

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.



World Tour: *Voice of Grace*

Pastor Coe received the following message and photo from Karen Swanson-Woolf:

"We just got back from spending two weeks in Newfoundland. We visited L'Anse aux Meadows, the first authentic Norse site found in North America. My 27th great grandmother, Guðríður Þorbjarnardóttir, and her husband journeyed there in 1002 and lived in Leif Eiriksson Camp. While in Vínland, the couple had a son named Snorri

Thorfinnsson, who is reported to be the first European born in the Western Hemisphere.

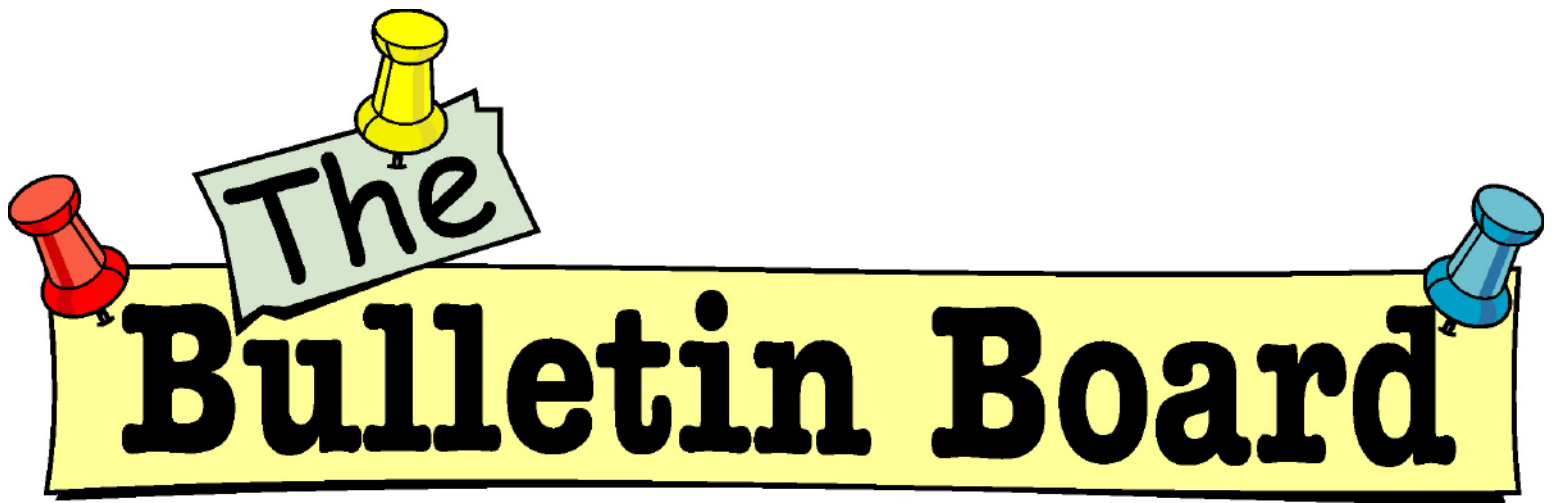
Pictured standing before a Viking long house reproduction with me (left to right): son, Johann, grandson, Kael, and my husband, Bill.

One of my memorable experiences was the zip line on one of Canada's highest mountains, Marble Mountain. What fun!"

Summer Worship 9:30 a.m.



August 2015 Issue



The Bulletin Board

Congregational Meeting Report

At the June 28 congregational meeting, the following officers were elected to two-year terms on the congregational council: Jim Hladecek, president (his second term), Earl Kong, social concerns minister (first term) and Dianne Espenson treasurer (first term). The congregation also heard the report that two college scholarships were provided: Taylor Mills received \$1500, and Britta Janssen received \$500. The congregation voted to put the proceeds from the initial lease payment for Grace Lutheran's mineral rights into the Grace Lutheran Mission Endowment Fund. Finally, the congregation heard reports and considered, but did not decide on, possible changes to the Christmas and Easter worship schedules.

Mineral Rights Update

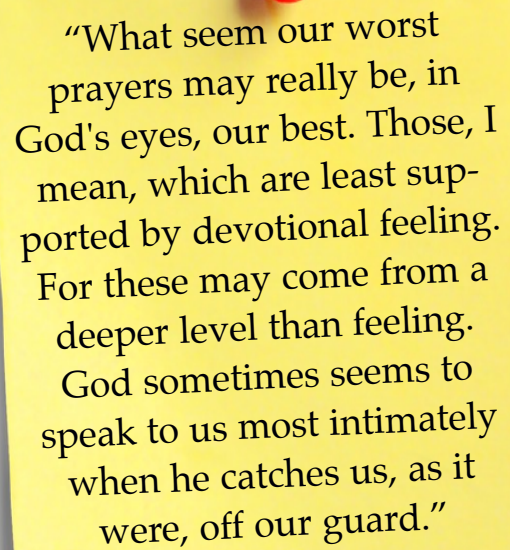
We have received our up front lease payment of \$36,000. Following the directions given at the June 28 congregational meeting, \$960 was used to repay the Memorial Fund for the money that was borrowed to pay the mineral rights attorney fees; \$3,600 (10% as per the Grace Lutheran Constitution) will be distributed with the 2015 Endowment Fund earnings in December; and the remaining \$31,440 has been deposited into the Endowment Fund. Thanks to everyone who participated in all the work along the way on this issue. You all did an excellent job.

DRAFT Policy for the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Individuals

In order to meet the requirements of our insurance, we are developing a policy for the protection of children and vulnerable individuals. The purpose of this policy is to make sure that Grace Lutheran Church is a safe place for everyone who visits and that the employees have appropriate guidelines to follow. If you would like to review or comment on this policy before it is approved by the council, please contact Pastor Coe for a copy. We value your input.

Kitchen Review and Possible Upgrade

The council has initiated a two-step process that may lead to improvements in our Grace Lutheran kitchen. A kitchen committee will be formed that will first discuss and gather input on the current and future purpose of our kitchen. This review may consider questions such as: how we think God is calling us to use our kitchen and what the kitchen's primary purpose will be in the future. The results of this discussion will be considered by the council. Once the purpose of the kitchen is determined, the committee will be asked to develop plans and cost estimates to make whatever changes to the kitchen that are necessary for the best fulfillment of its purpose. If you are interested in serving on the kitchen committee, please contact Pastor Coe or Jim Hladecek.



“What seem our worst prayers may really be, in God's eyes, our best. Those, I mean, which are least supported by devotional feeling. For these may come from a deeper level than feeling. God sometimes seems to speak to us most intimately when he catches us, as it were, off our guard.”

— C.S. Lewis

Uganda Orphans Benefit Concert Raises Over \$2,000

by Lisa Lanza

The enthusiastic audience attending this year's Ugandan Orphan Benefit Concert generously donated over \$2,000. The concert, produced by Grace pianist, Lisa Lanza, showcased two choirs, ten soloists and the vocal/guitar group, "Bella Jack," led by Jeni Little. Returning musicians, Madelyn Kowalski, cello, Marley Erickson on violin, Adlai Erickson on cello, and Sophia Parkhurst, soprano, were joined by Amelia Grant, violin, Ayla Favati, soprano and Ryan Clarke, trombone. Special guests included Lisa's piano professor from college, Dr. Peter Gries, who sang Gilbert & Sullivan's "The Nightmare Song," and local voice teacher Sydney Keegan (substituting for an ailing student) sang a Debussy song. Sharon Dembro read a letter from our Uganda student coordinator/mentor, Kenneth Kasule. The concert was a great success, a testament to the renewed commitment to educating a new group of orphans which began this year.



*"Take one day at a time.
Today, after all, is the tomorrow you
worried about yesterday."*

— Billy Graham

Church Mice

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www.churchmice.net

Our Guard Dog

by Rev. John E. Trincale



My very first assignment as a minister was to an inner-city parish in Camden, New Jersey. There was drug dealing and violent crime within sight of our home, and rough characters knocked on our door at all hours of the day and night.

Not long after we arrived, I had to attend a week-long church conference out of town. I dreaded leaving my wife and three children alone in our new neighborhood. God, I prayed, take care of them.

My first spare moment at the conference, I called home to make sure all was well.

My wife assured me that everything was fine and that no one had bothered them. "But there is one thing," she said. "You had barely gotten out the door when a huge black labrador retriever ambled up to our front porch and lay down; now he won't leave."

"Don't feed him or touch him," I said. "He's probably one of our neighbor's. He'll go back where he belongs soon enough."

The next day when I called, the dog still hadn't left the

front porch. "He never bothers the children or me, but he won't let anyone else come to the door," my wife said, "not even the mailman!"

At the end of the conference, I returned home to find the big black dog sitting on our front porch. He stood up when I opened the car door, his eyes trained on my every move. Once I reached the steps, I said tentatively, "Hey boy, I've got to get in the house to be with my family." With that, he stepped aside.

After hugging my wife and kids, I asked her what we should do about the dog. "I don't know," she said, "I have to admit, I felt completely safe knowing he was out there keeping watch." We both looked to the porch. The dog was gone. I went outside and walked around the block – checking all the front porches. No sign of the big retriever! It was as if he had vanished off the face of the earth – and perhaps he had.

This story, and many more like it, are available through the Guideposts magazine. Subscriptions are available through the website "guideposts.org."

ELCA Malaria Campaign reaches \$14.5 million toward \$15 million goal

CHICAGO (ELCA) – In their commitment to help end malaria-related deaths in Africa, members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) have contributed \$14.5 million to the ELCA Malaria Campaign, \$500,000 shy of the campaign goal of \$15 million by the end of 2015. Through the campaign, ELCA members and others have joined with companion Lutheran churches and partners in 13 African countries to prevent and treat malaria and educate communities about the disease.

“The greatest difference made by the ELCA Malaria Campaign has been in saving the lives of children and preventing a disease that robs families of their livelihood,” said the Rev. Daniel Rift, director for ELCA World Hunger and Disaster Appeal. “We have long known that by reducing the number of times that a child contracts malaria, it is possible to change the trajectory of their future for the rest of their lives.”

Approved by the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the campaign supports programs that provide mosquito nets, insecticides, medication, health care, education and more. As a result of campaign contributions, malaria programs in 10 countries have been fully funded. The final \$500,000 to be raised will complete funding for malaria programs in Burundi, Central African Republic and Namibia.

Jessica Nipp Hacker, director of ELCA Donor Relations and Donor Stewardship and former ELCA Malaria Campaign coordinator, said that as a result of the \$14.5 million in contributions from ELCA members and congregations, the church is “part of a global movement that has slashed malaria deaths in half in Africa. The programs we support have empowered more than 2 million people to keep their families and their communities safe from malaria.”

“One of the great benefits of this continent-wide effort to control malaria is the possibility that the disease will be significantly reduced in whole regions,” Rift said. “But that happens only if rural communities are involved in prevention and treatment. In most of the areas where the ELCA Malaria Campaign has been at work, no other organization has been able to get access to treatment and prevention and educate communities about effective implementation. In many locations the ELCA Malaria Campaign has helped to build up the skills and capabilities of our companions and partners.”

In Burundi, the ELCA Malaria campaign supports the Lutheran World Federation-Burundi malaria program. Because the disease intensifies the cycle of poverty and hunger, the malaria program is fundamental to the overall

economic stability of the community. The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 145 churches representing more than 72 million Christians in 79 countries. The ELCA is the communion's only member church from the United States.

In an ELCA Malaria Campaign blog post, Bugera Barnabe, program coordinator for Lutheran World Federation-Burundi, described the importance of the malaria program in Burundi's Cankuzo province.

“In implementing our community programs, we came to see so many people suffering from malaria; so many resources going to malaria,” said Barnabe. “Malaria was taking the time of the people. It was taking the resources of the people. We thought if we don't deal with malaria, then there will be no community development ever. If we don't deal with malaria, all other outcomes will be jeopardized completely.”

Rift said communities that have experienced a reduction in malaria-related deaths “are now ready to take on new challenges.

“It will be continued gifts to ELCA World Hunger that will help with those next opportunities,” he said. “The work to address malaria often becomes a starting point to a future that includes overcoming other sources of hunger. Hope in the face of malaria brings opportunity to claim hope in the face of additional challenges.”

Challenges addressed by ELCA World Hunger include economic development to build up sustainable communities, support for better agricultural methods, initiatives to supply safe water and sanitation, and attention to other health-related issues and diseases facing children.

“The ELCA Malaria Campaign has been a great gift to communities in 13 African nations,” said Rift. “Likewise it has been a gift to the church, opening doors of new possibilities to stand with those who are living with challenges that can overwhelm. For us all, this commitment to address malaria has planted seeds of possibility for life and abundance.”

The ELCA Malaria Campaign is one of 10 priorities of the ELCA's five-year comprehensive campaign, Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA. Approved by the 2013 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, the campaign seeks to raise \$198 million to help sustain and grow the ministries of this church. - See more at: <http://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/7758#sthash.sqHC0GSx.dpuf>

Customer Service from “The Upper Room”

submitted by Roberta Bymers

Read Philippians 4:4-8

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

- Philippians 4:6 (NIV)

Today's Devotional

“Your call is very important to us,” says the typical customer service recording. When I hear that, I think:

If it were that important to you, someone would be there to answer!

After discovering how long the wait will be, sometimes I just hang up the phone because what I needed wasn't that important or pressing.

How great it is to contrast that experience with our prayers to God! Sometimes I hear people criticize other people's prayers because they request seemingly unimportant things: for their favorite sports team to win or for the weather to be nice for a trip they plan to take. Yet, the verse quoted above tells us that there are no unimportant prayers. God can take all these “calls” at once, encouraging us to call frequently and with any kind of request. We are instructed to take all our concerns to the Lord in prayer, not just the life-or-death ones.

What a marvelous feeling it is to share everything with God: the big, the small, and all the things that lie in between!

Read more from the author, here.

Andrew Billings (Alabama, USA)

Thought for the Day:

My call is very important to God.

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for hearing all the thoughts we bring to you and for loving us unconditionally. Amen.

Prayer Focus:

Customer Service Employees

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**Have You Shared Your
Faith in Christ Today?**



Pastor's Message:

*"I was glad when they said
to me, let us go to the house
of the Lord."*

Psalm 122:1

I'm pretty excited on Sunday mornings; I like going to church. How about you?

William Barclay, a biblical scholar, told the story of a friend who had found a preacher he loved to listen to.

The friend took a 10-year old niece to hear the preacher

and after the service asked what she thought. "Terrific," she replied, "I had two sweeties with me in my pocket and I clean forgot to eat them." "That is just about the best compliment a preacher could ever receive," reflected Barclay. He continued, "The preacher must feel the wonder of the Christian message." Only then will the preacher and the congregation know the thrill of worship. It is a goal to which I and all preachers should aspire.

But it's not just about the preaching is it? It is also about receiving Holy Communion and being in community with one another and with God. There is something mystical about worship, something we can feel and experience but can't describe. Each person matters; even if we don't speak with everyone each week, it is important that they are there. The community is incomplete without them. It is likewise important to others that we are there. The community is incomplete without us and we are incomplete without them. We are the most whole, most complete, when we are worshipping in community. Our identity is not wholly individualistic but is at least partially defined by our community. We live out our God-given identity most fully when we are in community. So it follows that we would feel most complete when we are with our community worshipping the one who makes us community.

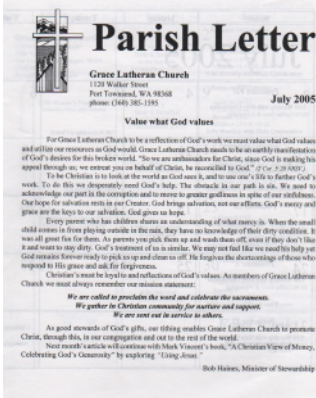
Jesus says that he came that we may have life and have it abundantly (John 10:10). Abundant life in Christ is life in community. So here is a question for you to consider. How can church help you lead a more abundant life? If you are not feeling that sense of delight, desire and anticipation when you wake up on Sunday morning, what would need to change for you to feel that way? We're talking abundance here, not just happiness, but belonging, a sense of purpose, justice, peace and community. In other words, a sense of the kingdom of God.

If you are feeling that sense of delight, if you are glad when they say to you, "Let us go to the house of the Lord," I encourage you to share that feeling and that enthusiasm with others. If that isn't what you feel, I would encourage you to think about what needs to change for you to feel that way. I hope you will tell me or a trusted council member about it. Jesus came that we may have abundant life, and church is a place where we ought to experience that abundant life. If that's not the case, then, let's change things so that is your experience. Let us know what you are thinking.

In the meantime, I pray that the sermon will be interesting enough to make you forget the candy in your pocket.

*God Bless,
Pastor Coe*

Voice of Grace 10 Year Anniversary



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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 August 2005

Parish Letter Gets Facelift and Name Change

The Voice of Grace Premier as the Congregation Newsletter

Starting with this issue, the *Parish Letter* becomes a part of Grace Lutheran Church history. In its place emerges the revised *Voice of Grace*, a monthly newsletter that is designed to bring the news of our church to every member of the congregation and interested members of the community. The *Voice* will be the instrument the council uses to keep the congregation up-to-date on what is taking place. Jim Hladecek will serve as the editor and will actively search out the newsworthy within the activities or our varied committees and groups.

The monthly publication will include a regular column from the pastor that relates to an important issue or theological subject as well as a column from the council chairman. It will also report on the actions of the various committees and activities taking place within our church. The format for the publication is larger than the previous newsletter and is printed in color. The format change was designed to increase interest and readability.

Suggestions for potential subjects to be covered

Adele Fosser Receives Award

in the *Voice of Grace* are welcomed. Share your suggestions with Jim Hladecek at 379-0306.

Adele Fosser received the President's Award during the June semi-annual congregational meeting. The award is presented by the council chairman to a congregation volunteer who demonstrates commitment to the parish through various services for the church and members of the congregation. This year the award went to none other than Adele Fosser. In presenting the award, Jim Hladecek announced that the award was going to a special saint of the church, a saint, he said, who could best be described as a "gap filler." A gap filler is one who steps in without being asked when there is a job to be done and without fanfare simply gets it done. Also, a gap filler is described as a person who, without being asked, will fill in when one of us is not able to meet an expectation. In other words, Adele Fosser is one of those people



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The last issue of the Grace Lutheran Church *Parish Letter* was published in July 2005. It was replaced in August 2005 with the first issue of the *Voice of Grace* (above). The *Voice of Grace* has been published nearly monthly for the past 10 years. Today, as in August 2005, our newsletter received a minor facelift to keep up with modern graphic design.

Some past issue covers have been added to this page to remind you of some of the special times we all enjoyed as part of the Grace Lutheran congregation.



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- President:** Jim Hladecek
james@hladecek.com
- Vice President:** Mary Ronen
- Secretary:** Betty Oakes
- Ministers:**
- Resources (Treasurer):** Dianne Espenson
- Facilities:** Jim Little
- Worship/Music:** Nina Daly
- Stewardship:** Don Fristoe
- Social Concerns:** Earl Kong
- Facilities:** Karen Erickson

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