

IT'S
2024!



OH, THE PLACES WE'LL GO!

With apologies to Dr. Seuss

Vol. 3, Issue 1
First Quarter 2024

IN THIS ISSUE:

Oh, The Places We'll Go!
By Chris Wethman:

What is Walltown?

Puerto Rico Mission

Bible Challenge

Campus Ministry Center
(Duke Lutherans)

LCMS Foundation

Get to Know Erin Hodge,
Music Director

From your Pastor

And more...

OH! THE PLACES WE'LL GO!

Dr. Seuss adapted by Chris Wethman

Congratulations!
This is a New Year
We're headed to Great Places!
Living by faith and definitely not fear!

We have brains in our heads.
We have feet in our shoes.
We can steer ourselves in any direction we choose.

But we're not on our own.
And we know Who we know.
As long as we heed the Guy Who'll decide where we go.



GPS is a quarterly publication of GLC – The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod
GPS is published in four times per year.

We'll look up and down streets. Look 'em over with care.
About some we will say, "We aren't led to go there."
With our hearts full of faith and our shoes full of feet,
we'll step out and head down an unknown street.

What is WALLTOWN?

Walltown is a historically African American, working-class neighborhood. Located north of Duke University's East Campus, it originally served as a residential neighborhood for service employees of the university and local tobacco and textile mills. It is bordered by West Durham Historic District and Watts-Hillandale Historic District to the West and Trinity Historic District to the east.

Walltown was named after George Wall. He was born a slave to the grandfather of a Trinity College physics professor and worked as a farm laborer before obtaining his freedom. Wall and his family settled near the college after its relocation to Durham from Trinity and purchased a lot nearby, building a house in 1906. In 1910 the first church was built in the neighborhood and named Wall Street Baptist Church, in honor of Wall.

History of Walltown Neighborhood Ministries

In 1996 representatives from 5 churches gathered for the purpose of formulating a strategy to revitalize the declining neighborhood and help alleviate problems associated with nagging poverty.

These five representatives, all pastors from neighborhood churches, met regularly for five years. In 2000, Walltown Neighborhood Ministries, funded by a grant from Duke University, officially opened at 1307 W Knox Street.

Mission And Vision Statements Of Walltown Neighborhood Ministries

Mission statement:

"In response to God's calling and in a spirit of reconciliation and renewal, Walltown and partners seek to engage and empower the residents of Walltown to create a community where every person can achieve educational, economic, physical, and spiritual well-being."

Vision statement:

"The rise of Walltown and the signs of renewal in the neighborhood have been brought by prayer, patience, and persistence. We believe in miracles."



Walltown Neighborhood Ministries Started With These Ministries:

Youth Way - After school tutoring and mentoring. A summer camp for young people and involving youth in service to the community.

Senior Adults CARE (Care And Respect For Elders) - Parish nurses for home visits, transportation to medical care and the enhancement of weekly programs for the elderly.

Young Parents and Families (PEAS - Parent Education And Support) - Provide education and support for young families. Encouraging congregations to adopt a young family moving from welfare to work.

Community Chaplains - Providing stipends for four Duke divinity students who worked with churches in providing daily ministries.

Oral History Community Identification - To write a history of the Walltown community to ensure pride in the African American origins of the neighborhood.

Hispanic ministry - Building bridges to the several hundred Hispanics living in the community.

Staff director - Providing funding for an executive director and associate director who oversee all the ministries.

The Food Ministry Blossoms And Grows

Walltown Food Ministries (WFM) was started by St. John's Missionary Baptist Church over 25 years ago as a food pantry serving neighborhood families. Initially,

80 families received food products each month.

Food is still purchased from local vendors on shopping days two times per month. It is brought to Trinity Ave. Presbyterian Church for storage.

Sorting and packing of the food takes place at Trinity on the last Monday of the month.

The food is distributed directly from the Trinity parking lot on the last Thursday of the month. As of this writing, WFM serves 150 families and 25 homeless individuals.

A Day In The Life

Hardly a day goes by where Executive Director, Sylvia Belcher does not receive a visitor at her office at St. John's from someone in need of food. She disappears for a few minutes and returns with an armload full of groceries that will last the recipient for close to three weeks. The smile on her face is gracious, infectious, and heartwarming. The recipient leaves her office with a thank you and a wide grin too. Blessed to be a blessing...

God willing, Walltown Food Ministries will procure its own location where food can be stored, sorted and

distributed. This new location would have ample space to accommodate an inventory that would last two to three months. The ideal location? Within the Walltown community, since this is where the majority of the food recipients live.

In the near future, the Walltown Board will meet to finalize details in order to move the project to its next phase towards completion. The cost to establish the new home to centralize all functions of Walltown Food Ministries is approximately \$80,000. So far, \$35,000 has been donated towards that goal.



Proposed Walltown Food Ministries Building

**And we may not find any we'll want to go down.
In that case, of course, we'll head straight out of town.
It's opener there in the wide-open air.**

**Out there things can happen and frequently will
to faithful and footsy people who can't sit still.
And when things start to happen, don't worry. Don't stew.
Just go right along. You'll start happening too.**

Oh! The Places You'll Go!

**We'll be serving on our mission out!
We'll be seeing great sights!
We'll become like those eagles
who soar to high heights.**

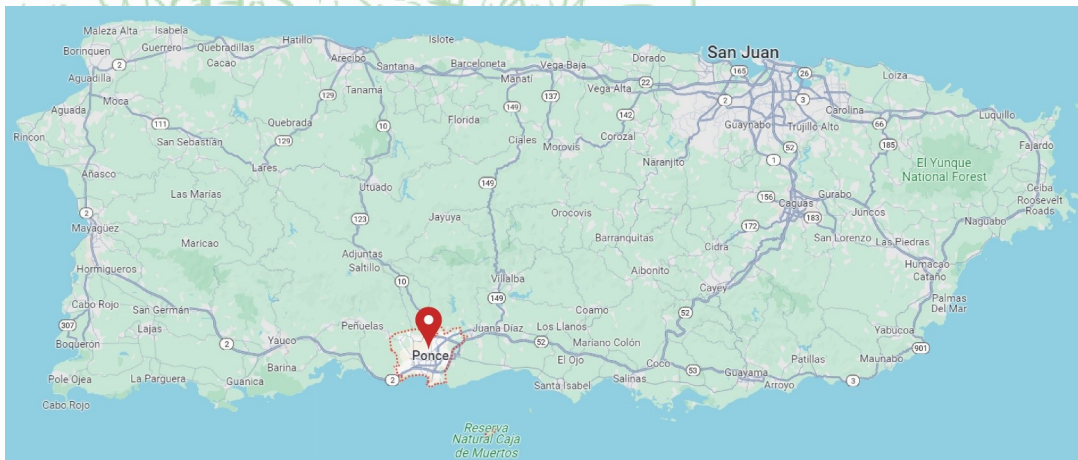
NEWS FROM THE MAITA FAMILY

Serving the Lord in Puerto Rico

Here are some highlights the recent newsletter from Pastor Gustavo, Ruth, Mikhaela and Isaiah Maita:

- Ruth leads a monthly English workshop in Ponce. Those who attended learned the hymn, “Christ Be My Leader.”
- Banana trees were planted for church meals, to help the community, and to provide some income for the church.
- Two sheep have been acquired to help maintain the weeds. The sheep are named Deborah and Dorcas.

*Christ be my leader
by night as by day
safe through the darkness
for He is the way
gladly I follow
my future I follow
darkness is daylight
when Jesus is there*



- English classes were started for little children in Mayagüez².
- Two new families with 2 children each attended the class.
- Families with autistic children were looking for English activities for their

children. It was discovered that these children pick up English more easily than Spanish.

- At the regular Friday night bonfire fellowship food was cooked in the new outdoor kitchen.
- Church members are helping to plan a Valentine’s Day event for celebrating friendship on February 17th.
- Please pray for the Maita’s as they plan for a new baby expected in April.

¹ Ponce is located on the southern coast of Puerto Rico. It is Puerto Rico’s most populated city outside the San Juan metropolitan area and was founded on August 12, 1692. Ponce is named for Juan Ponce de León y Loayza, the great-grandson of Spanish conquistador Juan Ponce de León.

² Mayagüez is the eighth-largest municipality in Puerto Rico located in the center of the western coast on the island. It has a population of 73,077.

**You will not lag behind,
because you’ll have read the Good Book
and you’ll be part of the whole gang -
Just turn around and look.**

BIBLE CHALLENGE

Out of 100 Bible verses ranked by internet search volume, listed below are the TOP 5 and the BOTTOM 5. See if you can match each scripture passage with the book, chapter, and verse. Then number the verses 1-5 and 96-100. Want to know how well you did? Check out the answers on the back cover.

RANKING (1-5; 66-100)	SCRIPTURE	?	BOOK, CHAPTER, VERSE
1.	After He said this, He was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid Him from their sight.	a.	John 14:6
2.	For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.	b.	John 17:17
3.	In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.	c.	Acts 1:9
4.	Sanctify them by the truth; Your Word is truth.	d.	Romans 3:23
5.	Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable -- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy -- think about such things.	e.	Micah 6:8
6.	Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.	f.	Philippians 4:8
7.	Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."	g.	John 3:16
8.	When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, "Will you give me a drink?"	h.	John 1:1
9.	For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.	i.	John 4:7
10.	He has shown all you people what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.	j.	Matthew 28:19

See if you can fill in the blanks:

_____ is the longest book in the Bible.

In the Book of _____, Balaam's donkey speaks.

The story of Shadrach and his friends in the fiery furnace is in this book: _____.

_____ is known as one of the few prophets to whom the people of Israel actually listened.

In this book we see the miracle of the sun standing still: _____.

Wherever you fly, you'll do your best.
Wherever you go, you know you'll be blessed.
Except when you don't.
Because, sometimes, you won't.

We're sorry to say so but, sadly, it's so true that
Bang-ups and Hang-ups happen to me and you.
We'll come down from the Lurch with an unpleasant bump.
And the chances are, then, that we'll be in a Slump.

And when we're in a Slump, we're not in for much fun.
Un-slumping ourselves is not easily done.
We will come to a place where the streets are not marked.
Some windows are lighted. But mostly they're darked.

A place we could sprain our elbow and chin!
Do we dare to stay out? Do we dare to go in?
What could be our loss? What will be God's gain?
And if we go in, should we turn left or right...or right-and-three-
quarters?
Or, maybe, not quite? Or go around back and sneak in from behind?



Simple it's not, I'm afraid each will find,
for mind-maker-uppers to make up their minds.
We can get so confused that we'll start in to race
down long wiggled roads at a break-necking pace
and grind on for miles across weirdish wild space, headed, I fear,
toward one more useless place.

The Waiting Place...for people just waiting.
Waiting for a train to go or a bus to come,
or a plane to go or the mail to come,
or the rain to go or the phone to ring,
or the snow to snow or waiting around for a Yes or No
or waiting for their hair to grow. Everyone is just waiting.

Waiting for the fish to bite or waiting for wind to fly a kite
or waiting around for Friday night or waiting, perhaps, for their
Uncle Jake
or a pot to boil, or a Better Break
or a string of pearls, or a pair of pants
or a wig with curls, or Another Chance.
Everyone is just waiting.





**No! That's not for you!
Somehow you'll escape all that waiting and staying.
You'll find the bright places about where you've been praying.
With banner flip-flapping, once more we'll ride high!
Ready for whatever is in store.
Ready because God wants us to soar!**

Campus Ministry Center / Duke Lutherans

WHAT'S HAPPENING?

Recently, a report was filed with MALIM (Mid-Atlantic Lutherans in Mission) as a requirement for the grant that was awarded to us for our ministry to the Duke Lutheran students. What follows are excerpts directly from the report that tell the story of lives of students impacted by the ministry that occurs every day in the Campus Ministry Center (formerly known as the Wittenberg Room.)

Two dedications of the Duke Lutherans Center (DLC) one during worship services in the morning and the other before an evening cook-out in the church's courtyard, welcomed students to their new Duke Lutheran Center (DLC). Both were well-attended. Before these events occurred, members of the congregation and the student group volunteered to renovate and repaint the space, furnish it, and make other preparations.

Since then, students, their leaders, and church members have gathered every Sunday evening during the school term for a worship service, followed by a hearty fellowship meal prepared by several Grace members.

Throughout the week students use the space for studying, group projects, and simply a place to rest or relax with other students. (The new refrigerator, microwave, and Keurig also provide students with access to fresh fruit, healthy snacks, coffee, tea, and juice throughout the week.)

The Grace Congregation has provided the Duke Lutheran students a place to call home, where they can worship, build community, study, share meals, gather with friends, and encourage each other. There has been consistent participation in Sunday evening worship and a steady stream of students spending time at the Center during the week.



Older and younger generations have successfully interacted in various ways. Pastor Brooks has stopped by to talk with students, and the 4 "ambassadors" and 2 committee members from GLC have taken advantage of opportunities to be involved with students in their own space. Others from the congregation have prepared meals or volunteered in different ways.

For over 50 years the Duke Lutherans did not have a consistent meeting place. Sometimes their gatherings were held far from campus, making it difficult for students without a car to attend. Their new Center is located just a block off campus, within easy walking distance. They now have a safe space to practice their

faith away from the pressures and skepticism of a university setting, and to invite their friends who might be seeking spiritual support. They come to be fed in body, mind, and spirit.

The Duke Lutherans group is comprised of 30-40 students (combined undergraduate and graduate) and their leaders. For some of the activities they have collaborated with other campus ministry groups, bringing larger crowds. We believe as many as 80-100 people have visited the Center at one time or another.

One-to-one relationships have been formed as members of Grace provided academic tutoring, resumé feedback, and airport transportation, while others hosted Thanksgiving dinner or engaged in coffee chats with the students. These activities occurred both within and outside of the Duke Lutheran Center.

“This is my first year with Duke Lutherans and I’ve found that the DLC has really helped me feel at home with the group by creating a safe, welcoming environment where I can take a break from college craziness and connect with my faith.” - Catalina

We have learned that when students have a dedicated campus ministry space to call home, they develop a clearer sense of community and identity as Lutheran Christians who are learning and growing as Jesus' disciples. At the Duke Lutherans Center, students find welcome, belonging, compassion, and purpose; they are rooted in their identities as beloved children of God who are equipped and called to serve their neighbors, God's Church and the world. Moreover, through the Christ-like presence and love of Grace members, students experience God's grace in tangible, concrete ways.

There is more activity taking place on a spiritual level than we as individuals are aware of and those activities will have a future impact that no one person can reliably foresee. It is with a sense of hope, curiosity and excitement that we look to the future of this mission.



Duke Lutherans
Called to life together

**Oh, the places we'll go! There is work to be done!
There are hearts to mend. There are souls to be won.**

A summary letter of the Grace Advisory Board (GAB) meeting from January 11, 2024

Items discussed:

Pastor Brooks-Discussion of calling a graduate DCO or DCM for Grace this year. A DCO is a Director of Congregational Outreach. A DCM is a Director of Congregational Ministries. The district deadline from synod is March 1, 2024. Chris Wethman requested paperwork from the district. A special voter's meeting will need to be called two weeks in advance to discuss with the congregation. Making this meeting happen before Ash Wednesday, which is February 14, 2024. The motion was made and approved, giving the Pastor ability to initiate contact with the district for a first call candidate (DCO or DCM), preparing a job description, and alerting the congregation for a special voter's meeting.

Board Reports-

Servant and Discipleship boards have been meeting together. Their last meeting was January 20. Members will be Bev Hudgins, Dwight Knoll, Gary Stuhlmiller, Laura Michael, Frank Oruwari, Sigi Benkert, and Kristin Poppe.

Resource Board-

Financial review, personnel policy update, altar and Grace House structural work are finished.
Lighting in sanctuary is finished except the custom fit cannisters.
Service contracts for ice maker and HVAC (for the church and Grace House) have been signed.
Duke Lutheran Center lighting changes (dimmable/LED lights) have been started but will need a different type of wire.

The assisted listening system and light controller still need to be completed.

A ceiling board in the Fellowship Hall has fallen and will need to be repaired and other boards checked as well.

Donna Gesell is looking into getting kneeling pads around the altar.

Painting for the Grace House has been completed. Looks like a new house!

2024 will be the year the Grace House mortgage will be paid off with God's help.

Joe Milko has been asked by the quilters if they can move into an empty classroom as a permanent location. GAB heartily agreed.

New Items-

Year End Financials reviewed and motion made and approved. We finished last year in a strong position. This was only due to the Holy Spirit's working in the hearts of all of you and your overwhelming generosity. Every one of you matters.

More counters are needed to help Donna with weekly counting.

Mitchell Endowment and Trustees per governance were

discussed. Geoff has resigned and the Board briefly discussed next steps.

Molly Brooks-Confirmation. Molly is in her second year attending confirmation classes at Resurrection in Cary. Molly will present to the GAB in March and give accounting of her faith and her Confirmation is scheduled for Pentecost at Grace on May 19, 2024.

Worship Planning- Discussion on moving to one Sunday service. More about this in the future.

Fellowship- Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper will be Tuesday, February 13 at 5:30. Suggestion made to see if Duke Lutherans would like to help.

Approval of Personnel Handbook Changes- Motion made to change wording from 'during' to 'after' 90 days in the reviewing of a new personnel. Approved.

May Voter's Meeting Scheduled for May 5, 2024.

Next GAB meeting Scheduled for February 18 in person.

This meeting was adjourned. Judy Barnes 1/20/2024

**And the magical things that the Spirit will guide
will make us victorious with God on our side.**

**Love! We'll be loving and caring as we can possibly be,
maybe crowds will be watching as God's Church we will be.
Except when they don't. Because, sometimes, they won't.**

**I'm afraid that sometimes we'll play lonely games too.
Games we can't win 'cause no one will even try something to do.**

All Alone!

**Whether we like it or not, Alone will be something we'll be quite a lot.
And when we're alone, there's a very good chance
we'll face things that could scare us right out of our pants.
There are some, down the road between hither and yon,
that can scare us so much it will take faith to move on.**

But on we will go though the weather be foul.
On we will go though our enemies prowl.
On we will go though the Cranky-crank's scowl.
Onward up many a frightening creek,
though our bodies may get sore and our hearts will grow weak.
On and on we will hike.
And I know we'll hike far and face up to our challenges
whatever they are.



We will get mixed up, of course, as you already know.
We'll get mixed up with many strange birds as we go.
So be sure when we step. Step with care and faith strong
And remember that Life on this earth is not long.



LCMS Foundation

TODAY | TOMORROW | FOREVER

With the visit by Rev. Licht from Lutherans for Live and his presentation on Practical Considerations at End of Life, some have asked about legacy giving.

The LCMS Foundation was created in 1958 by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to provide Christian estate planning services to LCMS members, and to help ministries invest or endow the gifts members leave them in their wills or estate plans.

More specifically, the Foundation has two purposes. First, they provide planned giving services to LCMS members, helping them make sure their God-given assets—things like retirement accounts, their home or land—will leave a positive, lasting impact upon the people they love, but also the congregation or ministries they care about most.

Second, they provide investment services to LCMS ministries, helping them be good stewards and grow the gifts their members and supporters have so generously provided. Essentially, they pool together the assets of hundreds of ministries to gain access to the type of highly-attentive investment services usually reserved for large corporations.

The Foundation staff are veterans of some of the world's best-known financial firms, banks and universities. They're backed by NEPC, one of the world's top investment advisers, and a seasoned team of 14 professional fund managers.

Imagine a future in which your God-given gifts continue to benefit your family and faith after you're called home to Heaven. With a charitable estate plan, your assets—things like retirement accounts, your home or land—will leave a positive, lasting impact upon the people you love, but also the congregation or ministries you care about most.

What is a gift plan?

Many people don't believe they have the wealth to leave a significant bequest to their congregation, or to create an endowment for their LCMS school. However, in today's world, most of our assets are "non-cash." Whether it's retirement accounts, life insurance or our home, when we leave this Earth, we often have greater blessings than we realized.

A gift plan structures how you'll leave those assets to your loved ones in a way that often minimizes the taxes on your estate, providing an opportunity to do more with the blessings God has provided. More specifically, using financial vehicles, such as charitable remainder trusts, a gift plan often provides the same level of inheritance to your heirs while also allowing you to make a substantial gift to the ministry of your choice.

Peace of Mind and Making the Most of Your Gifts

Having a gift plan provides numerous benefits beyond the obvious ways it will provide to your heirs in the future. It's tremendously comforting to know that, once you're called home to Heaven, your assets, including gifts you hope to provide to ministry, will be distributed in exact accordance with your wishes. By creating a gift plan for the future, you'll create peace of mind today.

Did you know that the best intentions detailed in a will can be overruled if your retirement accounts or life insurance policies have beneficiary designations that differ than what's listed in your will? Learn more about the differences between gift plans and having a will (and how they work best in tandem), at the Foundation's website: lcmsfoundation.org

The gift planning landscape can be complex, and unexpected taxes can reduce what you're able to leave to your heirs or give to charity. With a well-designed gift plan, you may be able to reduce the tax bill on your estate and accomplish more with your assets. With more than 60 years of experience helping LCMS members with gift planning, the Foundation knows to help you avoid unnecessary taxes so you can leave more to your family and to the ministries you hold dear.

Gift plans are for everyone, as we all possess gifts from God, and even the humblest gifts can make a positive impact.

Rev. John Denninger, former President of the Southeastern District of the LCMS is our District's dedicated gift planning counselor. He can be reached through the contact form on lcmsfoundation.org.

Just never forget to be dexterous and deft.
And never mix up your right foot with your left.



Get to Know Erin Hodge!

1. Tell us about your family...including pets.

I live with my family, just two kids and me, in Holly Springs, with our three cats. My son is in high school, my daughter is twelve, And both of them wear many hats! We like to play board games and snuggle with books, We take a long road trip each year, We don't have much family nearby, it is true, But we hold our friends very dear!

2. If you had to travel to the state/place where you were born, where would you be headed to?

My parents were both in the Air Force back then, In California, I was born We moved to NC in 1995, and lived 'twixt the cotton and corn.

3. What's the best concert you've attended?

I saw Radu Lupu, the greatest pianist, at UNC in 2007. His Brahms was transcendent, and I was inspired; The dear man now is in heaven.

4. What's your favorite thing to do on weekends?

I have an addiction to books and hot tea! I love to



play in my garden. I edit in spare time and busy with kids, If I miss your text, beg your pardon!

5. Are you a morning person or night owl?

I must have my coffee before I can speak, My son often brings me a mug, I'll stay up late to ensure a deadline! The cats curl up with me, (so smug).

6. Who inspires you?

Bach is my hero, and Brahms is my muse, Lydia's amazing (from Acts). I love Clara Schumann, the greatest of all, She's better than Liszt! (That's a fact!)

7. What was your first paying job?

At age 15, went to work with my dad, I worked stocking parts, 9 to 5; Taught lessons, cleaned houses, and waited tables, To keep my college dreams alive!

8. Have you ever met anyone famous?

I once met the glorious Alex Trebek! Why? My

friend was on Jeopardy! He was kind, with dry humor, such a cool day! Was grateful my friend had brought me!

9. What is your favorite Bible verse and why?

Job 38:7 "[Where were you] ... when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" God speaks of creation and thus, paints a scene, of cosmos and stars at their birth, And here it

is evident, music was there and built the foundations of Earth!

10. Favorite type of restaurant you love to go to and eat?

I love to be with friends and family to eat, I don't think much about venue. If you pick a place where I don't have to cook, I'm happy with any menu.

**And will we succeed?
Yes! We will, indeed!
(98 and $\frac{3}{4}$ percent guaranteed.)
Come on, we'll move mountains!**

**So...if your name begins with a
Z or an A,
you're off to Great Places!
The New Year's here to stay!
Our mountain is waiting.
So...let's get on our way**



I once heard a speaker call interstate highways "tunnels without walls." A traveler will see the same thing over and over, mile after mile, and progress is only measured in the distance or time between the last on-ramp and the next off-ramp.

Is this not the way many people go through life -- doing the same thing, thinking the same thoughts -- day after day, hour after hour, only focusing on the distance or time between the last on-ramp and the next off-ramp?

This issue of *GPS* has been an invitation to move off the interstate of life and discover what lies just beyond our usual horizon. Now, to do this means we must have two things: *trust* and *curiosity*. **Trust** turns us toward Christ, who has promised to be with us as we go into the world sharing Good News (Mt 28:19-20). Trust grows as we practice the habits Jesus teaches us; we practice... and practice... and discover that Jesus is

trustworthy, that he is near, as near as our own breath. **Curiosity** turns us toward those whom we see as we begin traveling new paths: who are those people who live next door? What is happening in the life of the woman I see in the check-out? What gift do I have to share with the community in which God has placed me? How can I share that gift?

So, today, do something different! Think something different! Let go worries about the time it will take or how far away it seems. Measure progress not in miles or days, much less in achievements or successes, but in people met and blessings shared.

For the saying is true: with Christ as your guide, oh the places you will go!

Prayers for your journey ~ Pr. Dave Brooks

Grace Notes is a publication of
Grace Lutheran Church.

Sunday Services at 8:30 & 11 AM
824 N. Buchanan Blvd.
Durham, NC 27701-1572
919-682-6030
www.gracedurham.org

Pastor:
The Rev. Dr. David H. Brooks



Visit us on our Facebook Page:
Grace Lutheran Church -
Durham, NC



Scan QR code
for Grace website

*Answers to Bible Challenge
on page 6.*

Ranking -- Book

97; c

5; d

2; h

100; b

96; f

4; j

3; a

98; i

1; g

99; e

Fill in the blanks:

Genesis

Numbers

Daniel

Haggai

Joshua



Grace Lutheran Church

Our new logo tells a story. It reflects our purpose and our goal: we are walking the way of **GRACE** that we might share God's blessing in our **HOMES**, our **NEIGHBORHOODS**, our **CITY**, and our **WORLD**.

The four points of the cross remind us of the first four parts of **GRACE**:

We **GROW** with Jesus

We **REJOICE** in God

We **ANSWER** with hope

We **CARE** for our neighbors

Each of these points moves us to the circle where we **EMBRACE** community. When Jesus calls us to life with him, it is not alone or solitary, but rather a life with and among others.

Our paths may be varied, winding, wandering and twisting, but as we walk the excellent way (1 Corinthians 12:31) we find Jesus who is the heart of life. The circle and the heart work together to mark out the four areas where we practice the way and find the Lord: in our homes, among our neighbors, around the city, and out in the world.

The cross in Duke blue and the heart in Carolina blue reminds us of our commitment to be God's People in the Durham/Chapel Hill area, "between the Blues."

*³¹ But earnestly desire the higher gifts.
And I will show you a still more excellent way.
~ 1 Corinthians 12:31 ESV*

Mission Statement: We are called to *Welcome Everyone to Walk the Way of GRACE*, and walk in that way in our individual lives, in our shared life in our various communities, in our common life with our neighbors, and even to the world at large as God sends us. The *Way of Grace* is to: **GROW** with Jesus, **REJOICE** in God, **ANSWER** with hope, **CARE** for the neighbor, and **EMBRACE** community.

Vision Statement: God has a plan **FOR OUR LIVES**, and so we teach how to walk in the path of Jesus Christ; **FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS**, and so we work to build healthy and strong communities; **FOR OUR CITY**, and so we share life with our neighbors in Walltown, Trinity Park, Duke, and the Triangle; and **FOR OUR WORLD**, and so we go with Good News.

Core Values: Because God loves us first, we value worship rooted in Scripture and Sacrament, service to all people, and being a welcoming community that loves and forgives one another.