

Grace Matters

the radio ministry of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Living in God's amazing grace

Fall 2007

How Does it Work?



Q & A

with *Grace Matters* Host
Peter W. Marty

I often get the question:
“How does it work? What’s
the behind-the-scenes story of
your role in *Grace Matters*?”

Well, here the curtain is
pulled back through Q and A.

Q: Aren't you also a parish pastor?

A: Yes, I am a dual-vocational person. There is a calling to lead this radio ministry, but I am also a parish pastor in Davenport, Iowa. The best part of this two-part life is the interplay between radio and congregation. Everything in my congregational work shapes some dimension of what I do for the radio and Web broadcast.

Q: Where do the interviews happen?

A: In many different places. Sometimes my guest and I meet in the Chicago studio where the production originates. At other times I take my digital recording equipment on the road. Most interviews are conducted from my home in Iowa by phone.

Q: Who picks the program guests?

A: A team at *Grace Matters*. There is a master list of possible guests, and I am constantly on the lookout for stimulating guests. Like others on the team, I always welcome ideas for guests that people suggest.

Q: What's the criteria for selecting program guests?

A: We look for guests (a) who belong to some sort of faith community and who derive strength from that attachment, (b) who do something interesting with their life and their God-given gifts and (c) who speak articulately about what they do or how they see the world.

Q: If you live in Iowa, and the program is produced in Chicago, what is your travel schedule?

A: At least three Thursdays a month I drive to and from Chicago. Other speaking and travel commitments associated with *Grace Matters* have me meeting people in different parts of the country.

Q: What's the greatest excitement with the program?

A: Far and away, the greatest excitement is generated by people — my guests and co-workers. You, the listeners, also hold a deep place in my heart.

Q: Your biggest concern?

A: Not surprisingly, it is the financial resources necessary to support a program of this scope. If only our Web visitors and other listeners knew what it took to produce these 30 minutes every week, especially with our production costs.

Q: Your greatest blessing?

A: My wife Susan, who lives with the different stresses my vocations create. She is living testimony to the truth that grace really matters.



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From the Producer



Grace Matters producer Susan Greeley

Sound Bites of the Spirit

The term “sound bite” carries a negative connotation these days. This meaning will no doubt be reinforced as we get closer to the 2008 elections and the candidates try to find pithy ways to sum up complex issues in less than 30 seconds.

The term applies to *Grace Matters* as well. Peter does a promotional announcement for every program we produce. His words are mixed with the *Grace Matters* theme music and sent to all of our radio stations. Since some stations only air 15-second promos, Peter has a grand total of 10 to 12 seconds to capture the essence of the program and try to entice people to listen. It's definitely his *least* favorite aspect of our recording sessions!

Maybe it's a carryover from my former life as a news reporter, but I happen to love sound bites. I have great admiration for people who can give me the essence of their life's passion in a 30-second elevator ride. It's not because I'm uninterested in

the details or the complexities of the issues; it's just that my own life is traveling a million miles per hour. I need to be able to grasp ideas quickly.

I think that's also true of many radio listeners. Some people may catch a program as they're driving from one place to another but don't hear the entire broadcast. Even those who do listen to an entire program may not remember many of the details they heard.

That's why I like the sound bite. Nearly every *Grace Matters* program has some gem, some little nugget of wisdom, that I think about long after we're finished with production.

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So here are just a few sound bites from recent *Grace Matters* guests: succinct, thought-provoking ideas that I hope will add something to your personal devotions and meditation.

— “The world is equally balanced between good and evil and your next act will tip the scale.” Rabbi Hillel as quoted by Robert Franklin: *Raise Her for God* (7/8/07)

— “God isn’t a character in our lives; God is the plot.” A quote from a mentor of Judy Valente: *Nourishing Your Soul* (6/24/07)

— “In knowing thyself, choose excellence.” Pastor Yehiel Curry: *Simba Circle-Making Choices* (7/15/07)

— “Jesus is always asking us to improvise life, isn’t he? To do it like we’ve not done it before because the situation is different now.” Ken Medema: *Grace, Everywhere We Turn* (7/22/07)

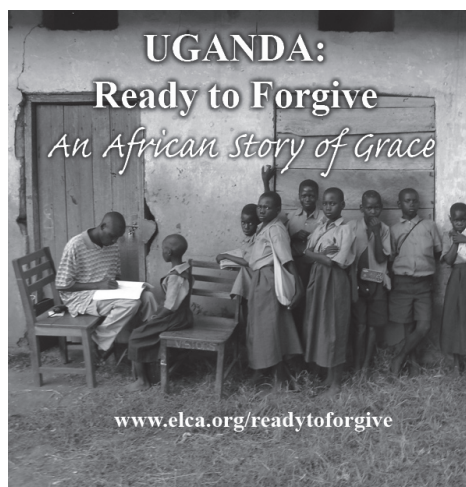
— “God cares more about faithfulness than success. I think significance is very different from success, and I would much rather live a life of significance and let the success take care of itself.” Danny Wuerffel: *Defining Success* (6/10/07)

— “You need to know your faith, understand your faith at its deepest and richest best, and at the same time know enough about your neighbor’s in order to show it respect.” Robert Seiple: *Humbly Engaging the World* (7/1/07)

— “If you know what [your excess] would do to somebody who was desperate and trying to raise kids, you can actually get more personal joy out of having them consume your excess than you consuming it yourself.” Rick Steves: *Expanding Your World* (5/13/07)

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Coming to NBC Television



Northern Uganda is at war. Those most affected are the Acholi people. They endure rape, torture and child abduction. Thousands have died. Two million are displaced.

Most live in squalid camps for internally displaced persons protected by the government soldiers they often fear more than the rebels. Despite all of this, the Acholi are united in a belief that the only real solution to the problem is reconciliation and forgiveness.

They are ready to forgive.

Beginning Sunday, December 2

Check your local listings for the exact date and time in your area.

For more information visit
www.elca.org/readytoforgive



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Ambassador Maahs



Good News Bears Repeating

By *Grace Matters*
Ambassador
Charlie Maahs

When Peter Marty invited me to be the ambassador for *Grace Matters* last year, I knew it would be a tremendous opportunity with a special mission: to share the good news that God's grace is unconditional and it changes lives permanently.

I was able to join with the *Grace Matters* Team and participate in the Good News Fund Phonathon in early May. It was a joy to visit with those I called, and I'm grateful for their willingness to support this ministry financially.

From these calls I was struck by the appreciation for the program's format, especially Peter's conversations with a variety of guests that cover a wide range of topics. It is evident that his theological and devotional reflections add depth to the program. Many people expressed a fresh understanding of God's grace and love through hearing about the lives of individual guests.

As an ambassador for *Grace Matters*, I attended the synod assembly of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin, the "Celebrating Rural Life" gathering at Gustavus Adolphus College, the "Let the River Flow" event in Burnsville, Minn. and the Global Mission Event (GME) in Columbus, Ohio. At each of these gatherings I told the *Grace Matters* story to very different audiences. I gave a PowerPoint presentation during workshop sessions and

spent the break times chatting informally.

The GME in Columbus was a particular highlight for me. My wife and I received *Grace Matters* CDs (sent to missionaries worldwide) when we served at the ELCA Continuing Education Center in Wittenberg, Germany in 2005-2006. We enjoyed listening to them as part of our devotional life, and it was a privilege to exchange some brief comments about *Grace Matters* with those who stopped by our display table during the Global Fest.

In his Second Letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul writes that we believers are to be "ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us ..." (5:20). Won't you join me in being an ambassador for *Grace Matters* where you live? Here are several things you can do:

- make certain your pastor and congregation council know about the program and its importance
- submit the program's topics, titles and texts to your church newsletter or weekly bulletin. Find them at www.gracematters.org/programs
- subscribe to *Grace Matters* CDs and place them in your church library for all to enjoy
- tell a friend about the program and invite them to listen
- apply to your congregation's mission endowment fund or other ELCA organization for *Grace Matters* support
- hold a *Grace Matters* fundraiser and apply to your local Thrivent chapter to match the amount you raise
- continue to listen to the program and hold it in your prayers

The appeal of *Grace Matters* is the everlasting importance of God's reconciling grace for our lives. This is the message that I am



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What's Coming Up



Andrea Jaeger

On **September 16** Andrea Jaeger, former #2 ranked female tennis player, talks with host Peter Marty about how laughter helps kids with cancer.

According to Jaeger's Web site she had a constant and supportive companion in God, who guided her through the often isolating experience of being a child prodigy (she turned pro at the age of 14) in the competitive, adult world of professional sports. Then a career-ending injury at the age of 19 set Jaeger on the path of helping children on a full-time basis. Jaeger operates the Little Star Program, headquartered in

Durango, Colo., a philanthropic program that provides funding and programs to children afflicted with hardship and disease.

Other September guests:

September 2 During her more than twenty years of ministry the Rev. Janet S. Peterman has worked with people going through very difficult times. Peterman, the author of *Speaking to Silence: New Rites for Christian Worship and Healing*, talks with host Peter Marty about new rituals for difficult circumstances.



Rev. Janet Peterman



Eboo Patel

September 9 Eboo Patel, founder and executive director of Interfaith Youth Core, a growing interfaith youth movement, talks with *Grace Matters* about religious pluralism vs. religious totalitarianism.

September 23 Wayne-Daniel Berard, director of spiritual life and associate professor of English at Nicholas College in Dudley, Mass., explores the Jewish roots of Christianity.



Wayne-Daniel Berard



Dr. David Hilfiker

September 30 Dr. David Hilfiker, is a physician and cofounder of Joseph's House, a supportive and nurturing home for formerly homeless men and women with terminal illnesses. Hilfiker is the author of *Not All of Us Are Saints: A Doctor's Journey with the Poor* and *Urban Injustices: How Ghettos Happen*. Hilfiker has lived and worked in the inner-city of Washington, D.C., for many years.



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Memorials That Live to Serve and Bless Others

IN MEMORY OF:

A gift to Grace Matters is a special way to remember a loved one who has gone to be with the Lord. Your memorial gift will help carry the gospel to thousands!
(Gifts received through 07/20/07)

Barbara Berglund

Stephen Berglund

Jonathan S. Coltvet

(41 year old son)

Rev. Sherman & Rachel Coltvet

Julie

Rev. Myron & Florence Grams

Lyle Greeley (Susan

Greeley's father)

Rhonda W. Campbell
Rev. Robert & Lois Dahl
Eleanor Hagstrom
Gertrude Milliken
Robert & Joan Pope

Anna Hamen

Rev. David & Jeanne Hoyme

Alice "Allie" Olson

Marrida Myron

Myrtle MacIver

Marvin Pederson

Leland Pederson

Jim Lee

Virginia Robertson

Marian Smith Flugstad

Margaret and Gus Sapega

Dorothy Kile

Anne Sauer

Eunice McKnight

Norma Siverson

Lewis Sampson

Doris Chantland

Joe & Phyllis Skinner
Fern & Lee Robinson

Beryl Ritz

Rev. LeRoy & Elisabeth Stadem

Mike Gremmert (uncle)

Marilyn A. Swanson

Rev. Conrad Thompson

Mark & Marjore Thompson

Arnold & Dorothy

Bjurstrom

Rev. Arnold & Barbara Thoren

IN HONOR OF:

Spreading the gospel through a gift to Grace Matters is also a wonderful way to remember a birthday, anniversary or other special occasion!

(Gifts received through 07/20/07)

50th Wedding Anniversary

Rev. Myron & Florence Grams

50th Wedding Anniversary

50th Anniversary of Rev.

Edgar Greve's Ordination

Rev. Edgar & Marilyn Greve

Waldo Bruss' 92nd

birthday

Ronald & Arleen Martin

50th Wedding Anniversary

of the Rev. Charles &

Anne Rein

Mr. & Mrs. Ken Rathert

50th Wedding Anniversary

of Phyllis & Carl Kringle

Erling & Elinor Rohde

"Bud" Kragenbrink's July

Birthday

Margaret Kragenbrink & family

Help Support

Grace Matters

With a charitable gift annuity you donate cash or stock through the ELCA Foundation and, in return, you receive a guaranteed annual income for the rest of your life. Your gift is deductible and a portion of your annuity payment is tax-free. As you age, the tax-free portion grows. Upon your death, the balance of your account goes to *Grace Matters*.

For more information, call the ELCA Foundation at 800/638-3522, ext. 2970, or visit www.elca.org/fo



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