

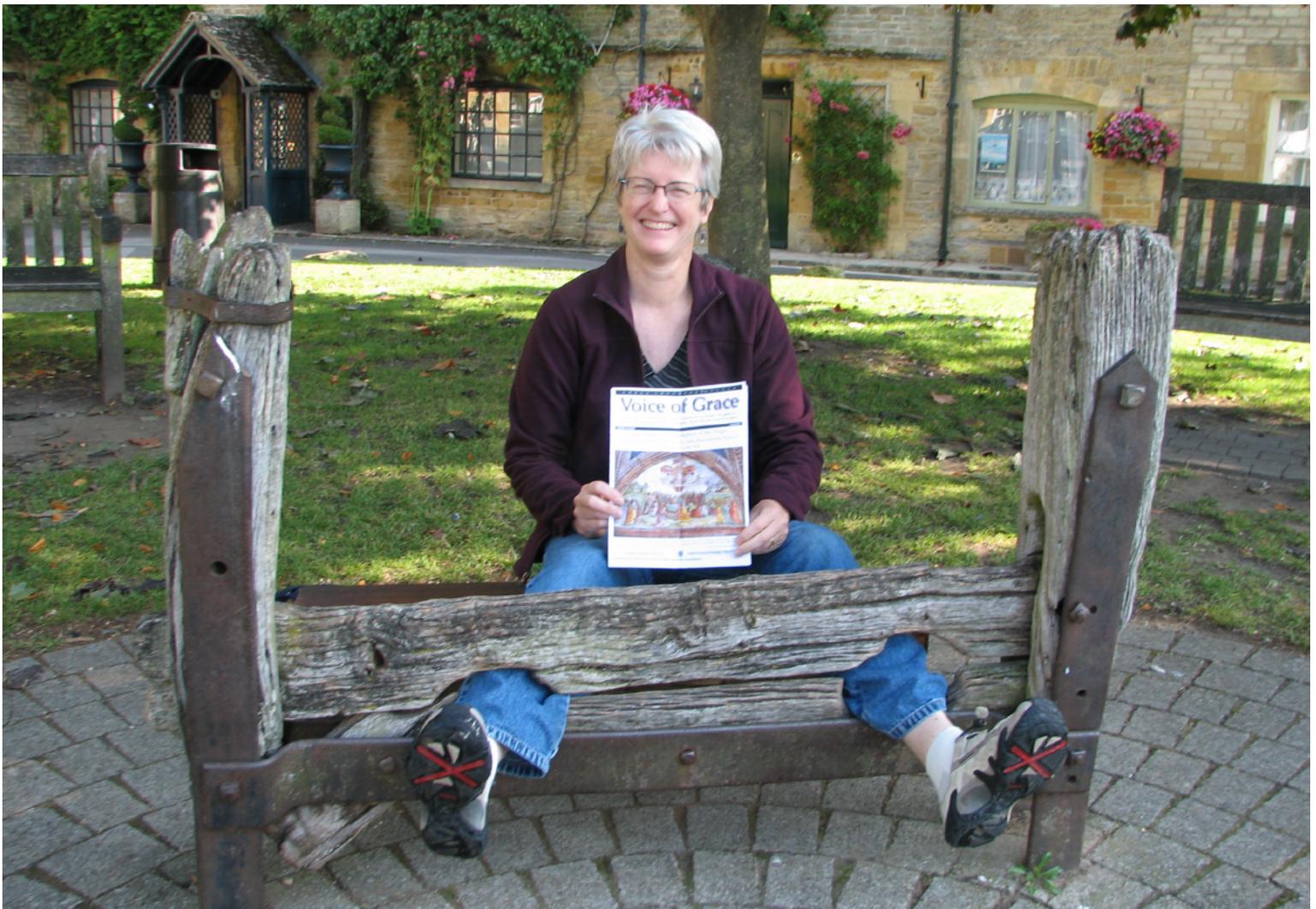
Voice of Grace

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

October 2011

Voice of Grace: World Tour



For the past few years, members of the congregation have taken a copy of the *Voice of Grace* along as they travel the world. In this case, Janet Hutchison has found herself confined in the stocks of Stow-on-the-Wold in the Cotswolds of England. Even

though confined, she is shown in good spirits as she has her copy of the *Voice of Grace* to while away the time.

Join in on this fun project and take a copy of the newsletter with you on your next trip. Who knows what will happen.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.



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

“St. Teresa in Ecstasy”

Giovanni Lorenzo Bernini, 1647-52

Compiled by Susan Reid

On October 15, we commemorate Teresa of Avila, Teacher and Renewer of the Church. Teresa was born in Avila, Spain, in 1515 and died in 1582. As a young woman, she joined the Carmelite Order, an order dedicated to a simple life of poverty and prayer. Since childhood, she'd had several unusual religious experiences, but she also enjoyed popularity and a lively social life among her sometimes misguided friends. Her decision to become a nun was foremost to devote her life to God, but it was partially to keep herself out of trouble as well.

She soon discovered a problem that existed in many religious orders. Women who had no place else to go often wound up in a convent, whether they had religious callings or not. There was a steady stream of visitors and parties that included young men. Nuns would arrange their veils attractively and wear jewelry. It seemed that prestige depended not on piety but on money. What spiritual life there was involved hysteria, weeping, exaggerated penance, and self-induced visions.

Teresa felt strongly about the original charism, or spiritual focus, of the Carmelite Order, which was contemplative prayer. During a period of 18 years, she practiced becoming one with God—not through the use of words or imagination, but through hours of quiet contemplation of the wonders of the Trinity. During these years, she had many transitory mystical experiences. At the age of 39, she had a vision of a “sorely wounded Christ” that dislodged any remnants of egoism that had previously hindered her spiritual development. From that time, she began to enjoy a vivid experience of God's presence within her. In another vision, a seraph drove the fiery point of a golden lance repeatedly through her heart, causing an intense spiritual-bodily pain.

“I saw in his hand a long spear of gold, and at the iron's point there seemed to be a little fire. He appeared to me to be thrusting it at times into my heart, and to pierce my very entrails; when he drew it out, he seemed to draw them out also, and to leave me all on fire with a great love of God. The pain was so great, that it made me moan; and yet so surpassing was the sweetness of this excessive pain, that I could not wish to be rid of it....”

This vision was the inspiration for Bernini's sculpture photographed.

Despite Teresa's emphasis on contemplative prayer and poverty, she was not a withdrawn or dour person. She was

known for her continued efforts to bring the Carmelites back to their original focus, despite chastisement from religious hierarchy and the surrounding lay community. At the age of 43, she became determined to found a new convent devoted to the basics of a contemplative order. When plans leaked out about her first convent, St. Joseph's, she was denounced from the pulpit, told by her sisters she should raise money for the convent she was already in, and she was threatened with the Inquisition. The town started legal proceedings against her. In the face of this open war, she went ahead calmly, as if nothing was wrong, trusting in God.



“May God protect me from gloomy saints,” Teresa said, and that is how she operated her convent. To her, spiritual life was an attitude of love, not a rule. Although she proclaimed poverty, she believed in work, not in begging. She believed in obedience to God more than penance. If you do something wrong, don't punish yourself – change. She advised someone feeling depressed to go to a place where one could see the sky and take a walk. When someone was shocked that Teresa was going to eat well, she answered, “There's a time for partridge and a time for penance.” To her brother's wish to meditate on hell, she answered, “Don't.” In the course of her

life, she authored *Way of Perfection*, an autobiography, and *The Interior Castle*, considered a masterpiece among theologians of many religions. In 1970, she was declared a Doctor of the [Roman Catholic] Church for her writing and teaching on prayer. She was one of only two women to be honored in this way, the other being Catherine of Siena.

Teresa left not only three books, but also an abundance of prayers and sayings. Following is one of her most inspirational prayers:

*May today there be peace within.
May you trust God that you are exactly where
you are meant to be.*

*May you not forget the infinite possibilities
that are born of faith.*

*May you use those gifts that you have received, and pass on the
love that has been given to you.*

*May you be content knowing you are a child of God.
Let this presence settle into your bones, and allow your soul the
freedom to sing, dance, praise and love.*

It is there for each and every one of us.



My Faith Journey: *by Jane Schwencke*

Sometimes I have wished that my faith had begun as a lightning bolt experience such as St. Paul or even Martin Luther experienced. However, my faith story is not even something I can claim to be mine; it is God's story of his faithfulness to me.

This story began, on my mother's 28th birthday at my maternal grandparents church in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, where I became a child of God through baptism. It was then that I began my real life through the working of the Holy Spirit. As far back as my memory serves, I do not recall a time when I did not know Jesus. As a young child I remember going to bed with the prayer, "Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep, I Pray Thee Lord My Soul To Keep." Even though I had no understanding of the keeping of the soul, I seemed to sense that there was something wonderful after this life on earth.

Shortly after my eighth birthday, my parents moved our family to Port Townsend, and it was here at the little Lutheran Church on Blaine Street that my faith life grew and was nurtured by so many. I looked forward to attending church and even though I would fall asleep leaning on my mother's arm during the sermon, I would rise to attention when the hymns were sung, as that was my favorite part of the service. After I was confirmed at age 14 by our visiting pastor, my delight in attending church had passed from the hymn singing to the spoken word of God. That was what I wanted more and more to hear. Those words were my guide and inspiration through those crucial teenage years. At that time God placed many Christian friends in my life who also nurtured my faith life.

I am so thankful to all those whom God has placed in my life. It is impossible to name all of those people, as the list would go on and on, but their examples of lives lived in faith have truly helped shape my own.

During my college career I had three roommates, all of whom were Baptists. Because of their examples, I had considered becoming a Baptist. They were so open about sharing

their faith in Jesus. While attending a Baptist service I heard the Pastor call out to a member of the congregation to lead in prayer. I remember thinking, "How would this go over in the Lutheran Church?" This led me to be more bold in my prayer life. Learning more about the Baptist faith caused me to dig deeper into the Word and my own Lutheran beliefs and to come to the conclusion that God had given me a faith in the Lutheran tradition that I deeply cherish.

There is no test of faith quite like life itself. As the saying goes, "Life is what happens when you are making other plans;" and as life presented its many challenges, I knew that I could depend on God to see me through each one, granting his wisdom, comfort, guidance, forgiveness, and love. I read a statement once that became very valuable to me in living my life. I don't recall who wrote it, and I didn't realize at the time I read it how much it would influence my life. If I had, I would have clipped it and hung it on my refrigerator or copied and framed it. I only wish I could repeat it in the profound way in which it was written; however, the gist of the statement was, "How does it stack up to eternity?" There have been many times when I have used this scale in evaluating the worth of something in this life, and many times I have passed this system of evaluation on to my daughters. For we live our life of faith with our eyes on our future, and for us Christians that future is eternity with Christ who has secured it for us. That is my motivation – to live my life in service to him.

No, my faith story didn't begin as a lightning bolt experience, although I have had several mountain-top events, the most recent being last April when I was fortunate to attend a Via de Cristo retreat. All of these helped me to grow and mature in the faith, because my faith story has been, and continues to be, the quiet, subtle working of the Holy Spirit on my heart since the day I was baptized. Thanks be to God! **GLC**



From Our Pastor: *"We're Back – And Glad!"*

We are back from our wonderful vacation and into the full swing of things. Our time away was wonderful and enjoyable and interesting and relaxing—but it is also very good to be back home with all of you. A number of people have asked what was the most interesting or the best part, but I want to report here about a couple of particular observations.

We visited lots of churches—big churches, little churches, city churches, country churches, old churches and even one relatively new church. Most were very old, stone churches with high vaulted ceilings, stained glass and memorials inside the building. Many had graveyards outside the church that were clearly a struggle to maintain. I guess it's because I am a pastor now and at least partially responsible for managing a church budget, but I was struck by what a burden it would be to simply keep those churches standing. The thought of heating the buildings in the winter made me shudder. One country church was struggling to raise funds to replace its roof. As I stood in that church, I thought of wonderful Grace Lutheran in Port Townsend that was putting its new roof on as we stood there. I thanked God for the generosity that allowed us to raise the funds for that roof in one month. And I thanked God (again) for calling me to healthy and vibrant Grace Lutheran.

We visited churches that were full of memorials to royalty or benefactors or community members who had died. Some of the memorials were huge tombs with elaborate statuary. It almost seemed as if there had been a competition to see who could put the most elaborate tomb in the church. Unfortunately, it made me feel like the churches were full of dead bodies. I wanted to see a church full of living spirits, on fire for the Lord. And we did see some of those that were inspiring. This experience made me appreciate our columbarium that provides a resting place for beloved members but does not dominate the worship space and crowd out the living, breathing spirits who are serving God.

Finally, I was struck by something new as we toured many museums and galleries. As we would see exhibits about ancient Christian cultures, the explanations on the exhibits went to some length to explain what Christianity was. "Christianity is a religion that believes in a supreme and benevolent God whose son came to earth as the man Jesus Christ." I don't think I've seen exhibits before that felt the need to explain what Christianity is. In the past, it could be assumed that most people knew what Christianity is, but apparently that assumption is no longer valid. I recently saw an article that argued that it used to be enough for a Christian to be a good "churchman" but now a Christian needs to be a "missionary. These are all signs that the world we live in has certainly changed and perhaps we, the church, need to change to join God in his work in this new world. Much food for thought as we move forward.

Everything we did and saw made me thank God again for each of you and for the wonderful Christian community we share here at Grace Lutheran. What a blessing it is!

*God Bless,
Pastor Coe*

From Our President: *"You Reap What You Sow!"*



Where has summer gone? It seems like the years are going by faster every time I turn around. Do you think that it has anything to do with my getting older or is it just my imagination?

Fall is one of my favorite seasons. I love the warm days and cool nights especially when we have that nice long run of sunny days.

I can recall harvest time as a young boy back in Minnesota. Farmers would work in their fields day and night to gather their crops. I remember seeing farmers at the gas station where I would go to buy a Nesbitt orange pop with my dime and a candy bar with my last nickel. The farmers hands seemed big and their necks were red, but that is not to be confused with a "redneck." They were hard-working, honorable men who still did business with a handshake. You would see their sunburned skin offset by the white skin around their ears when they took off their hats in church.

I loved the smell of corn ripening as the evening breeze blew across miles of fields. The sound of the tractors and combines hard at work were like music to me. I miss those days and will always have those fond memories.

We as Christians are not unlike the farmer. God has called us to bring people to him and that is his harvest. If we don't bring the crops in, they will wither and die in the fields. I believe that Grace Lutheran Church is like a great bunch of farmers. We reach out to others and do our best to bring them to Christ. We nourish those in need not only with food and shelter but with the Word of God, which sustains us all. We have a long standing tradition of caring for others and we understand that it is not just throwing money at a worthy cause to make us feel better about ourselves. It is about sharing God's message of love and salvation, and I firmly believe that we do reap what we sow. If we sow love, care, and Jesus' promise of eternal salvation, then, those who will hear us can have the same promise that we as brothers and sisters and in Christ enjoy. So in this harvest season let us remember the bounty God gives us and our calling to be harvesters in his fields.

Blessings,

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. -John 3:16 (NIV)

Letters from Uganda

Many members of our congregation have been supporting Aids orphans in Uganda as part of a Grace Lutheran Church project to help the orphans receive an education. Without that help it would be very difficult, if not impossible, for our students to attend school and be in a better position to support themselves. One of benefits for sponsors is the opportunity to communicate with "their" student. Supporters have reported that receiving a letter from a sponsored child is a true blessing.

Here is a recent example of a letter Willene Jaqua received from Beatrice Nakubulwa, who wants to extend her thanks to all members of our church.

Dear Willene,
 Greetings from your sponsored child,
 Dear Willene, am very much glad and thankful for the support you have given to me through education status, may the almighty God reward you abundantly.
 Thank you very much for the wonderful work you have done to enable me to have a bright future.
 Dear Willene, I appreciate the service you have rendered to me from Senior one up to tertiary institution. And it has contributed much to the development of me and poor country Uganda at large in social, economic and political aspects.
 Academically, Am planning to go for further studies next year at university to struggle for a degree because I have now completed a diploma in education.
 Am very happy because of the precious support given to me as, I have gained skills, knowledge, experience and values from studying.
 I thank God for enabling me complete my diploma in education though I have been facing many challenges at college and outside college - still I thank God that I have completed well and am planning to go for further studies with God's mercy and grace.
 Dear Willene send my greetings to people of Grace Lutheran church and appreciate them on my behalf for the great work they have done for the development of Uganda and greetings to nice Trivie.
 May God bless you and everything you do.
 Your sponsored child,
 NAKUBULWA BEATRICE

"Whatever their bodies do affects their souls. It is funny how mortals always picture us as putting things into their minds: in reality our best work is done by keeping things out..."

— C.S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*

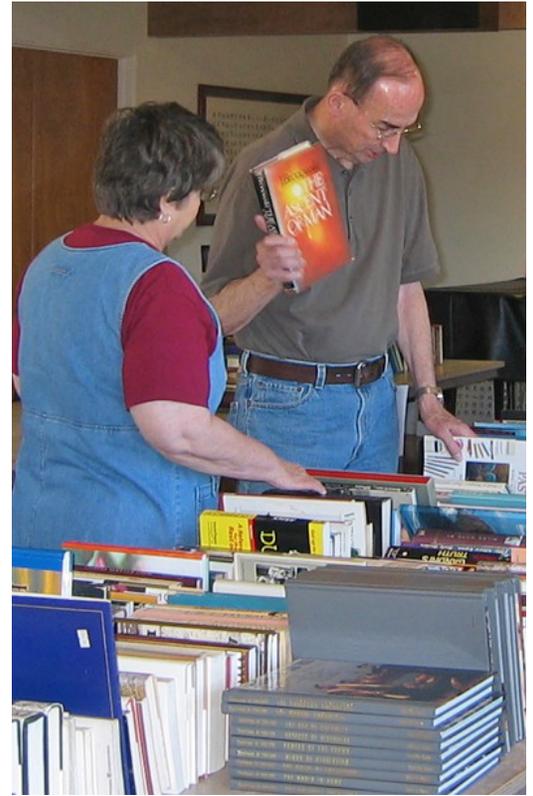
Booksale a Success!

The Grace Lutheran Church Book Sale was a great success, raising over \$400 for the replacement of the church roof. Organized by Tom and Nina Daly and Roberta Bymers, the sale brought in members of our own congregation and people from around the community.

Books were divided into specific categories, such as Fiction, Non-fiction, History and other special interests.

Thanks to all the volunteers

participating in the sale: Roberta Bymers, Tom and Nina Daly, Betty Oakes, Penny Westerfield, Marty Richards, Patt Roche, George Hanson and Linda Gaenicke. GLC



Marty Richards gives Jim Hladecek a helping hand in making his book selections.

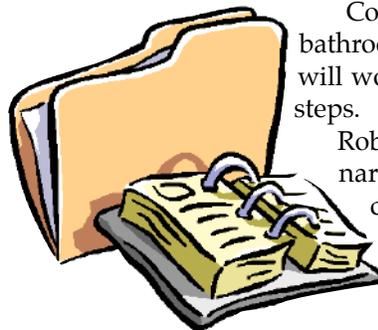
Recap: Church Council September 13, 2011

Our general fund balance continues to grow, and to date this year our giving is \$11,852 over the budgeted giving amount.

There was discussion about possible changes and additions to exterior church signs. The council will turn the proposal over to the design review committee for consideration.

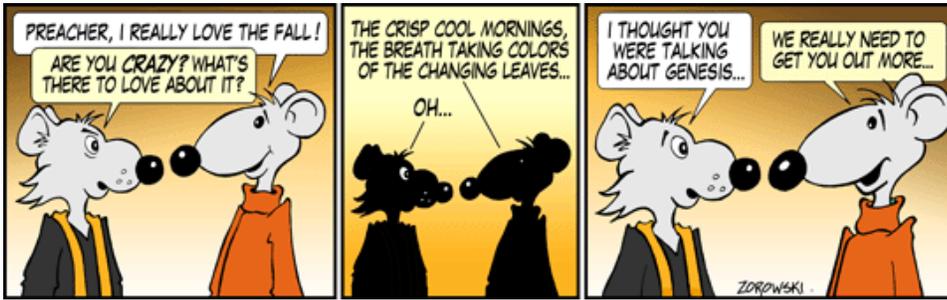
Council discussed completion of the bathroom renovation, and Pastor Coe will work with a group to plan the next steps.

Roberta Bymers presented a preliminary draft of a 2012 budget and council reviewed the draft. A more complete draft will be available at the November meeting. GLC



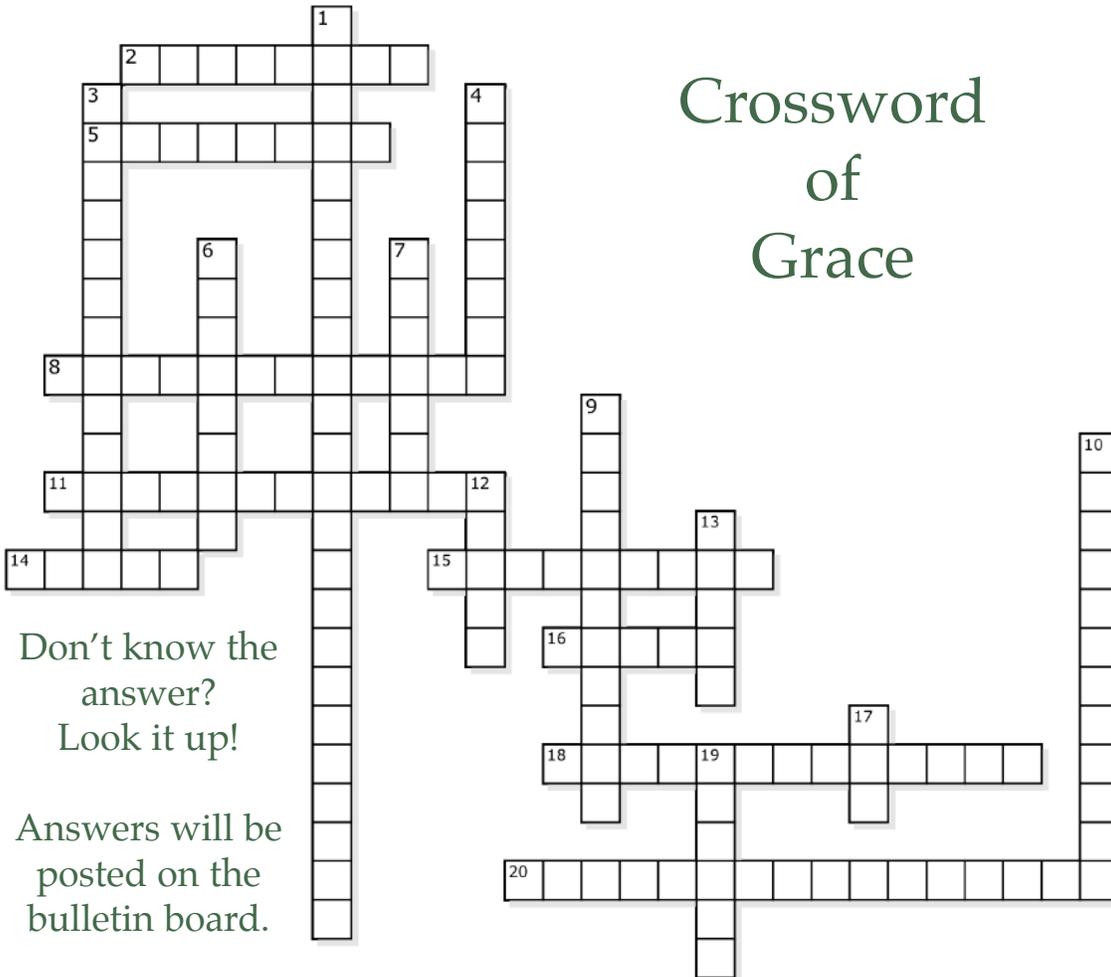
Church Mice

Karl Zorowski



Have You Shared Your Faith in Christ Today?

Crossword of Grace



Don't know the answer?
Look it up!

Answers will be posted on the bulletin board.

Across

- 2) Genesis 1-2
- 5) Matthias, Simon, Philip and Andrew
- 8) Group of people joined in worship
- 11) Father of Lutheranism
- 14) One of two doomed cities
- 15) They dogged Jesus throughout his ministry
- 16) A book of 66 books
- 18) Pastor
- 20) Sign on the cross

Down

- 1) The Fourth Petition
- 3) What were sandals made for?
- 4) Luther's birthplace
- 6) Figures on the ark
- 7) The Philistine of Gath
- 9) Matthew 27; Mark 15; Luke 23: John 19
- 10) Luke 2:1-20
- 12) Great-grandmother of King David
- 13) The Rock
- 17) Juvenile goat
- 19) Location of church sponsored orphans



Uganda Children's Concert

by David Gaenicke

With lively African music, drumming, and exuberant dancing, 17 members of the "African Children's Choir" entertained 450 members and friends of three Christian churches in Port Townsend Sunday evening, August 21! Wow! Grace Lutheran was invited to work with two other churches, New Life Center and First Baptist, to welcome these young singers and provide



Photo: Linda Gaenicke

Pictured above are Christy Johnson, Sue and Dave Peterson, Linda and David Gaenicke with Trevor, Brian and Jotham, guests from Uganda.

housing and meals for three days.

Pastor Coe and Janet offered their home for our three boys, Jotham, Brian, and Trevor along with Chaperone, Auntie Stephanie from Ontario, Canada. Sue and Dave Peterson, Christy Johnson and Linda and Dave Gaenicke were the welcome team for the boys and chaperone. They prepared breakfasts and lunches for the three days, hosted dinners in their homes and provided daily transportation to and from First Baptist church, where the children met for their school work and music rehearsals. These children had a very busy schedule!

The offering and gifts received at each concert will provide

financial help for the children and the African Children's Choir for future school years. Most of the children have little or no family to help provide education and training for later employment. Without these donations, the children would be forced to hire out to work at age seven or eight.

Our young boys met a local friend, Stephen, who enjoyed telling us about Uganda. The whole experience gave us all a deeper appreciation of the courage of these children as they face their daily struggles. They are cheerful and energized and praise God in their music! We were blessed by their visit and were touched by their courage, joy, and trust in God's great steadfast love. GLC



Photo: Keith White

Congratulations!

Linda Cooley received a UGN award on Sep 16 for her outstanding service as a community volunteer. The award was presented by mayor Michelle Sandoval. Linda was recognized for her continuing service as a volunteer for ECHHO. She has served as a board member, office manager and volunteer driver.



Congratulations, Linda, for such outstanding service!

Church Council

President: Jim Espenson
espenson@cablespeed.com

Vice President: Roberta Bymers

Secretary: Linda Cooley

Ministers:

Resources (Treasurer): Anne Argites

Facilities: Dave Peterson

Worship/Music: David Gaenicke

Stewardship: Mark Dembro

Community Concerns & Social Ministry: Bob Threlkeld

Congregational Concerns & Fellowship: Floyd Thompson

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. Coe Hutchison
pastorcoeh@gmail.com
cell 206-369-0606

parsonage 360-385-2281

Secretary: Crissy Dunlap
gracelutheranpt@gmail.com

Organist/Pianist: Lisa Lanza

Choir Director: June Mills

Sunday School Superintendent: Linda Wolff

Editor, Voice of Grace and Church website:

Jim Hladecek, james@hladecek.com