice; Stephen's dad wanted to impart wisdom. To accomplish this he asked fathers to accompany their sons to the party and to bring a special gift – a tool that served them in their specific lines of work.

Each father gave a tool to Stephen along with its accompanying "life lesson" for the "toolbox" of principles Stephen would carry into life. The tools were as unique as the men who used them. My dad gave Stephen a quality writing pen and explained that a pen not only served him when he wrote his ideas but also represented his word when he signed an agreement.

During the gift giving, a father who was a professional home builder handed Stephen a small box. "Inside that box is the tool I use most," he said. Stephen opened it and found a nail puller.

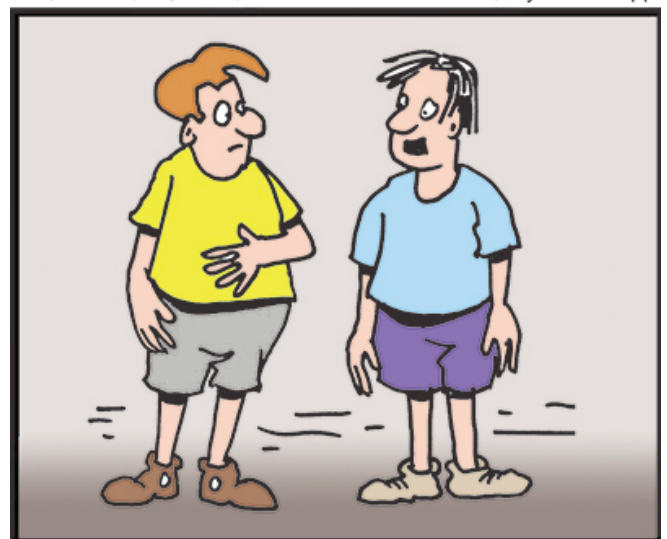
"My nail puller, simple as it might seem," the father explained, "is one of the most important tools I have." This father told the story of how once, while in the middle of building a wall, he discovered that it was crooked. Instead of halting the construction and undoing a little work to fix the wall, he decided to proceed, hoping that the problem would go away as he continued to build. However, the problem only worsened. Eventually, at a great loss of materials and time, he had to tear down the nearly completed wall and totally rebuild it.

"Stephen," the father said gravely, "times will come in life

when you'll realize you've made a mistake. At that moment, you have two choices: You can swallow your pride and 'pull a few nails,' or you can foolishly continue your course, hoping the problem will go away. Most of the time the problem will only get worse. I'm, giving you this tool to remind you of this principle: When you realize you've made a mistake, the best thing you can do is tear it down and start over."

GLC

Church of the Covered Dish by Thom Tapp



"Our family is trying one of those old-fashioned churches, with preaching, the Bible, and all that stuff."



Practicing Self Care

Do you tend to think of self-care as regular doctor visits and taking a break from the busyness of life to participate in fun, distracting activities? Often the Lutheran tradition of the West tends to relegate our spiritual care mostly to a communal worship discipline, such as attending Sunday services and engaging in Bible study. These are absolutely essential, but they are not all-encompassing. The Christ life within us seeks a fuller expression into all areas of our lives.

It is important to have a special place set aside where you can practice and strengthen your relationship with God.

If you decide to create a sacred space, consider these suggestions as you get started:

Choose a space that meets the need. What is your desire for this space? Select your space with intention and prayerful consideration.

Clear it out. Take away everything—even the curtains! Then prepare the space by cleaning it. Consider performing a ritual that will help dedicate the space to your purpose.

This is adapted from Sacred Spaces, a free downloadable resource written by Inez Torres Davis. GLC

Men's Breakfast

On a recent Saturday, the men of Grace Lutheran Church and men from several other churches in East Jefferson County enjoyed a breakfast and fellowship hosted by Grace. As an added feature, Pastor Norm Arnold from the Living Stones Prison Congregation at Shelton prison spoke about life and faith in a prison facility. His audio presentation will be posted to the Grace website in the near future. GLC



World Tour: Voice of Grace

While on vacation in Turkey, Pastor Coe and Janet Hutchison emailed some photos of their trip. As you can see, they did not forget to pack a copy of their *Voice of Grace* newsletter to keep them company when they needed some down time as well as a reminder of Grace Lutheran Church. Pastor Coe reported: "It



is Tuesday and we are in Antalya, Turkey a mediterranean seaport. These are stairs that St. Paul reportedly climbed after disembarking his ships when he arrived here on his missionary journeys. We walked up and down them twice just to make sure we walked in his footsteps. Then there is a picture of Janet at the St. Paul's Cultural

Center which has a very interesting story. That will have to wait for my return."

When you go on vacation or travel, take a copy of your newsletter and take a picture illustrating your travels for publication in the following month's issue. GLC

"I think the reason we sometimes have the false sense that God is so far away is because that is where we have put him. We have kept him at a distance, and then when we are in need and call on him in prayer, we wonder where he is. He is exactly where we left him."

— Ravi Zacharias, *Has Christianity Failed You?*

C. S. Lewis

from "Mere Christianity"

"I hope you will not misunderstand what I am going to say. I am not preaching, and Heaven knows I do not pretend to be better than anyone else. I am only trying to call attention to a fact; the fact that this year, or this month, or, more likely, this very day, we have failed to practise ourselves the kind of behaviour we expect from other people. There may be all sorts of excuses for us. That time you were so unfair to the children was when you were very tired. That slightly shady business about the money – the one you have almost forgotten – came when you were very hard-up. And what you promised to do for old So-and-so and have never done – well, you never would have promised if you had known how frightfully busy you were going to be. And as for your behaviour to your wife (or husband) or sister (or brother) if I knew how irritating they could be, I would not wonder at it – and who the dickens am I, anyway? I am just the same. That is to say, I do not succeed in keeping the Law of Nature very well, and the moment anyone tells me I am not keeping it, there starts up in my mind a string of excuses as long as your arm. The question at the moment is not whether they are good excuses. The point is that they are one more proof of how deeply, whether we like it or not, we believe in the Law of Nature. If we do not believe in decent behaviour, why should we be so anxious to make excuses for not having behaved decently? The truth is, we believe in decency so much – we feel the Rule of Law pressing on us so – that we cannot bear to face the fact that we are breaking it, and, consequently, we try to shift the responsibility. For you notice that it is only for our bad behaviour that we find all these explanations. It is only our bad temper that we put down to being tired or worried or hungry; we put our good temper down to ourselves."



Have You Shared Your
Faith in Christ Today?

Calendar & Reminders

Thanksgiving Eve Worship

7:00 p.m. Wednesday, November 26
Bring a pumpkin pie to share after the service

Thanksgiving Family Potluck

(for Grace Lutheran members without family nearby)
Thursday, November 27, (time to be decided).
Grace Fellowship Hall
Sign-up sheet to be posted November 2.

Advent Soup Suppers and Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesdays, Dec. 3, 10, & 17
Soup supper at 6:00
Holden Evening Prayer at 7:00

Need sign-ups for Refreshment Schedule.

Coming in December:

Dec 14, Grace Members' Christmas Party, White Elephant Gift Exchange



in photographs. Pictures always remind me of good times with family and friends. And there is a little bit of technology to photography that makes it fun too.



Mary Ronen: The "utensil container" is actually a "thanks bucket". On the outside you can barely make out the word



Thanks - it is very faint. I thought of it at Thanksgiving last year when I used a basket and asked my family to just throw pieces of paper in it saying what they are thankful for rather than going around the table and talking. This gave them plenty of time. I wasn't even going to read them, because I wanted them to really think and not worry about how it might sound. But my oldest son took the

lead and read them all aloud. It was a fun thing to do, and everyone agreed to do it again next year. So I decided to make the 'bucket'.

Comments from the Artists

On the walls of the fellowship hall, we have had the opportunity to view a changing display of artwork by members of our own congregation. The art has taken many forms: paintings, with various medium, pottery, poetry and photographs. The coordinator of the display is Roberta Bymers. Roberta asked the artists to briefly share their thoughts about some of their work. The following comments are placed here for your review and information:

Nina Daly: I was inspired to do the oil painting of my grandmother's house when my cousin Paula and her husband visited us in early April. We talked about the times we spent at our grandma's house and played on her porch. That brought about a search through old photos and emails back and forth. Grandma's house was the start of the three-picture series displayed at Grace this rotation.

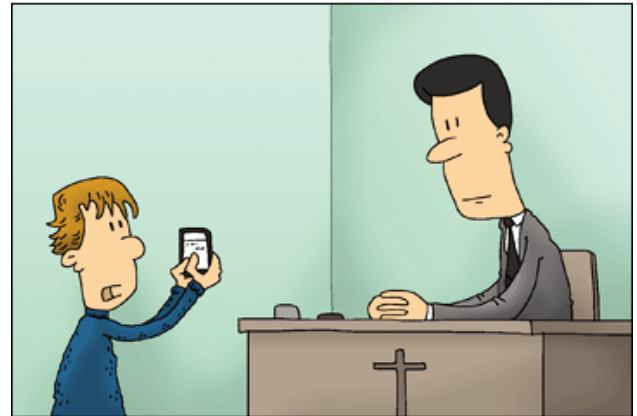
Earl Kong: I got the inspiration for "Port Townsend Skyline" one day looking back from the ferryboat. After three failed attempts, I decided to do a collage of the subject; that is to ignore perspective. This is a collage/watercolor (if there is such a thing).

Pastor Coe Hutchison: I just love the beauty, color and vibrancy of God's creation and it is such fun to try to capture it

Roberta Bymers: I can tell when my inspiration has blossomed; I see the shadows, the shades, and I feel excited about painting the scene. I have found that through all these years of painting I still have many skills to accomplish. The large flower was a series of four that I painted on large canvas. I closed my eyes and where my paintbrush landed was the center. I went from there. This is an application using acrylic as a watercolor.

GLC

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CAN YOU HELP SET ME UP SO I CAN FRIEND AND LIKE JESUS, TEXT HIM MY PRAYERS, AND SHARE ALL HIS TWEETS?

08-25-2014



Pastor's Message: *"Jesus is the Difference"*

In our recent travels to foreign lands and the observation of other religions, it has become much more clear to me how Jesus makes Christianity different from other religions. Christianity declares Jesus to be the Son of God, that he is fully human and fully divine. Other religions may consider Jesus a wise man or a prophet, but Christianity is unique in proclaiming Jesus to be God's Son.

Christianity is unique in its belief in Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven. Most important, no other religion has as its foundation the understanding we have of the impact, the import, of Christ's work. We understand that through our belief in Christ's death and resurrection we receive the "righteousness of Christ." Martin Luther called it the "Great Exchange." Christ took on our sin and brokenness and gave us his righteousness. It is a free gift, given out of God's steadfast love. That is what we call grace – another concept unique to Christianity. In nearly all other religions, humans must live right, think right, act right and then God will respond with his favor. It all depends on what humans do. Humans are the primary actors. But not so in Christianity. Christians believe that it's all about God – that God is the primary actor. God loves us, and saves us in Jesus Christ. God forgives us through Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Then humans respond to God's amazing grace by loving the Lord our God with all our heart and all our soul and all our mind and loving our neighbor as ourselves. *We love, because he first loved us.* (1 John 4:19)

The more I understand Christianity (and I am certainly still learning and understanding), the more I marvel at how unique and even radical our religion is. God's grace in Jesus Christ gives us freedom and security that is unlike anything else. In Christianity the question is not, "What do you have to do to earn God's love?" Rather, it is, "What are you going to do, now that you already have God's love." Only in Christianity can we open our worship with the wonderful Bible passage that I dearly love.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

*God Bless,
Pastor Coe*

President's Message: "Blessing of the Animals"

Each year at this time, proud pet owners are invited to bring their pets to church for the annual blessing of the animals. At Grace Lutheran Church we continue a custom that originates with the faith of St. Francis of Assisi, who is recognized for his love of the animals. That love has turned into a custom in which the special bond and love between humans and their pets is celebrated by blessing these pets before God.



Over the years, Lucy and I have always brought our Chelsea and Holly to the annual blessing. They seemed to relish socializing with their "peers" in the church family. They also seemed to enjoy the attention they received from the pastor at the time of the blessing. Sadly, this year was different. Chelsea, our little white Pekingese, died on December 30, and Holly, our brown Pekingese who was just a bit younger, passed away last month. Strangely, both dogs lost the use of their back legs during the final year of their life necessitating our physically picking them up and taking them wherever they needed to go. That was never a problem for us; it seemed to bring us even closer to our little angels. Even though we did not have pets at this year's blessing of the animals, I came with my camera to get pictures for the *Voice of Grace*.

Taking pictures at the blessing exposed me (pardon the "camera" talk) to something I had not observed during previous years when attending with Chelsea and Holly and trying to take pictures at the same time. This year, I had more time to observe the humans. I was struck by the amount of love, gentleness, kind touches and even tears that were shed by the pets' families. The four-footed family members exhibited signs of love, trust and faith in their people. I had the privilege of focusing on the bonding between a human and an animal. What a wonderful treat. I did not have a pet that day, but I, too, felt blessed.

If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to the man. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the Earth befalls the sons of the Earth.

~Chief Seattle of the Suquamish Tribe, letter to President Franklin Pierce



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. J. ...".



Habitat for Humanity Project Photo Album



Some snapshots were taken to record the activities of the Habitat for Humanity work party. Clockwise from the right: Dave Gaenicke hammers siding onto an exterior wall; Michelle Haines and several other Grace women tend to the landscaping by removing weeds; Earl Kong and Dave Gaenicke take a break for lunch; Tom Larsen and Dave Peterson arrange the studs for an exterior wall; and, of course, every work party needs a supervisor and supervisor apprentice with Harlan Wolff and Alex Brown fully meeting the requirements.



Church Council

- President:** Jim Hladecek
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- Vice President:** Mary Ronen
- Secretary:** Betty Oakes
- Ministers:**
- Resources (Treasurer):** Anne Argites
- Facilities:** Jim Little
- Worship/Music:** Nina Daly
- Stewardship:** Don Fristoe
- Social Concerns:** Teresa Janssen
- Fellowship:** Karen Erickson

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- Choir Director:** Colleen Johnson
- Sunday School Superintendent:** Linda Wolff
- Editor, Voice of Grace and church Web site:**
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