



GRACE NOTES

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 46 WOODLAND STREET, HARTFORD, CT 06105 860-527-7792

New England Synod Assembly

Live via your computer – The 2010 annual assembly of the New England Synod, June 3-5 in Sturbridge, is coming to a computer near you. This year, you can follow the assembly action in real time from your computer. Simply go to www.nesynod.org/events/synod_assembly.php to access the live feed. The broadcast schedule is listed next to it right now.

Grace will be represented by **Barbara Ruhe, Vera Kaljob, and Pastor Steege.** **Lloyd Smith** will be there as a member of the Synod Council, and **Ted Steege** will be there representing the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

The Assembly will be electing several officers and Council members, as well as members of the ELCA Churchwide

Assembly to be held in 2011. The Assembly also will consider several resolutions, including one on energy stewardship, and one on supporting in word, prayer, and action our Palestinian brothers and sisters in the Holy Land.

Cards of encouragement for Bishop Younan. During her recent three-month sabbatical, Bishop Margaret G. Payne had a chance to travel to Israel and Palestine, where she spoke with Bishop Munib Younan of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, one of our companion relationships. According to Payne, Younan was “feeling quite discouraged” following new action by the Israeli government. As a sign of support, congregations in the

New England Synod are being asked to bring cards and notes of encouragement for Younan to the synod assembly. These will be collected and sent to Bishop Younan at his office in Jerusalem.

The LSS In-Gathering this year will include alarm clocks, flatware, new shower curtains & rings, new sheets & pillow cases (twin & full), liquid soap (bath and dish), and toothbrushes & toothpaste. Bring these items to Grace any time before May 2, and they will be brought to the Assembly for distribution to refugee families.

A Festive Eucharist with ordinations will be held at Trinity Lutheran Church, Worcester at 7:30 p.m. Friday, June 4. All members of the New England Synod are welcome to attend this stirring service. A reception will follow in the church parlors.

June

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Here Comes Summer!

Note from Pastor

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to set us free from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen. Galatians 1:3-5

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Here we come, into one of the nicest parts of the year in Connecticut. There are ten or twelve “nicest parts” of course, but coming from a state where it’s still pretty wintry in May, I especially relish the gentle transition from late spring into summer that blesses us here.

Every three years in the Sundays in June we get to spend a little time with one of the most important and beautiful – and often forgotten – little letters Paul wrote, the one to the new Christians in Galatia. In fact, many hold that Galatians is basic to any discussion of what is essential in Christianity.

Apparently someone in their group has been convincing them that Paul had taught that the Law – that is the Torah, the great gift of the Lord to the children of Israel –

no longer has any role at all. They want “true Christians” to go right back to observing every last bit of rule, ritual, and restriction found in the many scrolls of the Old Testament. If they are gentiles, they must be circumcised. Paul is heartbroken.

Paul’s message, written with all kinds of emotion because he cares so deeply about that little congregation, is as warm and fresh and life-giving as an early summer day. It’s not that the Law is gone, he says. The good news is that the Law has been fulfilled for us by Jesus Christ. It’s amazing how easy it is for us Christians of any age to forget that. Paul says, “The law was our disciplinarian until Christ came, so that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.” But still there is that little voice inside us – it’s called the *opinio legis* – that just can’t believe we are free. “Maybe if I just try a little harder to be a little bit better,” we think, “just to

make sure God will love us in the end.”

It’s the kind of thinking that drove Paul crazy. This is why we have church – yes, even in summer – because we need to remind one another that we are *already* children of God. In June we will be continuing our occasional series on Luther’s marks of the church: Word, Baptism, Communion, Confession, the Pastoral Office, Prayer, and Suffering – what Luther calls Cross-bearing. Where we see these things (and not liturgy, trappings, stained-glass windows, or even – gasp! – steeples), we know there is church, Luther says.

The Word is the first mark – “Word” being not just scripture, but Jesus Christ himself, as well as preaching, teaching, and the word of encouragement and consolation we offer each other when we gather for worship. Some of us have encouragement and consolation to give; others of us need it. It’s different for each of us from one Sunday to the next, isn’t it?

God grant you a blessed June. See you in church!

Pastor Steege

Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters

A two-pronged approach

Option 1: Foreign Assistance Reform

The global recession has delivered a harsh blow to millions of poor and hungry people around the world. The price of food, including basic staples such as rice, wheat, corn, and sorghum, has doubled, pushing more people into hunger. Millions are also suffering the adverse effects of climate change and natural disasters, such as the devastating earthquake in Haiti.

These challenges call for the United States to adopt a more effective approach to foreign aid. Currently the U.S. government's global development policies and programs are scattered across 12 departments, 25 different agencies, and nearly 60 government offices. A more efficient foreign assistance system—with better coordination, accountability, transparency, and clarity—means people get help faster and more effectively.

Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters will push Congress to reform U.S. foreign assistance, specifically by rewriting the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961. Priorities include making poverty reduction a primary goal, ensuring that more attention is paid to the needs of women and young children; providing partnerships to developing countries to help them meet their long-term development goals; and aligning U.S. aid, trade, migration, energy, and environmental policies so they

work together to promote sustainable development that reduces poverty.

Many of the key elements of foreign assistance reform are important to the rebuilding efforts in Haiti following the January 2010 earthquake. This Offering of Letters will maintain a special focus on the extent to which U.S. assistance to Haiti is following the principles of reform and helping or hindering Haiti's development.



Option 2: Global Hunger and Food Security

The global economic recession and a steep rise in food prices have pushed hundreds of millions of people into poverty and a state of food insecurity. More than 1 billion people suffer from hunger and live in extreme poverty. Women of child-bearing age and children under 2 are especially vulnerable. Last year, more than 3 million children died from hunger. Those who survive an early childhood of hunger and malnutrition will suffer lifelong consequences, including lower IQs, poorer vision, and stunted growth.

These challenges call for the United States to adopt a more effective and targeted development assistance strategy—with food security and agriculture at its core.

Bread for the World's 2011 Offering of Letters will urge Congress to pass legislation to codify the Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative (GHFSI), launched in 2009 by the president, which outlines a comprehensive approach to food security and agricultural development. Bread's campaign will focus on: agricultural development—especially for small-scale farmers and women; improving nutrition for women and young children; ensuring that efforts have civil society involvement and are “country-led”—meaning that the communities, constituencies, and countries actually affected by hunger are setting priorities and developing programs—and reforming the way food aid is delivered.

Bread's campaign will call for a revitalized U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to lead this initiative, as well as the United States' broader development goals. USAID can best coordinate the many agriculture and food security programs currently under way—ensuring a “whole-of-government” approach to development—and ensuring that U.S. investments are wisely spent.

Offering of Letters scheduled at Grace

On Sunday morning, June 13, we will have an opportunity during and after worship to sign letters, write a letter, or write a card on behalf of **Bread for the World** to encourage the Federal Government to remember our responsibility to the hungry all over the world.

Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation's decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. The organization has worked closely with Lutheran World Relief for many years.

God's grace in Jesus Christ moves us to help our neighbors, whether they live in the next house, the next state, or the next continent. Bread for the World members write personal letters and emails and meet with our members of Congress. Working through churches, campuses, and other organizations, Bread for the World engages people in advocacy. Each year, Bread for the World invites churches across the country to take up a nationwide Offering of Letters to Congress on an

issue that is important to hungry and poor people. (See accompanying article.)

The Stewardship Committee will supply all the materials we need – sample letters, paper, pens, envelopes, and congressional addresses – on the 13th so we can do our part to remind our leaders of our responsibility as a wealthy nation to feed the hungry and care for the poor.

FoodShare's Walk Against Hunger a Success!

Hartford's Walk Against Hunger May 2nd was a huge success! Despite the hot temps, more than 4,000 people came out to show their support, raising an all-time record of \$548,000!

Additionally, lead sponsor *The Hartford* matched employee donations with an extra \$100,000!

Thank you to **David Eberly**, **Sue Carey** and **Pastor Steege** for walking, and to **Jody**

Rodiger for rallying our team and then serving as a 'bean counter' at the walk. Our team raised \$265, and expects at least to double that next year!

Please remember, worship begins at 9:30am each and every Sunday. The psalmist says, "I was glad when they said unto me, 'Let us go into the house of the Lord.'" Join us for worship each Sunday.

CONFLICT: Management, Resolution, or Transformation

The first week of May, I attended – along with Pastor Steege and 60 other clergy and lay leaders – a workshop on mediation skills training. Bishop Payne encouraged church-wide participation and 25% of the attendees were Lutherans. This article is my report of some of the concepts I learned and hope to practice.

Conflict is an inevitable part of life. Even the Bible is full of stories of conflict. Two examples are the Hebrews' conflict in Egypt during their exile and Jesus throwing out the moneychangers in the Temple. In contrast, God intends for us to live in peace. Authentic peace requires conversation and justice. The issue is not whether we have conflict, but rather, how we respond to it.

There are many seminars and books that address how to handle conflict. This seminar taught *transformation*, encouraging us to set our sights on the highest goal of achieving peace by re-creating broken relationships so that there is new life *together*. Whereas some conflict management theories emphasize problem solving and others focus on managing people and their feelings, conflict transformation takes a holistic approach. It aims at healing relationships and opening the door to new possibilities that solve issues with justice.

The principles of conflict transformation are applicable to the relationships we care about. Throughout the week, I reflected on my relationships with family, friends and coworkers as well as my place as co-leader of the Visioning Steering Group and member of Grace Lutheran Church. Some of the principles we studied in the conflict mediation training that are especially meaningful for me include:

- Speak the truth from a position of love
- Recognize that I have contributed to a situation, either by omission or commission; be humble
- Seek forgiveness and reconciliation when a relationship has been breached
- Conflict signals a diversity of views and gifts from God
- Applying holy listening opens me up to discerning God's call
- Stress is being in the outside position of a triangular relationship; talk with others, not about them
- When I am stuck in finding an agreeable solution, it usually signals that feelings are in the way and that there is healing to do
- Clarify and be specific; non-specific issues and principles can't be problem-solved
- The goal is more than finding an agreeable solution, it is creating the possibility for new life together

Throughout the program, there were moments of tearfulness. Although we role-played imaginary scenarios, the scenarios created moments to experience love and healing so deep that it could only be explained by God's grace. The church's role is to create an environment where God's gift of reconciliation has a better chance of happening.

Susan Carey

Council Corner

Highlights of the May 8, 2010 Council meeting

The Congregation Council responded to a request for the use of our building from the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. This church, known informally as the Indian Orthodox Church, was founded by St. Thomas in India and has congregations in every state except Connecticut. It is in communion with other Oriental Orthodox churches and in good ecumenical relationship with the Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Protestant churches.

Syrian is the language of their liturgy. The church has received approval to use the Forum Room for prayer meetings on the first Sundays of June, July, and August, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.. It will donate \$25 per meeting to Grace. A larger worship service will be held Saturday, September 11, 2010 in the sanctuary from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.. Pastor Steege will participate in this service and members of Grace will be invited to attend.

The Mennonite Mediation Skills Training met for five days at Grace last week and was hosted and attended by Pastor Steege and Sue Carey. Pastor Steege reported the week was very successful and thanked **Sue Carey, Mavis Smith, Rebecca Lewis, Emma Coleman-Carr, Barbara Ruhe, Dale Eberhardt, Ted Steege, Guenther Mamet, Cathy Tomlinson, Onita Chambers, and Miriam Miller** for their work in making the week such a success.

Bruce Klotz, Secretary

People of Grace

With a combination of deep regret and great joy, the Council has received **Barbara Van Fleet's** letter of resignation. She has been an outstanding worker and leader at Grace for many years. In just the past five years she chaired Stewardship Committee, served as a member of the Congregation

Council, participated in the Women's Bible Study, and was especially active in assisting with the Karen group, teaching them English, taking them shopping, and in many ways befriending them. The joy we share with her is that she has succeeded in selling her home in Windsor and is buying a charming home in Fremont, Ohio, the

town where she grew up and still has many friends.

Her new address will be

106 Kaylee Drive
Fremont, OH 43420

We give thanks for her friendship as a sister in Christ, and ask the Lord's blessings for her in this newest chapter in her life.

High Tea at the Thompsons

The Christian Education Committee, all parents of Sunday School children, and everyone who cares about the faith and spiritual nurturing of our children are invited to High Tea at Phyllis and Chad Thompson's house on Sunday,

June 27th, from 1:00 to 3:30 p.m.

Enjoy an elegant tea party and bring all your ideas for making the 2010-2011 Sunday School year the best ever!

The Thompsons live at 80 Bellevue Ave. Springfield MA 01108. They will provide everyone with good directions, and of course car-pooling is a good idea. Call them at 413-827-9434 for details!

Need a summer job?

Calumet announces job openings

NURSES NEEDED: Calumet strives to have three nurses on staff at all times during the summer and one on duty during the spring. There is a Nurse Practitioner on call and available for consultation around the clock. The times needed are June 25-July 3, July 10-17, August 7-14, August 14-21, and August 21-

28. If you are a nurse or know a nurse that might be interested in this opportunity, please call Bonnie Caterson at 201-925-2070 or email her at blcaterson@aol.com.

HEAD CHEF FOR CONFERENCE CENTER, COOK FOR LAKESIDE DINING HALL NEEDED: Calumet's food is well known

for its quality, both in the resident camp and the family and adult program. Head Chef needed from the middle of June to September. Call Chef Wade at Calumet at 603-539-4773 ext. 231.

CALUMET LUTHERAN MINISTRIES
PO BOX 236, W OSSIPEE, NH

Synod plans mission trip to Honduras in August

The Global Mission Team of the New England Synod is planning a mission trip to our companion synod in Honduras for the week of Aug. 7 to 14. This trip is open to all in our synod, as well as friends and family. Participants should be 18 or older. However, children and

teenagers also are welcome when accompanied by a parent or grandparent. Mission work includes leading vacation bible school, constructing buildings and making needed health infrastructure projects such as sinks and stoves. The Global Mission Team will provide the

training. Cost is \$695 per person, plus airfare. Hotel, meals and supplies are included in the fee. For more information contact Pr. Jim Hazelwood at jim@standrewri.org or 401-322-0088 or Steve Dumas at StevenDumas@cox.net.

Duct Tape or a Nail?

The following story has been floating around the web for awhile.

A man dies and goes to heaven. St. Peter meets him at the Pearly Gates and says, "Here's how it works. You need 100 points to make it into haven. You tell me all the good things you've done, and I give you a certain number of points for each item, depending on how good it was. When you reach 100 points, you get in." "Okay," the man says. "I was married to the same woman

for 50 years and never cheated on her, even in my heart." "That's wonderful," says St. Peter. "That's worth two points!" "Two points?!" he says. "Well, I attended church all my life and supported its ministry with my tithe and service." "Terrific!" says St. Peter. "That's certainly worth a point." "One point?!! I started a soup kitchen in my city and worked in a shelter for homeless veterans."

"Fantastic! That's good for two more points." Peter says. "Two points?!" Exasperated, the man cries. "At this rate, the only way I'll get into heaven is by the grace of God." "Bingo! 100 points! Come on in!"

We often try to fix problems with WD-40 and duct tape. God did it with a nail.

Recipe for gluten-free communion bread

We are currently using manufactured wafers for our communion bread at Grace. This came about when it was found that store-bought bread tended to come apart when it was dipped in the cup. At Grace communion is offered in several ways. Worshipers may take an empty glass from a tray, and the deacon fills it, or they may dip the bread into the common cup, or drink directly from the cup when it is offered.

In case anyone would like to try it, however, here is a recipe for gluten-free bread that apparently works well and does not come apart. The recipe was used April 11 in Worcester, Mass., at the festive Eucharist celebrating the new full communion relationship between the ELCA and the United Methodist Church.

Emmaus Road Communion Bread – Gluten Free

1 package (about 5 cups) Bob's Red Mill All Purpose Baking Flour (gluten-free) (NOTE: save a 1/4 cup for rolling out the dough)

5 tsp. Xanthan gum (also made by Bob's Red Mill) – expensive, but you use only a small amount each time)

4 tsp. baking powder

2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

1/2 cup real maple syrup

1/2 cup milk

1/2 cup warm water

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Mix dry ingredients in a bowl. Mix the oil, syrup, milk and water together. Add only as much liquid to the dry ingredients as needed to make a smooth soft dough that is not too sticky. Turn the dough out on a floured (gluten-free, please!) surface and kneed it gently. Roll out to one-quarter- inch thickness and cut into rounds about six inches in diameter (or the top of a small saucepan). Cut a cross into the surface of the dough. Place the bread onto slightly greased baking pans and bake for 10 to 15 minutes. Let bread cool for one hour. Wrap individual pieces in plastic wrap and refrigerate. Take out about one hour prior to use. Loaves can be stored in the freezer in zip-lock bags.

*By the grace of God, we are a Lutheran congregation,
diverse in worship, Christ-centered in fellowship,
committed to prayer, deepening of faith,
and the stewardship of the gospel and God's world.*



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Church Staff Directory

The Rev. Eva Reque Steege, Pastor
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Dale Eberhardt, Organist
Catherine Tomlinson, Parish Administrator
Marilyn Flaherty, Financial Assistant
Onita Chambers, Parish Assistant
Miriam Miller, Sexton

Mavis Smith, President
Emma Coleman-Carr, Vice President
Bruce Klotz, Secretary
Gertrude Kanwischer, Treasurer
Barbara Calogero, Assistant Treasurer
Sally Nolen, Grace Notes Editor

PLEASE NOTE:

The submission deadline for the July-August 2010 summer edition of Grace Notes is July 15th. Please forward information to Sally Nolen (sallynolen@live.com) by this date. Thank you.

www.graceistheplace.org

