

# 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

March 2012

## Voice of Grace: World Tour



Seeing is believing. Here you see Pastor Coe and Janet Hutchison coming up for air during a snorkeling adventure in Hawaii, with their copy of last month's *Voice of Grace*. They

never travel without the latest copy of the newsletter.

You, too, can be published in the *Voice of Grace* by traveling with your newsletter and verifying the trip with a photo.

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m.



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



## Church Restrooms: *ADA Concerns Flushed*

Gradually over the winter, we have witnessed the process of upgrading the church restrooms. The design review committee spearheaded improvements and conformation with basic ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) recommendations. The restrooms have been upgraded to include new fixtures, safety handles, paint, flooring and several other very attractive touches that make the restrooms far more pleasant to use.

Some members of the congregation were surprised to learn that the restrooms had not been improved since the 1950s. Of particular concern was the failure since that time of addressing ADA issues. Special thanks go to Corrine Bugbee-Smith for focusing the committee on this problem.



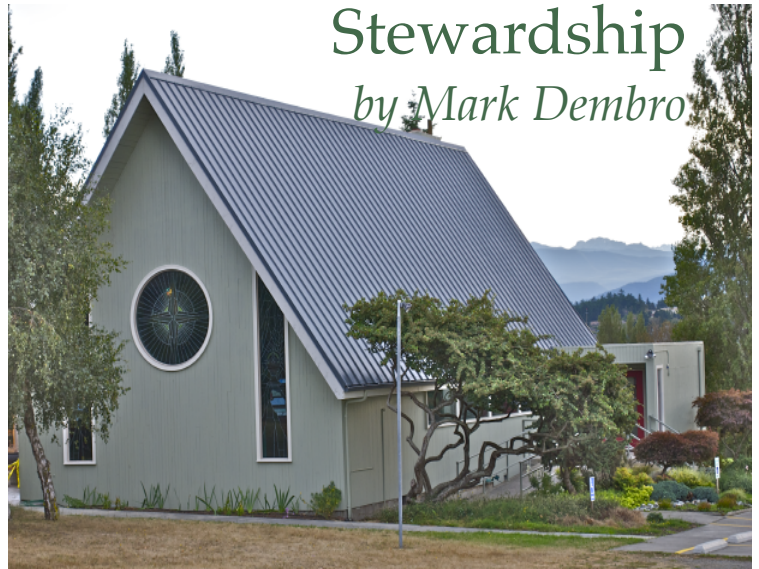
Dave Peterson headed up the volunteer work crew and did much of the plumbing installation; the design review committee selected all the colors; Floyd Thompson did the shopping and hauling of the

toilets, while Jeni Little painted and Bob Haines caulked.

*Diane and I would like to thank this wonderful congregation for all the cards and condolences we received after the death of my brother. It was a shock but the family seems to be dealing with things as well as can be expected. It is a privilege to be a part of this caring church.*

*Bob and Diane Threlkeld*

## Stewardship *by Mark Dembro*



Good news about our stewardship! I'm trying to play a little bit of a trick here, because I think stewardship should always be about good news. When we understand good stewardship as part of our response to God's love, when we remember the Biblical teaching of blessed to be a blessing, then, I think it is very easy to see how good stewardship is all about good news.

Of course, being human, we often spoil it and get things all wrong by thinking that stewardship means someone is asking us for our money. Or even that stewardship means someone is telling us we aren't giving enough money. Nothing puts a damper on generosity like being made to feel we're not generous enough.

So, good news! We started our 2012 giving very well with January giving of \$16,577. (As I am writing this, we do not yet have the figures for February.) To provide some helpful context, our January giving of \$16,577 is \$3,956 over our budgeted giving (of \$12,621) and \$1,533 above our comparable 2011 giving. Our general fund balance on January 31 was a healthy \$15,862 (remember that this is after we decided at our January semi-annual meeting to move \$8,000 from our general fund to our building fund.).

This strong start in 2012 followed a strong finish in 2011. Our full-year 2011 giving was \$157,110. This was 11.8% or \$16,849 over our 2011 budgeted giving of \$140,261 and \$17,825 over our 2010 full-year giving.

Some members of our congregation have asked me recently what happened to our 2012 pledge cards (i.e., why we haven't yet received the cards nor been asked to make our pledges for 2012). Has our council been designing exciting new pledge cards? Has our council been contemplating a new way to pledge? No, and No. The answer is simple: your minister of stewardship forgot to distribute pledge cards for 2012!

The good news (I'm determined to see lots of good news everywhere) is that even with our pledging being behind our normal schedule, our 2012 giving is off to a very strong start. Our council believes that the pledge process is an essential part of our on-going stewardship, so watch for your pledge cards with a letter about pledging in your mailboxes in March.



# Church Council Meeting Summaries

# MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

## January

- Approved turning off alarm system at church
- Appointed Diane Kenyon to audit committee
- Approved appointment of Linda Hinkie to endowment committee, subject to congregation approval
- Approved priorities for 2012 capital projects:
  - Plan and design kitchen remodel
  - Complete courtyard installation
  - Upgrade sanctuary door
  - Upgrade signs
  - New stairs and handrail outside conference room
  - New shed roof and doors at parsonage
  - New entrance walkway at parsonage
  - Paint/stain parsonage
- Approved new language for scholarship program subject to congregation approval
- Approved payment for organ repairs from organ maintenance budget if necessary
- Approved moving \$8,000 from general fund to building fund, subject to congregation approval
- Approved \$2,500 parsonage allowance for Pastor Hutchison for 2012

## February

- Approved endowment committee grant recommendations:
  - \$2,700 to Uganda HIV orphans
  - \$ 550 to Young Life
- Treasurer reported another good month for income
- Approved moving choir director Colleen Johnson from probationary to regular employee
- Discussed need for committee to clarify and revise current policies and procedures
- Jim Hladecek expressed the need for more information and communication from council ministers so that he can provide more comprehensive coverage of events in the *Voice of Grace*
- Discussed the seven council positions up for election this year. Mark Dembro, Roberta Bymers and Linda Cooley have agreed to run again for their positions. Other positions to be filled are worship, social concerns, fellowship and facilities
- Council continues to seek male and female representatives to the Synod Assembly in May

Wed.	Mar. 7	6:00 p.m.	Soup Supper
		7:00 p.m.	Holden Evening Prayer
Sat.	Mar. 10	9:00 a.m. - 12	Guided Prayer Retreat
Wed.	Mar. 14	6:00 p.m.	Soup Supper
		7:00 p.m.	Holden Evening Prayer
Wed.	Mar. 21	6:00 p.m.	Soup Supper
		7:00 p.m.	Holden Evening Prayer
Sat.	Mar. 24	9:00 a.m. - 12	Guided Prayer Retreat
Wed.	Mar. 28	6:00 p.m.	Soup Supper
		7:00 p.m.	Holden Evening Prayer
Thu.	Apr. 5	7:00 p.m.	Maundy Thursday Worship
Fri.	Apr. 6	12:00 p.m.	Good Friday Stations of the Cross
Fri.	Apr. 6	7:00 p.m.	Good Friday Worship
Sat.	Apr. 7	7:00 p.m.	Easter Vigil and Confirmation
Sun.	Apr. 8	9:00 a.m.	Easter Breakfast
Sun.	Apr. 8	10:30 a.m.	Easter Worship
	June 9-16		Holden Village Trip
Sun.	Jul. 8	3 - 5:30 p.m.	Root Beer Social at the Parsonage
Sat.	Aug. 25		Worship at the Shelton Prison

REVERENDFUN.COM COPYRIGHT BIBLE GATEWAY



02-06-2012

THE PLACE HAS BEEN PACKED SINCE I ADVERTISED THAT OUR SERVICES ARE PERFORMED LIVE IN HIGH-DEFINITION 3D





## Dateline: Reno

*"Not What I Expected"*

*by Susan Reid*

As I said in my first communiqué from Reno, I was going to forward bits and pieces about my new home in Reno. First, let me provide a short review of how I landed in this high, dry, brown rock desert after 12 years in verdant Port Townsend, surrounded by snowy mountains, blue ocean—and many VSLs (Very Special Lutherans). My only child, Courtney, and I had always wanted to live closer to each other, especially after her two children were born (now five and almost three). But it was not a feasible re-location for me. My daughter's husband, Joe, was a college football coach and the son of a college football coach. Pigskin is in his blood. The problem with his occupation versus my moving next door to my grandchildren is that the life of a football coach is inherently nomadic. Football coaches make frequent moves, whether they're working up to a larger university or having some bad seasons and being fired. (Getting fired after a few losing seasons is an equal opportunity firing: the entire coaching staff goes.) And that's exactly what happened to Joe in November 2010. The entire Indiana University football staff was fired. After the firing, decent coaching positions seemed unusually scarce. The frightening experience of unemployment continued for months until my determined and hard-working son-in-law laid his passion aside and sought employment in another field. He had some college friends who worked in sales for large pharmaceutical companies. After months of training and testing, Joe was hired to be a drug salesperson. For the first time, he would have the promise of stability. So, when I was ready, I could finally relocate, and we'd all stay put for the foreseeable future.

When my daughter called with the joyous report of the new job, my response on the phone echoed her elation. But there was a catch: the new job was in Reno, Nevada. My inner grandmother bristled with questions: You're moving my grandchildren to the only state that has legalized prostitution? To a state where gambling is everywhere? If Las Vegas is Sodom, then, isn't Reno Gomorrah? Prudently, I shared only my exuberance about the new job!

The moment I hung up, of course, I immediately opened the computer and started learning everything I could about Sin City. I must admit, I was rather surprised by what I found. As it turned out, Reno is located in one of the four Nevada counties that have not made prostitution legal. Advertisements for the two-billion-dollar "gaming" industry (gambling) dominated the side columns of many computer pages, most tempting the gullible with easy money and many "embellished" by photographs of women in revealing costumes. But there also seemed to be many cultural activities and

a bevy of wholesome, family-oriented programs midst the tawdry glitter. Despite Nevada's dreadful economy (the Reno-Sparks area had the worst average drop in house prices nationwide for 2011, and Nevada's jobless rate is the highest in the nation, topping 14%), many citizens must have banded together to keep open the library system, build a state-of-the-art science museum, support a well-respected university, and maintain parks throughout the area.

Here are additional positive bits I discovered about Reno:

- Rand McNally rates Reno/Sparks/Tahoe as the No. 1 outdoor recreation area in the US
- Reno/Sparks area is home to the largest art festival in the country - Uptown Downtown ARTown
- *US News and World Report* ranked the University of Nevada, Reno as one of "America's Best Colleges"
- Reno was ranked the No. 1 literary city by National Endowment for the Arts (surprise, surprise!)
- There are four ELCA churches in the Reno/Sparks area (actually, this situation didn't appear on any list of statistics other than my own personal list).

Once my daughter's family was settled, I made two visits to Reno. (Fair warning to the timid air-traveler: The descent into the Reno airport is an experience that challenges one's faith in aeronautic physics.) I was reluctant to visit in July. Heat quickly turns me into a sweaty, panting woman with dripping hair plastered to her head. But my daughter had assured me that this was dry heat, so I might react differently. Sure enough, it wasn't too bad during the day, and as soon as the sun began to set, we were quite comfortable outside under the veranda. When I visited again in October, of course the days and nights were cooler. But it was the presence of the sun that made all the difference. The sun shines here 300 days a year. Even on a chilly winter day when the thermometer registers 35°, if the sun is out, it feels warm, and no one bothers with jackets or outerwear.

I was still bothered, however, by the barrage of billboards along the highways promoting diversions that I found a disturbing influence for my little ones, but the stark beauty of the high desert was growing on me, and I knew from my research that I'd given Reno short shrift.

After looking at delightful, small houses to rent in a +55 community close to my daughter's neighborhood, I made the hard decision to move southward. Although there's no place on earth like Port Townsend and no church like Grace, Reno and I have made peace and, most important, my grandchildren are just five minutes away!



# Uganda Orphans and Young Life Receive Grants

The church council approved the recommendation of the endowment committee to grant funds to two organizations this year. The Uganda AIDS orphans fund received a grant of \$2,700, and Young Life received \$550. Due to very limited funds, a third request from the Dr. Clayton M. Schail Guild for \$2,000 was not funded, although acknowledged to be a very worthy project.

A total of \$5,800 was requested by the three organizations. The money available to our church for distribution came from the income on the investments contributors have made to the endowment fund. During the past year, the investment fund earned a total of only \$3,256 which was available for distribution. The council heard a report from Jim Hladecek, endowment committee chairman, that the committee (Pastor Coe Hutchison, Susan Reid, Diane Threlkeld and Jim Hladecek) was supportive of all three applications, but, unfortunately, not



The Grace Lutheran Church Council poses for a photo during the February 14 meeting. Left to right: Linda Cooley, Pastor Coe Hutchison, Anne Argites, Jim Espenson, Roberta Bymers and Dave Peterson.

enough money was available to meet all the requests. The committee, therefore, recommended funding be restricted to the orphan project, and Young Life. Grace Lutheran Church has championed the orphan project for several years with the goal of providing an education to Uganda AIDS orphans who would have no viable opportunities without this help. The request from Young Life was for the support of two camperships for young people who needed the experience. The committee recommended that one campership be provided, which was consistent with what was done in previous years. Regretably the fund did not have sufficient income available this year for distribution to the Dr. Clayton M. Schail Guild.



Grace Cinema offers another special feature film for the enjoyment of our members and friends. *What if...* will be shown on the big screen in the fellowship hall at Grace Lutheran on Friday, March 23, at 6:30 p.m.

Fifteen years have passed since Ben Walker (Kevin Sorbo) shared a tearful goodbye with girlfriend Wendy (Kristy Swanson) at the bus stop in their small town. Instead of going to seminary as he'd originally intended, Ben headed into the business world, and now he's a successful investment banker who's completed his biggest deal yet. But on the eve of a celebratory trip to Paris with his new fiancée Cynthia (Kristin Minter), his brand-new Mercedes breaks down and Mike (John Ratzenberger), a mechanic calling himself an angel, gives him a sucker punch that sends him into a sort of "parallel universe" where he never left Wendy behind.

Ben resists his new life, delivering the world's lamest sermon on his first Sunday as the new pastor in his old hometown. He alienates his elder daughter Kimberly (Debby Ryan) by forgetting her name, and sends Wendy into paranoiac tailspins



thinking that he's going to divorce her. He wants desperately to be Banker Ben again, but Mike explains that God isn't going to let that happen until Ben surrenders completely to the life he was supposed to have.

Enjoy an evening of fun entertainment along with heaps of popcorn and soda! This is a film you will want to bring a friend to. Mark your calendar: March 23.



## From Our Pastor: “Knowing God”

“What were we made for? To know God.  
What aim should we set ourselves in life? To know God.

What is the ‘eternal life’ that Jesus gives? Knowledge of God. ‘This is eternal life: that they may

know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent’ (Jn 17:3).

What is the best thing in life, bringing more joy, delight and contentment than anything else? Knowledge of God. ‘This is what the Lord says: *Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understand and knows me*’ (Jer 9:23-24).

What, of all states God ever sees man in, gives God most pleasure? Knowledge of himself. *I desired . . . the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings, says God* (Hos 6:6 KJV).”

So begins a chapter in J. I. Packer’s book, *Knowing God*. When I came across this chapter, I read this opening over and over again. It sounded awfully bold to talk repeatedly about “knowing God?” Yet, Packer is quoting Scripture, specifically verses that reinforce the idea that we are actually created for the purpose of knowing God. Wow! What a privilege, what a gift it is to even contemplate the idea of actually knowing God.

So, how do we go about knowing God? We read and study God’s Word in Scripture. Scripture is one of the primary ways that God reveals himself to us and, therefore, the better we know Scripture—the better we will know God. We pray. Prayer is communication – and prayer is relationship. We are focusing on prayer during this Lenten season. This means that by the end of Lent we will know God more deeply than when Lent began. If you haven’t done so, pick up one of the Lenten Prayer Resource booklets and make a commitment to prayer for this Lenten season.

We know God through worship and the “means of grace” (Holy Communion and Baptism). Each Sunday when we partake of Christ’s Body and Blood, we come to know God better. When we hear God’s Word preached, we come to know God better. When we serve others, we come to know God better.

I encourage you to try two things. First, simply consider and meditate on the idea that we were created to know God. God is not far away, removed and unknowable. God is present and desires intimacy with His creation—and with you. Second, tell God in prayer that you desire to know Him better and then take some of the steps mentioned above to begin to grow in knowledge of God. “Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you” (James 4:8). May God bless you with greater and greater knowledge of Him.

*God Bless,  
Pastor Coe*



## From Our President: "Blessings"

I would like to share with you a prayer I found that really touched my heart. I will abbreviate it. If you want the entire prayer, give me a call and I'll send it to you.

Psalm 66:8 Let the whole world bless our God and sing aloud his praises.

*"Father, as this day begins, I choose to bless you! Father I choose today to go through my day blessing you, whether my circumstances are comfortable to me or not. I will bless you, even if the car won't start or the kids' commotion won't stop. I will bless you because you have rescued me from sin. I lift up your holy name and exalt your goodness because you are holy and righteous. I bless you when gas prices rise, and when my income falls. "I will bless you today when that which I've lost is found" (remember this part). Your love never fails; it always meets me where I am; it always comforts me; it always satisfies me. Even when circumstances or people fail me, you remain faithful."*

I am not much of a handy man when it comes to minor home repairs. It seems when I attempt these repairs, things just don't go the way I hope they will. I recall building a dog house when we lived in Moses Lake. When I had completed the project, I stepped back to admire my work; low and behold, the darn thing just fell over all by itself. I think the dog was relieved that he didn't have to live in it.

Well, all these many years later things haven't changed much. Just the other day I was going to replace our door bell. The new door bell looked pretty innocent in its little container. Little did I know that this project would turn out to be much like the doghouse. I struggled just to get the door bell out of the package; once I did, I had to figure out how to disassemble the door bell so that I could put the new wiring on it. There were not many parts to this job – only two tiny screws. The little screws were a very important part as they were meant to hold the whole thing together. So, I carefully put one screw on the concrete step while I put the other screw into the door bell. The first screw went well; however, when I reached for the second screw – it was gone. I couldn't find it anywhere. I assumed I must have accidentally kicked it with my shoe while I was working. I couldn't finish the project without the screw. I looked and looked to no avail. I even broke down and asked Dianne to help, but neither of us could find it. I knew I wouldn't be able to find a screw that tiny at Henry's Hardware, so now I was stuck.

This event went on for so long I almost missed my guitar lesson, and I had to leave. I was so frustrated that I didn't think I could even focus on my lesson. As I drove away, I began to feel guilty for being frustrated and grouchy about all of this. Then, I remembered reading about blessing God for all the good in my life and for all the things that are not so good in my life. So, I even blessed God for the frustrating time that I was having that day. I went so far as to tell God that I didn't expect him to find the tiny little screw that I lost – but I should have asked.

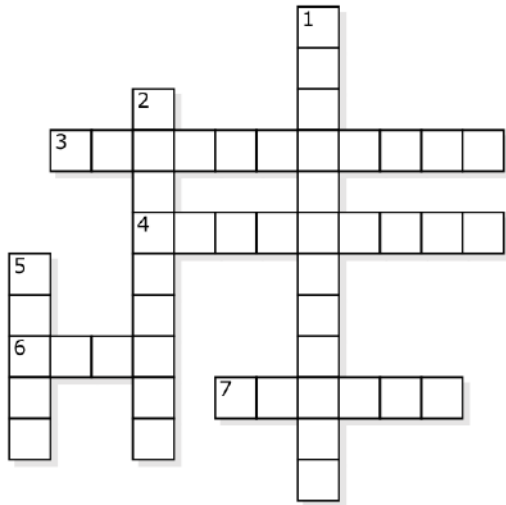
When I got home from my guitar lesson, I asked Dianne if she had any luck finding the little screw, and she answered, "Umm, yes I did, and I blessed God for finding it." No fooling – she stepped on the tiny little screw and felt it through her shoe!

I know that this event isn't what one would think of when talking to God, but God does listen to our prayers, praises, and blessings. It is that personal relationship with God that brings us closer to him. So no matter how small or how overwhelming things may seem, God is always there for us.



*James K. Espens*

## Crossword from Voice of Grace



**Across**

- 3) About to appear
- 4) What we were made for
- 6) Newsletter 2nd desk
- 7) Grace Cinema movie

**Down**

- 1) Traveling newsletter
- 2) Recently upgraded
- 5) What our president lost



Have You Shared Your Faith  
in Christ Today?

## New Members Meet the Council



Photo: Linda Gaenicke

A social was held at the church to introduce new members to the church council. Seated from the left are: George and Joan Thomsen, Cathy Gibson, Lois Ward, Janet Hutchison and Bonnie Toepke. George Hanson (not in photo) also attended.

### 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:** Colleen Johnson
- Sunday School Superintendent:** Linda Wolff
- Editor, Voice of Grace and church Web site:**  
Jim Hladecek, james@hladecek.com