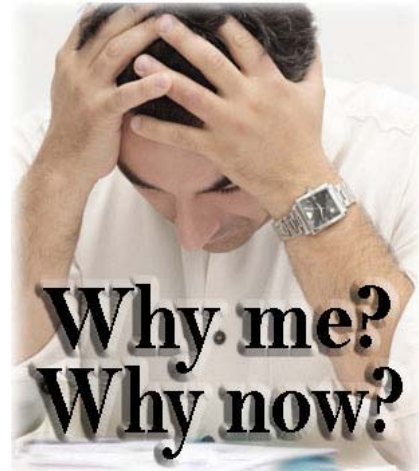


GRACE SPOTLIGHTER

WHY ME?

The question is often a lament. Surrounded by worries or personal challenges, one may tilt back their head and ask, "Why me?"

When the world doesn't seem fair or when health is on the skids, "Why me?"



There isn't an easy answer. We don't exactly know why some people prosper and others face a hard scrabbled life. There isn't a mathematical equation to explain why one person is born with a silver spoon while another has a disability or must battle prejudice or poverty.

It can't just be luck or the lack of it.

Luck assumes there is no answer to the "why" questions. Life is an accident without reason, without design, and without purpose. The only thing that exists is the luck of the draw and pure coincidence. It explains how some in life may catch a few aces, but in the end you're screwed. End of story. Luck runs out.

When I said before there is no easy answer to the question why, I didn't mean there is no answer at all. I just meant there is no cheap answer or instantaneous way to decipher the mystery of life. We still need to ask why. We must ask why.

Intuitively we know there must be some explanation, rationalization, or justification for the circumstances of our life.

Look at the created world. Even those who reject the existence of God can't easily discard evidence that this universe has incredible design. The intricate patterns in nature, the configuration of the stars, the sophistication of anatomy, and the laws of nature almost boring in their predictability, all testify to superb design.

But where is the nexus of this creation? Where does the sense of all history reside? Why are all things as they are? Why me? St. Paul gave this answer to the Colossians, "[Jesus] is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." (Col. 1:17)

Jesus is the key. Jesus is the transom through which we see the answer to "Why me?"

Many times I've told a story about Steven Feinauer who, in my opinion, gave the most brilliant answer I ever heard from a catechism student. One day we were spinning our wheels over the questions: Why the Bible? Why deal with God? Why am I here? Why me?

We were looking for the key. So I asked, "What is a key?"

And Steven answered, "The stuff inside."

We all looked at him blankly, and it took a minute before I realized just how special his brief answer was. He said it better than I ever could. "A key is the stuff inside."

A key, you understand, is not just a device to open a door. A key is not merely a cheap piece of metal to unlock a latch. A key is not just some chance, accidental *abracadabra*.

A key, Steven said, is "the stuff inside!"

Let me explain. Suppose there is a great treasure, a fortune of riches beyond measure locked away from the view and understanding of anyone. It is marvelous but impenetrable. Imagine the treasure is eternal life, the wealth and wonder of a new and perfect world. Suppose the fortune is nothing less than forgiveness for your sins, union with God, and every good and perfect thing.

Suppose now that you were given the key to this treasure. The key may look like



an inferior thing. It may seem little more than a cheap utensil or handy gizmo.

But no! It is far more than that. The key is equivalent to the treasure. Indeed, the key IS the treasure! For if you have the key, you have the treasure!

The Key to the kingdom of heaven is not luck or a token answer. The Key to eternal life is Jesus Christ. The Key to joy, forgiveness, and freedom, and the Key that unlocks the answer to "Why me?" is Jesus Christ.

Christ is not merely a key; He is the Stuff Inside! He is the Treasure!

Jesus is the Way and the truth and the life. He is the substance of things hoped for and the body of the new and living way.

The Word of God says there definitely IS an answer to your "why" questions. Life is no accident. Your life in Christ is not by chance or blind fate. There is divine reason, design, and purpose to human life as God gives it through His Son. There is beauty and stability, value and intention in your life. Christ is your life.

Jesus Christ has taken upon himself your upsetting realities, your personal challenges, your grievances and injuries, your skidding health, heartbreaks, frustrations, and regrets. Most of all He bore your shame, sin, and death.

And why did He do this? Why? So that we may be justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.... and so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. (Rom. 3:24, 26)

Continued from page #)

Why? "God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him." (1 John 4:9)

Why? "So that he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:7)

That's why!

Being given the Key and Crown of Christ may not explain exactly why a particular hardship or heartache occurs, but it re-frames the question.

Now "Why me?" is not a lament but a laud. Rather than bemoaning our fate by asking it, we celebrate our faith.

"Why me?" now expresses the marvel of being so loved and blessed by God through Christ. "Why me?" utters the Christian's astonishment that God should be so infinitely gracious that He would grant to me, yes me, the saving benefit of His Son. "Why me?" acknowledges my own confounded inferiority and His unmistakable mercy.

"Why me?" confesses that all I receive is a gift. There is no cause or quality in me that can answer why I am so abundantly favored with God's pardon and kindness. His goodness is such that even being chastened is good and the privations one may endure in life are gifts because these things train and exercise our faith.

"Why me?" is a question fitting for the Lenten season we enter again this coming month. Ask, "Why me?" Why should I be so thoroughly favored, loved so completely, and served so exhaustively?

The answer is Christ, the Key to it all.

The Christian can say: Christ is the redemption in my disgrace. He is the providence in my emptiness. He is the light in my darkness and the calm inside my storm. He is the laughter in my sorrow and God's honor for my shame. He is the gladness in my doubting and the new birth in my dying. He is the Friend that fills my loneliness who defends against my foes. He is my strength despite my weakness and my song despite my fears. He is my Savior and God's answer to "Why me?" and "Why here?"

The Key to Lent is Jesus too. The holy season we soon again observe begins in ashes and culminates at the cross. But what you will not hear in Lent is any lament from Jesus, "Why me?"

What you will see is the scale of His sacrifice and the greatness of his passion. And what you will hear from Cana to Calvary and from Jordan to the cross will be your answer to "Why me?"

God Bless you.



Pastor

Lent 2009

Salvation In No One Else

Acts 4:11-12

This Jesus ... was rejected by you ...
And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."



The sacred season of Lent begins Ash Wednesday, February 25. It is a season in which we wrestle with the demands and desires of our sinful flesh and are brought to a renewed realization of our total dependence upon Jesus and the eternal salvation He accomplished for us by His bloody death on Good Friday.

During this coming Lent, our mid-week worship services will be a search into the substance of our salvation through Christ.

The source, substance, and security of Christ's salvation has been "given among men." There is only one salvation and one Name by which our salvation comes, Jesus Christ.

Acts 4:11-12 will serve as our theme verse, "There is salvation in no one else."

"LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR"

"Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." Mt 5:16

As the writer of this recent note wished to remain anonymous, we think the neighbor (Mk 12:31) would wish to be also.

Dear Pastor,

On 12-18-2008, a large medical supply order was mistakenly delivered to one of your young parishioner's duplex. It was left on his door step and apparently sat there all day till he returned from work.

He took the time and effort to locate the address to which it should have been delivered. After verifying the correct address, he packed the boxes weighing at least 75# in the trunk of his car and brought them to my apartment.

[I know that] this young man and his family are a part of the "Grace Lutheran Church" family. His parents should be so proud of this upstanding and compassionate, young man.

What a blessing!

As a disabled Senior I'm so grateful to have had this "Christ"mas kindness from a very special stranger.

.... Anonymous

We announce here for the first time the exciting schedule of anniversary occasions as Grace Lutheran Church, beginning in September, marks 50 years of God's gracious love and care through His Son Jesus Christ. The Anniversary Committee has been eagerly planning for this special commemoration, and we hope you will also anticipate the following highlight dates.

GRACE LUTHERAN CONGREGATION 50th Anniversary Celebrations



September 27, 2009

Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m. honoring our **Charter Members**
 Guest choir: Bethlehem, Saginaw.
 Chicken BBQ luncheon and program to follow in gym.

October 18, 2009

Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m. honoring the service of our **Pastors and Vicars.**
 Guest pastor preaching.
 Roast beef luncheon and program to follow in gym.

November 22, 2009

Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m. honoring **our missionaries**
 and thanksgiving for **all the blessings received by Grace congregation.**
 Guest speaker, Pastor David Hakes
 Guest choral group from Concordia University, Ann Arbor
 Pot luck luncheon and program to follow in gymnasium.

January 17, 2010

Two worship services honoring our **first 25 years of confirmands**
 from 1960 through 1984 including adult confirmands.
 Social gathering in our gym between services; refreshments will be supplied.

February 7, 2010

Two worship services honoring our **second 25 years of confirmands**
 from 1984 through 2009 including adult confirmands.
 Social gathering in our gym between services; refreshments will be supplied.

March 7, 2010

Celebration Service at 10:30 a.m. recognizing the blessing of **Grace School**
 and honoring the service of our **Teachers.**
 Guest Choir: Valley Lutheran High School
 Pot luck luncheon and program to follow in our gym.

Mission Focus for the Month

Lutheran Braille Workers



More than 180 million people around the world experience life with a visual impairment. Among these, 45 million are blind and 135 million have only partial sight. There are countries where over 90% of blind persons are illiterate. In a number of countries, less than 15% of blind children receive an education.

The Need for Hope is Great

To provide the message of salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ to individuals who are blind or visually impaired throughout the world has been the mission of Lutheran Braille Workers for 56 years.

Ever seeking opportunities to provide individuals who are blind or visually impaired with quality Christian publications in special Braille and Large Print formats is the strategy LBW uses to communicate Christ.

Meeting spiritual needs of people who are blind or visually impaired has been the focus of Lutheran Braille Workers, Inc. since it was founded in 1943. The work has grown from producing titles in a single language to 30 languages; and the labor force has gone from one volunteer working out of a shoebox in her home to more than 5000 volunteers in about 200 work centers across the United States!

Publications are presently distributed free of charge to more than 120 countries around the globe. Like the work force, the financial backing comes from individuals like you - who believe in the work of delivering God's Word in legible formats - touching the lives of real people.



Steve VanTol, Gil Bartz, Gary Roth, and Kim Herbolsheimer help bring in the new furnishings.

Voters Assembly Sunday, February 8 9:15 a.m.

A complete set on new tables and chairs for the library (Room 2) were delivered to Grace recently. After years of valuable service, the previous heavy tables and deteriorating chairs needed to be retired. Undesignated Memorial funds were able to make the acquisition possible. The new furniture is already especially welcomed by the Men's Wednesday morning Bible study and Confessional study (Mondays) and women's Saturday Bible study. Usefulness by the school and for women's events and Sunday Adult Bible study will make the new furnishings much valued.



Protecting Your Child's Hearing

As a parent and teacher, I strongly suspect that the word "huh?" is the most often word spoken by children today. It is hard to know if frequent requests to repeat a question indicate loss of hearing or selective hearing, but it remains true that our children are exposed to an almost constant barrage of noise. We live in a noisy world, and we search in vain for peace and quiet.

When I was growing up, the noise did not follow me around. My radio was plugged into the wall in my room. Now we go everywhere with MP3 players, iPods, phones that play music and movies, hand-held games, and DVD players in our cars. When do the ears of our children get a rest?

Damage to your ears can happen in an instant through dangerous noise levels or injury, but most of our children are at greater risk of damage that happens over a long time of exposure to higher-than-normal sound levels. This is referred to as noise-induced hearing loss. This is the kind of damage we need to prevent.

With all of the sound producing technology that children have today, our children are surrounded with noise. While it would never be recommended to deny your children music, it is a good idea to take a look at the noise-exposure amounts and volume levels your children's ears encounter each day and to make some safe adjustments. The American Academy of Otolaryngology reports that upwards of 3 million children have impaired hearing. Research indicates that as much as 15% of eighth graders and 26% of high school seniors have measurable hearing loss. With the advent of so many portable music devices, these statistics will only rise.

Years ago, hearing loss was a concern for those who played in rock bands or worked in factories. Listening to music piped directly into the ears at loud volumes, can cause hearing loss for any teen. Even for younger children, reports indicate that the average daily noise level is 90 decibels (90 decibels = city traffic, 60 decibels = normal conversation).

Besides the obvious, hearing loss can contribute to childhood difficulties even before it becomes serious

Principal Report Peter Fredrich

enough for hearing aids. Children with measurable hearing loss have difficulty learning and may develop behavior problems. Besides not being able to accurately hear directions and teaching, they also have difficulty with language and social-skills development. This is especially true for the children for whom the hearing losses go undetected. Many children can hear well when they are looking at the person talking, but some have trouble understanding speech because of background noise.

Perhaps it is to take notice and put into action some simple steps to protect the hearing of our children:

- Rethink the toys given for gifts – could a silent toy be substituted?
- Check the toys already in use. Could the sound be turned off or down?
- Watch for ear infections and seek medical care.
- Set rules about volume on games, computers, and personal music systems. A good guide is half volume. It is also a good idea to upgrade the earbuds that typically come with these devices. Look for earphones that fit outside the ear.
- Send children outside to play with noisy toys.
- Teach and practice good hearing safety. Encourage children to use quiet voices and remind them never to put anything in their ears.
- Listen for indistinct speech and mumbling, and watch to see if your child is aware of what is going on or has trouble paying attention as these may be signs of hearing loss.

"He who has ears, let him hear."
Matt. 11:15 In much of Jesus' teachings, hearing was synonymous with understanding. We see how important hearing is in our world. While there are many ways to help people with non-preventable hearing loss, we are all in agreement that the best option for our children is to prevent hearing loss, if at all possible. God has blessed us with much technology that makes our lives more entertaining. Our children want to participate in this technology. It is important that we take their best interests into consideration and teach them how to limit their exposure to noise, how to revel in quiet, and how

to prevent damage to the hearing abilities that God gave them.

Over the past two months, both Grace and Trinity have gotten together to discuss the future of our schools. We are concerned about the current trends in education and enrollment within our Lutheran schools. As we compete with public and charter schools, our enrollments continue to decline leaving us with challenges of how we can encourage and provide our children with a Lutheran education. As sister congregations working together, we feel that we can pull on the strengths of each other, ultimately growing as a preferred Lutheran school. Both schools will continue to meet periodically and we will update both congregations as these discussions continue. An informational meeting for Grace Congregation has been scheduled for Sunday, February 15, beginning at 9:30 in the chapel. A power point presentation will be made that provides information on the progress of the consolidation committee. There will be no action taken at this time. Please keep this committee in your prayers as we work toward keeping our children in an environment that provides a quality Christian education for them.

We continue with our basketball season. Our "A" teams play most Mondays with the "B" and "A" teams playing on Fridays. Check our web site for specific dates and times. The mid-quarter marking period ends on February 13th, with the reports going home attached to the memo on February 17th. Our second parent/teacher conferences of the year are scheduled for February 19th in the afternoon and evening and February 20th in the afternoon. Classes will dismiss both days at noon. This second conference is optional. If either the classroom teacher or the parent feels a conference is needed and beneficial, one will be scheduled. If both the classroom teacher and the parent are satisfied with the student progress, no conference is necessary. A mid-winter break is scheduled for February 23rd.

The day before Valentine's Day, our students will be going bowling. The school will travel to Midland's Valley Lanes for an hour of fun the afternoon of February 13th. The cost is being covered by our C.P.T. L. – many thanks!

JUNIOR HIGH HIGHLIGHTS

Religion for February continues in our study of the Old Testament. We are examining the life and times of the Israelites as they moved to the Promised Land. These stories are recorded in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. In 1812, the United States was flexing its muscles as we started a policy of expansionism. Our government leaders wanted to increase the boundaries of our nation. We joined forces with France to fight the British again, trying to drive them off of North America. We will discuss two battles that took place in Michigan, The Battle at Fort Detroit, and the Battle at Fort Mackinaw. The second battle will come to life for our eighth graders as



they remember the May, 2008 class trip to Mackinaw Island, a tour of the fort, and the witnessing of the re-enactments. The War of 1812 will be the focus of our history this month. Eighth grade math continues with our efforts to understand algebra. The seventh graders are attempting to comprehend a new number system – integers. This number system includes positive and negative numbers. By the end of the month, we will have learned how to add, subtract, multiply, and divide them. The earth beneath our feet is dynamic - constantly changing.



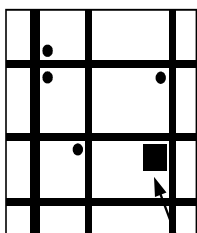
Our Grace Grizzlies cheering on the boy's team!!

Because they are dynamic, the crust above can change positions. These shifting plates are responsible for two catastrophic occurrences, earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. Earth science focuses on the study of these two violent natural happenings.

Miss Rudick's Classroom

As we begin our third quarter of the school year, our class is focusing on reading comprehension. They are all working diligently to reach certain goals in Accelerated Reader. Some of our students do need the help of their parents to achieve this goal. Thank you parents for your help and support in your child's education!

In religion we are learning about Jesus' ministry here on earth. The title of this unit is "Jesus teaches God's grace". We have learned from Mr. Fredrich in chapel that grace is God's undeserved love. We certainly do not deserve God's love and forgiveness, but he freely gives us these.



I live here.

In Social Studies we have been learning about terms such as leadership, mayor, government, governor, and communities. We are also learning how to read maps. Math continues to be more chal-

lenging. Our 2nd grade students have begun to master subtraction with borrowing. They now know that addition with carrying was much easier to learn. Our 1st grade students have learned about cups, pints, quarts and gallons. We had a very



enjoyable hands-on lesson on this concept which was a good review for 2nd grade and introduction for kindergarten. Our kindergarten students are being challenged as well. They are focusing more on patterns, time and coin identification. They have also begun to learn their addition facts.

In Science we are learning more about where specific animals make



Miss Rudick's students learning measurements by working with pints, quarts & gallons.

their homes and how they make their homes. We are especially looking forward to how a beaver makes its home. We are learning that God made each animal able to provide and take care of itself.

We know that God takes care of our needs, both spiritual and physical. We pray that you remember this also. God be with you!

Gledhill's Gators

We are half-way there, folks! Things continue to move strong in Gator' Land. The Soybean extravaganza pushes on with all sorts of nuances for the students to pick up. I cannot count how many "I didn't know that" exclamations have been made. The good part is there is very little prior knowledge presumed in the curriculum. The 5th grade does not have the magnanimous advantage with previously learned concepts. The students will be bringing in either a cooked meal or a meal to cook that yours truly will whip up right in our kitchenette. (More details to come in rm. 4 newsletter).

We took another unit test for Religion. I have the students submit three questions that they create from the entire unit, along with the answers. They make multi choice, T/F, short answer, or fill in the blank. We then com-

press all of those into a workable test, and make a review session. I enjoy making the students accountable to themselves.

Teaching brings all sorts of surprises. I had the most enjoyable teaching surprise recently in Social Studies (of all subjects). I asked the students to write a couple of verses to the tune of a familiar song from the recent lesson. The particular unit was about the founding of the New England states. Most of the students chose *Deck the Halls*. What an absolute ball we all had! It is a proven scientific fact that combining music with learning attaches the information to a special place in the brain and makes the connection more long-term. We will most certainly be doing that more often.

I am trying to get a deeper understanding with our reading and comprehension. A large portion of this is learning new vocabulary and using it properly. I had the students sit with their respective grades in the back of

the room and play "Vocabulary Go-Fish". They had to match the word with its definition. I couldn't help but snap a shot of it. Looks like a real serious game, eh?

AR reading is finally beginning to be on the rise. I am proud that the students are using their extra time for reading and test-taking. The friendly camaraderie is beginning to get to them. It's a great competition to have, in my opinion.

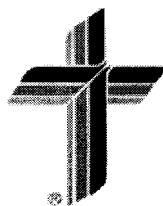


Casey and Jacob are playing a word definition game.

Informational Meeting on Consolidation

Grace Lutheran School &
Trinity Lutheran School

Sunday, February 15 at 9:30 a.m.



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Valley Lutheran Pig Roast



Valley Lutheran High School Parent Organization will be holding their annual Pig Roast on Sunday, February 15, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the high school, 3560 McCarty Road. The dinner includes Roast Pork, mashed potatoes, gravy, rolls, coleslaw, green beans, pie, and beverage. Tickets are available at the door, \$7 for adults (age 12 and over), \$4 for children, and takeout is available for \$7. Proceeds will benefit ongoing technology upgrades throughout the school.

Girls and Boys Republic

The Lutheran Child and Family Services of Michigan merged with Boys and Girls Republic of Farmington Hills last year. The BGR is a 128 acre closed campus for juvenile delinquents. This keeps the youthful offenders out of the adult rehabilitative system. We want to give their 65 young people some daily needs items for their store. A list of the items are on the ushers desk and a box has been placed under the table in the narthex. Items are needed by February 15th. Thank you for your contributions.



Save The Date!

It's a Small World! The 6th annual VLHS Benefit Dinner & Auction is going to be on Saturday, February 28, 2009 at Apple Mountain Conference Center. The past 5 auctions have netted us over \$150,000 which has been applied to various school improvements including the 21st Century Classroom Initiative, busses, student aid, teacher training & more! Thank you for your past support of VLHS! We could use your help - we are asking for items to be donated and put up for bid (merchandise, tickets, services, vacation homes, etc.) There are also opportunities to participate by way of Prayer, advertising, sponsorship, or attending! Click on our auction link www.vlhs.com and get more information and check out our often-updated list of items. Watch your bulletin and/or church message board for ticket/donation fliers. For further information or questions, you may call Valley Lutheran at 790-1676, Beth (Lambert) Kaul 989-754-5918 kaulfarm@airadv.net, or Karrie Gatza 989-667-0034 Karriekookies@aol.com.



Thrivent / Habitat

Thrivent Financial and Habitat for Humanity are teaming up, once again in 2009, to build 27 homes in the state of Michigan. Of these, one will be built in Bay Co., two in Saginaw Co., and two in Genesee Co. Thrivent is providing \$270,850 or 65% of the necessary funds for these five local homes.

Our Bay County project will be the home of Jennifer and Sanford Murphy-Wheeler and their five children on the corner of Sheridan and 16th Street in Bay City. This home will be built entirely by women. While the women are working on construction, the men are invited to provide child care, meals, clean up and other needed support.

Framing construction for the walls of the Bay County home will begin in mid March 2009 inside the Do All building on Lincoln Street, near 26th Street, in Bay City. The foundation and sub floor deck were completed before winter. It is planned to have the home completed by June 15. Volunteers will be working Wednesdays and Saturdays. It is time to begin thinking about how you would like to volunteer. Contact your Congregational Champion.

In 2009, Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity will contribute more than \$24 million to help build another 314 affordable homes in 37 states and the District of Columbia. Since 2005, it has given more than 1,000 families an opportunity to achieve the American dream of homeownership.

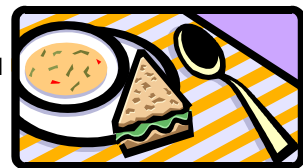
LIBRARY CORNER

If you start weeding out your children's books or CD's after Christmas please remember that our school library can always use second-hand books and CD's in good condition. Any questions call Lynn at 662-6161.



YOUTH NEWS

It's almost Superbowl time and that has to mean SUBS and SOUP!



The Youth are busy planning to prepare your fresh made-to-order subs and 2 delicious types of soup... chicken noodle and cheesy potato.

We're also planning a fun night of Glow Bowling on Saturday, February 7th. We've invited Zion Beaver's Youth Group to join us, and look forward to spending some time with them. We'll meet at Grace at 9:00 pm to head over to Monitor Lanes in Bay City. Games are \$2.50 each and shoe rental is free. You are welcome to bring a friend...just let one of the Youth leaders know by February 1st if you can come so we can reserve the lanes.

Since we are making subs on the first Sunday in February, we will hold our regular meeting on Sunday, February 8th. Please come so you can help us make plans for the next month!



Given in Memory

Edwin Dominowski

By
John & Iris Dominowski
Art & Elaine Prah

Marion Maxwell

By
Loretta Reinecke
Bob & Olive Schmidt

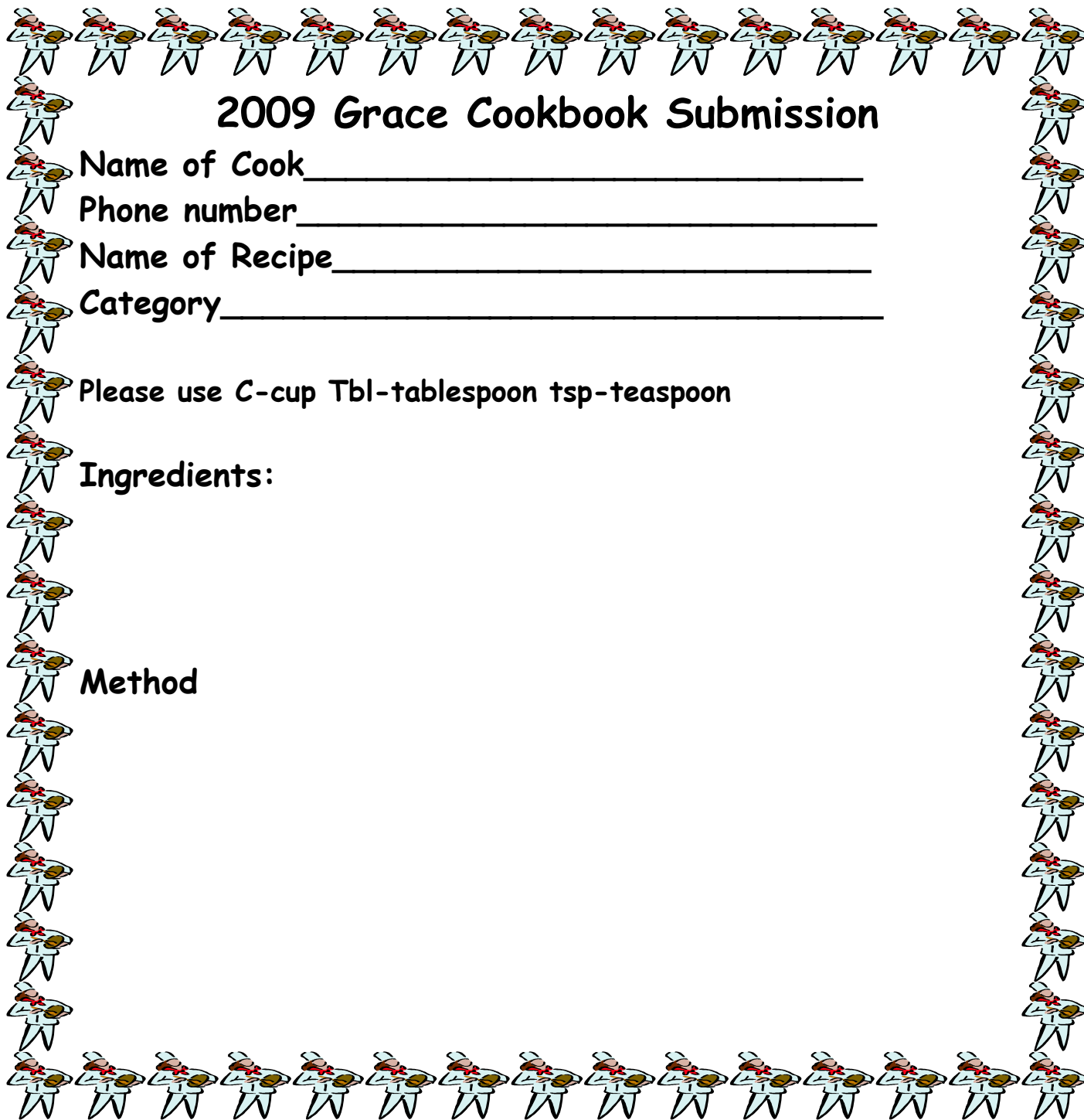
Vi Reiss

By
Dick & Bonnie Frank
Don Wackerly

We are Creating a New Cookbook

It has been a long time since the cooks of Grace have compiled all those wonderful recipes into one place. Cookbooks from Grace's past are fond reminders of wonderful cooks and special tastes we all love and remember and we think it's time for another one. Virginia Behmlander, Linda Bebeau and Sue Roth are collecting recipes for an all new, all updated, all delicious cookbook. We can hardly wait to enjoy them so start compiling those great recipes and send them to us. We are setting a deadline of March 1 so get started. Contact any of us with any thoughts you have about things to include. I think I'm getting hungry already.

Recipes can be e-mailed to seroth@chartermi.net



2009 Grace Cookbook Submission

Name of Cook _____

Phone number _____

Name of Recipe _____

Category _____

Please use C-cup Tbl-tablespoon tsp-teaspoon

Ingredients:

Method

Finding Balance when It's Needed Most

The holidays are now behind us. Family and friends have all gone home, and we're putting away the Christmas tree and some final decorations until next year. The last couple of months have been a delightful distraction from our regular routine, but now it's time to find a little more balance. "Balance? What is that?" you ask. Life can be a constant juggling act between home and career, kids and activities, family and friends. In the midst of all the busyness in our world, finding balance is what we all need. Are we taking care of ourselves so that we are able to care for others? The booklet, *Finding Balance*, will guide the reader through author Melanie Wilson's personal experiences as she learned to best manage the issues and challenges of her life. Along the way, Wilson discovered principles sure to help readers in finding their own sense of balance. *Finding Balance* is a popular booklet and one that is sure to connect with those in your sphere of influence.

Take a Trip. Experience a new culture. Change lives.

Does the winter weather have you thinking about a summer vacation? Why not consider an alternative vacation with the opportunity to serve God and others?

Throughout the world, millions of families are living in sub-standard housing. You can help change their lives through a Thrivent Builds Worldwide with Habitat for Humanity trip. Join Thrivent Financial members, other Lutherans, and volunteers to help build a home with a partner family in need of simple, decent, affordable housing. This is an opportunity to learn new skills, experience new culture, meet others who share your passion to make a difference, and do something amazing---help give a family a chance at economic independence.

If you are a member of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, you'll receive a discount on trip costs. A donation also will be made to the Habitat for Humanity host program on behalf of members who participate in the volunteer work trip. Visit www.thriventbuilds.com/worldwide for trip information and eligibility guidelines.

Trip Details Consider volunteering for an 8-day trip to the Cheyenne River Sioux Indian Reservation in Eagle Butte, South Dakota, from June 20 to June 27th. No experience is required. This trip will be an opportunity to share God's love with others and to learn about a different culture. For more information, contact Amy Keinath, *Thrivent Builds Worldwide* trip team leader, by March 1st at akeinath@charter.net or 989-823-3137.

2009 THRIVENT MATCH

In the 2008 budget year, Thrivent members contributed \$45,182 to Grace's school Memorial fund which was used to help pay our total congregational expenses. THANK YOU SO MUCH. Thrivent then added through the matching gift program another \$22,591 to our budget. That was extremely helpful to meeting our budget needs. With a new calendar year, comes a new opportunity to contribute again. Are you and or a family member a Thrivent member? How do you know? Do you own Thrivent products? (life insurance, mutual funds, investments) Those items allow you to contribute to Grace's school, and Thrivent will contribute 50% of your gift, up to \$300.00. Remember to fill out a form found on the Ushers desk or church office and send it with your gift. Your contribution and Thrivent's match goes to the school and then is added to the church's budget. Remember, each of your family members that own Thrivent products over the age of 16 can donate up to \$600.00 to the school that will be matched by Thrivent. Last year we started this process in May and raised an extra \$22,591. This year we have more time to make that amount even higher. Would you like to be a Thrivent member and make your money work for you and your church? Call Rod Grigg @ 686-9620 and he will answer any questions

Auburn Area 2009 American Cancer Society "Relay for Life", Saturday, June 27th 2009

What is Relay? "Relay for Life" is the American Cancer Society 24-hour signature activity. "Relay for Life" teams take turns walking around a track to help raise money for the battle against cancer. With the second annual "Auburn Area-Relay for Life" event, our community is joining the fight to conquer cancer and one day someone in your family may live because we succeeded.

The Team Relay Committee would like each religious denomination within the Auburn area to be represented by a community relay team. If you and other members of your church are interested in supporting cancer survivors within your church body, and wish to form a relay (walking) team, please contact Kelly Kimball, A.C.S.-R.F.L. Staff coordinator@ 989-895-1730 or Gordon Schroeder R.F.L. Survivor development Chair. @989-662-4503. Thank you for your consideration.

Grace Lutheran Church and School
303 W. Ruth Street
Auburn, Michigan 48611

Rev. David H. Reed, Pastor
Mr. Peter Fredrich, Principal

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February

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

1 Heidi Arnold, 1 Mary Kalitta, 2 Lucas Weiss, 3 Ned Gray , 3 Dale Gripentrog,
3 Kaleena Walter, 3 Loretta Wegener, 4 Kayla Mularz, 6 Jeffrey Sugden, 8 Jon Alexan-
der, 8 Aaron Stanford, 9 Stephanie Dominowski, 9 Paul Netkowski Sr., 9 Nathan Wolf,
11 Ruth Skyrme, 12 DeLynn Taglauer, 13 Amy Marner, 13 Crystal Wisniewski, 14 Dale
Gripentrog, 14 Jordan Pyle, 14 John Whalen, 15 Rena Rosenbrock, 15 Steven Wegener,
17 Rick Garlinghouse, 17 Ronald Kent, 18 Mark Konsdorf, 18 William Melick Jr., 19
Ilene Taglauer, 20 Genell Taglauer, 21 Robert Feinauer, 21 Joyce Rabadue, 21 Janet
Vennix, 22 Kathleen Alexander, 22 Jesse Arnold, 22 Thomas Feinauer, 22 Ray Ralph, 23
Debra VanTol, 24 Cole Melick, 26 Ruth Roth, 27 Spencer Fiebke, 28 Robert Wegener

Anniversaries

5 Dale & Dale Ann Gripentrog, Leonard & Maxine LeBeau, 22 Bernard & Freeda
VanTol, 23 Art & Elaine PrahI