

January 2009

# Letter of Grace

## Grace Lutheran Church, ELCA

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### *From the Pastor ...*

Here we are, *anno domini 2009!*

You don't here that very much anymore. However, I can remember when television was a fairly new invention, and one news commentator from a local station in Charlotte would begin the first broadcast of each new year with the words, *anno domini* (the year of our Lord).

There was a lot of emphasis in those years upon the significance of the new year as being a fresh beginning – one in which Christ was very much present and active. We got a sense of hope and promise from those words.

Over the decades as all kinds of mechanical, scientific and medical inventions have affected the way in which we live out our lives, humanity has seen things as being a little more complex – even complicated. We have ceased to put as much prominence on the significance of “*A. D.*” as each year has passed.

I believe, however, that the year *A. D. 2009* is an appropriate time for us re-focus our energies and our faith upon those things that really matter in life- both for us and for our neighbors. We have seen in this past year how our dependency upon our own resources can sometimes come back to bite us. We have witnessed how some individuals in positions of power will sacrifice the welfare and well-being of the masses in order to gain for themselves. Yet, in spite of all of this, there is more charity and sharing on the part of selfless individuals than at any other time in recent history.

That is because the *year of our Lord* is much more than just a way to introduce another year. We, as Christians, truly believe that our Lord can (and does) influence our decisions and the way in which we live our lives. We know that when things get tough for all of society, there are still those who are having a harder time making it from day to day than most of us. Our faith tells us that this is not fair, and we are compelled to do something about it.

In this *Year of Our Lord, 2009*, Grace is taking a long, hard look at our vision for ministry, our goals, even our attitudes toward ourselves as a family of God and toward our community. I applaud this self-assessment, and I ask each of you to prayerfully consider your role in this process. I encourage you to join the Council and Pastor Renee LiaBraaten at the assessment workshop on the morning of Saturday, January 10 in order to be in on the ground floor developing a ministry plan for our future. I am excited about the possibilities that such an assessment will raise for our work together as a people of God as we seek to do the Lord's will in his year of 2009.

Yours in Christ,

*Pastor Michael*



Dr. Michael W. Frye, Pastor  
Ellen Koester, Associate in Ministry  
Jan Decker, Admin. Assistant  
Janice Peery, Organist/Accompanist  
George Joyner, Adult Choir Director  
Karen Johnson, Youth Choir Director  
& Adult Chime Choir Director  
Joan Fitzgerald, Youth Choir  
Accompanist  
Lynn Hess, The School of Grace  
Director

#### Our Mission:

As Christ clearly calls us, we seek the fullness of life in Christ for all people by:  
Worshiping and praising God;  
Supporting, nurturing, and equipping each other and our congregation;  
Serving people in need in our community and world;  
Witnessing to all in the name of Christ.”



**HAPPY  
NEW YEAR!**

## *Lunch and Learn: Mission Trip to Reynosa, N*

The Global Missions group invites you to attend a Lunch and Learn session on Sunday, January 18 beginning at 12:30 PM. We will discuss plans for our mission trip to Reynosa, Mexico in early May of 2009. The main purpose of the trip will be to construct a small block home for one of the resident families of Reynosa; however, there are many benefits to the participants than just the building of a home. We hope that you will join us for lunch. We'll provide lunch, but we do ask that you please sign your name on the poster in the narthex or call the office to let us know that you will be attending.



Another date to circle on your calendar is Saturday, February 7. That is the day that we will be "bowling for Reynosa." We hope that you will participate, either as a bowler or as a sponsor. There will be more details on this event in the weekly Letter of Grace.

## *To Our Grace Church Family*

Thank you all so much for the kind, thoughtful, and generous gifts you have given us this holiday season. We appreciate your kindness and generosity, as well as for your support and encouragement throughout the year. Knowing that you are thinking about us and keeping us in your prayers helps us to much as we go about our work from day to day. It is an honor and privilege to serve our Lord with you here. God bless you. God's blessings as we journey together in the new year.



— Pastor Michael, AIM Ellen Koester, Jan Decker, Janice Peery

## *Retreat Report*

In November Bryant Loesch, Hannah Jablonski, Amanda Dieckhaus, Deena Dieckhaus, Ms. Ellen, Mr. Dieckhaus, along with us, Sara Yeh and Deanna Loesch, went to Camp Caraway. It was for the North Carolina Synod's Middle School Retreat. The theme for those two days and the entire year was "Go Green, God's Work our Hands." We did some activities with that theme. One example is where in our small groups we had one person lay down on the floor and we traced their outline on a giant sheet of paper. On one side of the person we wrote and drew pictures of all the bad things they, and all of humanity, have done to the environment on the other half was all the things we are doing right and how we are helping the earth.

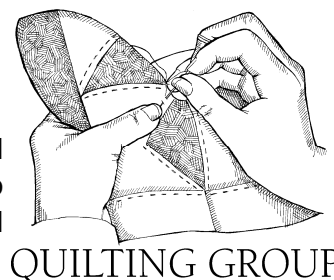


During the retreat, we also talked alot about listening to God. We even listened to a few verses. It was about God calling to Samuel (1 Samuel Chapter 3 Verses 1-10). On Sunday, some of us also receive affirmations. Unfortunately, Sara's group did not get an affirmation, but I (Deanna) did. The affirmation said that I do (1) poetry for the Lord and (2) am reflective.

And just think, we did all of this in just about 16 to 17 hours, including the time we slept. For such little time we sure did alot!

## *Lutheran World Relief*

**AMAZING GRACES** made and shipped a total of 205 quilts to Lutheran World Relief this year. All the 10 churches in this section of N.C. who brought boxes to Grace shipped over 4,000 lbs. of quilts, soap, school and health kits to be used wherever the need exists.



QUILTING GROUP



## Planning Workshop

## Ministry Planning Workshop

The information gathered from the individual interviews and focus groups is now being summarized to find Grace's top goals or initiatives by Pastor LiaBraaten. She will be sharing the results during a workshop on Saturday, January 10th from 9:00am-1:30pm. Your participation is prayerfully encouraged for us to finalize and implement our future goals. The implementation of the top goals is the key to our success and is the desired outcome of this workshop.

Please contact the church office to inform us of your attendance by January 4th with a special rotation if day care will be needed. Lunch will be provided

## LFS Carolinas

### Point of Change

*"Let your eyes look straight ahead, fix your gaze directly before you. Make level paths for your feet and take only ways that are firm. Do not swerve to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil." Proverbs 4:25-27*

Being a teenager is a time for a lot of different things. It is a time to learn, grow and most of all it is a point of change. As a ninth-grader in high school, Nathan\* like any other boy has his favorite school subjects, sports and goals for the future. Nathan lives in a LFS Carolinas group home and is using this time to change for the better.

Nathan came to LFS Carolinas after having difficulty living with his stepmother, where he found himself in a repetitive cycle of fighting. To prevent the fighting, he was assigned to a group home by the Department of Social Services (DSS).

Now Nathan has a new outlook on his life that he might not have had otherwise. He has maintained good behavior and is now seen as a role model to some of the other boys.

His mentors have been working along side him to overcome some behavioral issues by encouraging the positive decisions he makes. This guidance reflects in Nathan's actions towards others in the home.

He also looks to his older sister for strength. The two are very close and her choices in life have made an impact on Nathan. She is in the Air Force and because of her he also wants to join the military when he graduates from high school.

Nathan started off fighting but with the guidance of the group home and from his sister, he has become a leader. He, along with others in the home, sees himself as a teacher that helps others realize how their actions can impact others.

Not only is he a leader to others, he has also found the strength to be a leader in his own life.

"Being in the home has changed me," said Nathan. "I used to get in trouble. Now they've taught me to walk away."

Having found new stability in his life, Nathan is able to focus his energy in a more positive direction. He is applying his time to bringing his grades back up and working on getting back to his family in Virginia.

\* Names have been changed for confidentiality.



# WELCA News

Dear Sisters in Christ,

Thankyou, thankyou, thankyou for your support and the support and donations from you ladies of the congregation who anonymously left your cookies, fruit, and towels in the fellowship hall during the week before the Christmas Party. It was all so gorgeous, the bounty of fruit piled on the stage, and cookies lined up on a neighboring table in sumptuous array! We came into the hall, sat down for a great dinner with magnificent desserts, and chatted with each other. We revealed ourselves to our Secret Prayer Sisters and drew new ones by lot. We had an inspira-

tional guest, who spoke to us about a refuge home for adolescent girls, called "House of Hope" in Clayton. She was an impressive young woman, and everyone was most interested in the program she outlined for the girls in her care.

Then we got down to business, the business we came for. There were baskets on tables by the wall, baskets of all shapes and colors. First we assembled, by the dozen, assorted cookies from the donated packages. Then we grabbed a basket and chose a dozen assorted pieces of fruit. The arrangement was completed in an artistically pleasing manner with one bag of cookies. We tied up the baskets in cellophane with a fancy bow on it, and they ended up in cars ready for delivery to the families of PLM-FT and our dear shut-ins. We felt great; we got it all together in a very short time working together in Christmas spirit, and the baskets were beautiful. Merry Christmas to us all, every one!

The Alzheimers Awareness Program is still coming together nicely. Flyers and pamphlets will have been laid out in the Narthex by now, and a poster, which will explain that light refreshments will be served and childcare provided for parents who wish to attend. Please talk to Jean Gerald if you are interested in attending: the telephone number is 870-1433. Our program is co-sponsored by the Membercare Committee and is expected to answer a need in our parish for information about this disease, with a question and answer period designed to help differentiate between age- related memory loss and dementia. We all need to hear what Peggy Smith has to say; so please come on February 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:30PM.

— submitted by Jean Gerald

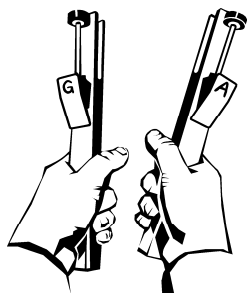
## ✠ Christian Symbol ✠

### .ANCHOR CROSS

The anchor is a symbol of the Christian's hope in Christ. "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure" (Hebrews 6:19, NIV). The early Christians used this cross during the days of persecution. They saw hope in the anchor's cross, while non-Christians saw nothing but an anchor.



## ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!



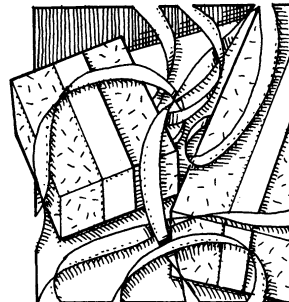
Do you like music? Do you enjoy hearing our great chime choirs, both the teens and adults? If so, we desperately need your help! The adult chime choir needs 3-4 more chimers in order to continue in January. The teen chime choir also needs 1-2 more players. Very important: You do not need any experience and as long as you can count to 4, we can teach you how to play. We have a lot of fun together learning about music and serving our church family. Please consider joining this ministry! Practices are every Tuesday with teens at 6:00 (prior to Faith+Life) and adults from 7:00-8:00. Questions?

### Handchimes

Call Karen Johnson at 676-2968 or email at [ksjmail@aol.com](mailto:ksjmail@aol.com). Thanks!

# Care Packages

Our tradition of sending care packages to our college and military members continues for Valentine's Day. We would welcome contributions of snack items, small, inexpensive games, and/or personal notes. We will place boxes in each Sunday School room early January for donations. We would like to end the collection by January 25th, so we can get the mailing done. The Member Care Committee thanks you for your support of this project to our away from home members.



We thank you for the visits and the kindness our Grace Family has given us the past months. The caroling at Christmas time was so special. We continue to pray daily for each of you and hope we can return to our regular attendance soon.

— Vernon & Margarette Peoples

# Member Information

## ADDRESS CHANGES

Justin Landwehr, 1922 Edgerton Drive, Durham NC 27703-6013

## BIRTHS

Emma Grace Waddell, daughter of Matt & Stacey (12/3/08)

## BAPTISMS

Alexandra Grace Bobay (11/30)  
Regan Marie Shelton (Living Spirit) (11/30)  
Jacob Douglas Smith (12/21)



Our Church Family

## Altar Flowers

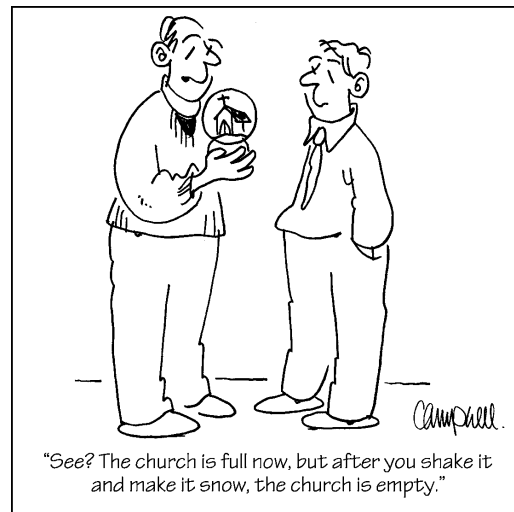


**NOTICE!!!** — It is time to fill out the flower chart for next year. Giving flowers in honor or memory of someone and having flowers in the sanctuary contributes to our worship service. If you are interested in participating in our flower program, call me. Each vase is \$30. This will certainly help me fill the chart for 2009.

— Lois Jean Query, 847-5497



# On a Lighter Note



## Wake County Lutherans and Thrivent Financial Build

The Thrivent Builds program has approved sponsorship of a build in Wake County again in 2009. Seven or more Wake County ELCA and LCMS congregations will work as partners with Thrivent Financial and Habitat For Humanity of Wake County to assist a qualified family build and own an affordable home in Cary.

### Groundbreaking at Falcone Point on January 31, 2009

Please join us at Lot 6, Falcone Point in Cary on January 31 at 9:30 a.m. to break ground with **Tenenet Woyesa** and two children.

Suggested driving directions starting from anywhere in Midtown Raleigh: (1) drive on I440 west to exit 3 at Hillsborough Street. (2) drive toward and then 1/4 miles past the State Fairgrounds to the NC54 exit (turn right). (3) Follow NC54 or Chapel Hill Road to Harrison Avenue, then exit and turn left. (4) Drive south on Harrison to Chatham Street and turn right. (5) Drive on West Chatham Street to Old Apex Road and turn left. (6) Drive on Old Apex Road to Falcone Point and follow local signs to parking.

### Build Schedule and Funding Information

This year instead of scheduling workdays throughout the hot summer, we will begin building in February and be near completion by the first of July. Grace Lutheran will be asked to supply 5 to 10 volunteers on each of 5 or 6 Saturday workdays. The actual schedule, and a volunteer recruitment effort will be announced in mid-January.

The partner churches will be required to donate about \$13,000 against matching funds from Thrivent Financial For Lutherans. (Without this Thrivent matching, Habitat of Wake County would be requiring the supporting sponsors to provide \$75,000 to build a house like this.) Sometime during the year, pending approval by the church council the Sheep and Goats Committee anticipates holding a fundraising event with a modest goal to meet or surpass our expected portion of this financial commitment. Contact any representative of the committee for more information.

— submitted by Wayne Cornelius



## Agapé † Kure Beach Ministries

**Summer is coming!** We are searching for quality Christian young adults to serve as counselors on our 2009 summer staff. Applicants must be 19 years minimum, love kids, and want a fun and exciting challenge. Contact us for an application.

- **Saturday Safari January 10 Vermipost and February 28, 2009 Predators**  
Cost is \$7.00 per person \$35.00 maximum per family. Pre-registration required.
- **Summer brochure will be arriving at your church soon.** Contact the office if you need more brochures.
- Our ministry is in need of a **4 x 4 pick up** for Camp Agapé.
- **Building Youth Groups is for grades 3-5.** This is a growing part of our ministry to your church. Contact Alissa if you are interested or want more info about this program about weekend and summer programs.
- **Openings for Summer Day Camps.** Contact Alissa for dates and details.
- **Beach weekend opening February 13-15, 2009 at winter rates – call KB**

Contact Camp Agapé: Telephone: 919-552-9421

E-mail: [agape@agapekurebeach.org](mailto:agape@agapekurebeach.org)

Web site: [www.agapekurebeach.org](http://www.agapekurebeach.org)

Contact Kure Beach: Telephone 910-458-0783

E-mail: [kurebeach@agapekurebeach.org](mailto:kurebeach@agapekurebeach.org)

**Grace Lutheran  
Church Leadership**

Council

**President**

Vic Lebsock  
(847-1360)

**Vice President**

Suzanne Hagen  
(781-7561)

**Secretary/  
Communications**

Dottie Scott

**Treasurer**

Ray Gerald

**Evangelism**

Christine Camp

**Fellowship**

Jill Nobles

**Finance**

Ray Gerald

**Long-Range Planning**

Suzanne Hagen

**Member Care**

Christine Camp

**Property**

Steve Dieckhaus

**Sheep & Goats**

Peter Hauser

**Stewardship**

Eric Kohl

**Teaching & Learning**

Leon Moser

**Worship**

Jim MacDaid

**Youth**

Ty Freeman

**Youth Liaison**

Hilary Holmes

Committee Chairs

**Evangelism**

Christine Camp

**Fellowship**

Joan Fitzgerald, Jill Nobles

**Long Range Planning**

Tom Thompson

**Member Care**

Donna Lebsock

**Property**

Barbara Irene

**Sheep & Goats**

Wayne Cornelius

**Stewardship**

John Hefner

**Teaching & Learning**

Bonnie Torgerson

SS Superintendent

**We Believe in Prayer**  
Prayers the past month



For praise and thanksgiving...

Mark, ELCA Presiding Bishop, Leonard, our Synod Bishop, for Pr. Michael, AIM Ellen, and for all pastors, teachers, and leaders in the Church  
The ministries of this congregation, The School of Grace , PLM-Families  
Together, North Raleigh Ministries, Helen Wright Center, Meals on Wheels, Food Bank, Kairos Outside, Alpha, Alliance Medical Ministries, Urban Ministries, Open Door Clinic, Joy of Discovery Lutheran Church, Gracepoint Lutheran Church in Pittsboro, Living Spirit Lutheran Church, The Universal Christian Church of Haiti  
Our Prayer Partner Congregation, Christ Lutheran Church, Stanley, NC  
The President, Congress and Supreme Court of the United States  
Leaders of all nations, especially those entrusted with finding a lasting peace in the Middle East  
Our military forces (especially Alex Berry, Christyn Holkamp, Joseph Liefer, Laurie Middleswarth, Grant Pinkston, Dan Ragone, Jasper Rogers, Chris Weston, Karl Wick, and Pr. Carl Yost)

For people around the world in need...

Victims and families of those involved in terrorists attacks  
Our neighbors who aren't sure where their next meal will come from

For our homebound members...

Louise Bonke (615 Spring Forest Rd, Room 213, Raleigh 27609)  
Erika Reter (6301 Cape Charles Dr., Raleigh 27617)  
Roz Sekadlo (700 Red Forest Trail, Raleigh, NC 27615)  
Paula Stresemann (North Carolina Special Care Center, Wilson, NC)

For illness, surgeries or injuries... (Members)

Jennifer Andrews	Bob Hanson	Rick Lockhart	Barbara Rodberg
Scott Bolin	Gunther Herrmann	Joan McGaffin	Dottee Tonnesen
Melba Fowler	David Keithly	Valerie Mulvaney	Dave Wahlstrom
Karin Gougeon	Joanne Keithly	Vernon Peoples	Doris Wunsch
Clarence Haldy	Ben Lewis	Margaret Peoples	

For illness, surgeries or injuries... (Family/Friends of Members)

Gerri Boatlick	Pat Brown's cousin
Jim Brown	Pat Brown's brother
The Chitinis Family	Suzanne Hagen's friends
Kelly Collins	Jeane Joyner's niece
Dominic Freni & Family	Wayne & Dorothy Conners' family Friend
Frank Haag	Sue Hatch's fiancé
Kathy Harris	Jeane Joyner's colleague
Dorothy Held	Carolyn Loncosky's grandmother
Tim & Kaye Green	Gordy & Peggy Koehler's neighbors and friends
Charles Kistler	Barbara Oates' father
Chris Koehler	Gordy & Peggy Koehler's son
John Leonhardt	Denny Murphy's uncle
Laurie Martin	Peggy MacDaid's sister
Pat Samuels	Pat Brown's friend
Mary Lou Sielschott	Suzanne Hagen's aunt
Tom Torbet	Suzanne Hagen's brother
Carolyn Winter	Margaret Winter's daughter
Bob Wyatt	Jeff Wyatt's father

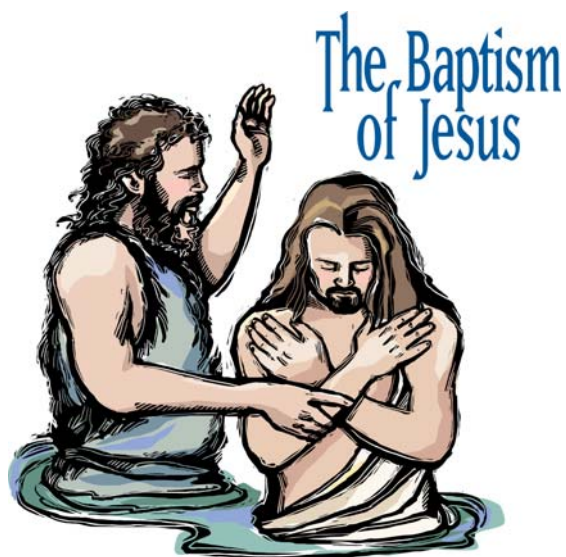
For families of...

John Dittman	Sue Hatch's father-in-law
Jack Hatch	John Hefner's mother
Dorothy Hefner	Sarah Wilson's brother
George Hess	Don Holtz's mother
Virginia Holtz	A student at L-R University
Harrison Kowiac	Suzanne Hagen's friend
Kristian Marceno	
Tony Moreno	

GRACE LUTHERAN  
CHURCH  
5010 SIX FORKS ROAD  
RALEIGH, NC 27609



January 2009



*January 11th*

#### WAYS TO START OFF THE NEW YEAR

According to historians, the celebration of the New Year is the oldest holiday. Ancient Babylonians first observed it in the spring about 4,000 years ago. In 153 B.C., the Roman Senate declared January 1 as New Year's Day.

The early church started to hold religious observances that coincided with pagan celebrations. Some denominations still mark Christ's circumcision on New Year's.

The tradition of making resolutions dates back to the Babylonians, who often promised to return borrowed farm equipment. Using a baby to symbolize rebirth and the new year dates back to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians.

Modern-day New Year's customs often focus on prosperity. In Spain, people eat 12 grapes at midnight, hoping to have 12 happy months to come. The Dutch eat donuts because another year has come full circle. One of the best ways to start off the new year is by spending time in prayer. Look back on God's many blessings during the completed year and ask for his guidance in the one to come. Also consider starting the tradition of praying for people around the world on New Year's Day.