

GRACELINES

Pastor's Article

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"From Hell to Heaven"

Deep below Westminster Abbey in London is a burial vault for ancient kings. One morning a visitor was accidentally locked in this ancient crypt behind its thick, solid door. All his shouting and knocking was of no avail. When the caretaker made his usual rounds, the imprisoned man heard him come near but then walks away until finally his footsteps died in the distance. All day long the entombed man, hoarse and exhausted, cried as loudly as he could. In terror he threw himself against the solid oak door until, at evening, when the Abbey was silent, he heard the creak of the entrance door, and it dawned on him that he was buried alive.

Just before leaving the building, however, the custodian stopped, for he seemed to hear a slight tapping. He listened more carefully, and there in the silenced Abbey he heard a muffled rapping, a low moaning. Following the sound to the crypt, he unlocked the massive door and lifted his light to see the imprisoned man fall unconscious to the floor. Had he not been rescued then, he would undoubtedly have turned insane.

In a much higher way, had not Jesus risen from the grave on the first Easter, we would have been locked in eternal death with no forgiveness for our sins, no hope of heaven, nothing but the doom of hell--shriek and pound as we might.

But in eternity Jesus heard you cry. He left heaven. He went to the cradle. He went to the cross. He was carried dead to the tomb. Today you can say with Paul, **"It is written: 'I believe; therefore I have spoken.' With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the One who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in His presence" (2 Cor. 4:13-14).**

On this Easter, April 12, know, believe, and confess that you have been delivered from hell and are destined for heaven. From hell to heaven! Believe it. Trust it. Confess with Job: **"I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see Him with my own eyes--I and not another! How my heart yearns within me" (Job 19:25-27)!** Easter joy to you! Be blessed and be a blessing, especially to those still without hope.

Pastor Riggert

Gracelines Calendar and Gracelines are a monthly publications of

Grace Lutheran Church

856 W. Newgrove Street, Lancaster, CA 93534-3092
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Offering		Attendance	
Ending Sunday 2/15	8,038	Saturday 2/14	90
Ending Sunday 2/22	8,431	Sunday 2/15	203
Ending Sunday 3/1	11,721	Saturday 2/21	27
Ending Sunday 3/8	8,189	Sunday 2/22	198
Ending Sunday 3/15	11,987	Saturday 2/28	192
		Sunday 3/1	334
		Saturday 3/7	25
		Sunday 3/8	204
		Saturday 3/14	30
		Sunday 3/15	193
		Sat/Sun Average Attendance-February	
		2008	267
		2009	259
Building Fund (BTBC)			
Ending Sunday 2/15	150		
Ending Sunday 2/22	105		
Ending Sunday 3/1	405		
Ending Sunday 3/8	170		
Ending Sunday 3/15	265		
Total as of 2/8	786,580		

Stewardship Corner

Salvation is God's free gift to us, but it does not come without cost! We cannot buy it or earn it. God gave it to us in the person of His Son, "a lamb without blemish or defect." Only through "the precious blood of Christ" (1 Peter 1:19) could the debt of our sin be paid. St. Peter says, in light of this great gift, we "have sincere love for [our] brothers [and] love one another deeply, from the heart" (1 Peter 1:22).

Baptized in Faith

Hayden James Sowa

Born: September 5, 2008

Baptized: February 8, 2008

Son of

William & Sandra Sowa

Jack Edward Roy

Born: September 5, 2008

Baptized: February 15, 2008

Son of

Justin & Kristen Roy

Special Service and Event Palm Sunday – April 5th

Bible Class Hour

9:00 am

ONE Worship Service

10:00 am

Dancing Chicken Cook-Out

12:00 pm

WHAT

It's a ONE worship service Sunday and COOK-OUT after the service.

PURPOSE

- To invite back members we haven't seen in a while.
- To bring us together as members of Grace Lutheran.
- To give us an opportunity to grow together in Faith and Fellowship.
- To start reaching out by reaching those connected directly to us.

Who

Friends - Family - Co-Workers - Members - Non-members

NEED

- 5 Grills with lids (either Charcoal or Gas)
- Every Family to bring a Family-Favorite-Side
(Salad, Cole-slaw, Potato Salad, Pasta Salad, Cookies, Brownies)

How

- Focus on ONE Friend or ONE Family.
- Spend time w/ them, eat dinner together, go to a park or a game together
- Invite someone you know and KNOW WELL.
(You have a relationship with someone already and already know how to talk with them. They might be connected with Grace Lutheran, too, but have recently felt disconnected.)
- Let them know about the Special Palm Sunday Service and Cook-Out.
(Through you, someone can feel welcomed, loved and know that Jesus Died and is Risen for them.)



Holy week Schedule

Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday on Sunday, April 5th.

Our Holy Week schedule and themes will be:

Sunday, April 5th 10:00 a.m. Palm Sunday

"King of Kings: A Humble Coronation"

Wednesday, April 8th 7:00 p.m.

Service of Corporate Confession/Absolution

Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 p.m. - "King of Kings: Condemned to Die"

Good Friday Service 7:00 p.m. - "King of Kings: Life through Death".

Easter Vigil Service 6:00 p.m.

Easter Services - 7:00, 9:00, and 11:00 a.m. "King of Kings and Lord of Lords"

Easter Morning Schedule

Come join us on Easter Sunday as we joyously celebrate our Lord's Resurrection

7:00 a.m. Easter Sunrise Service

w/Communion, Bells, Brass & Chancel Choir

9:00 a.m. Easter Festival Service

w/Communion, Bells, Brass, & Chancel Choir

11:00 a.m. Easter Festival Service

w/Communion, Bells, Brass & Chancel Choir

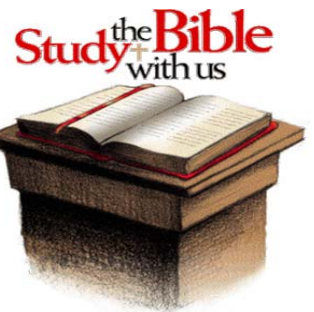
Grace Lutheran Youth Group will be serving Easter Breakfast from 8:00-11:00 a.m.

Prayer Vigil Reminder - Mark your calendar for 6:00 p.m. Friday, April 3rd thru Saturday, April 4th. We will close the prayer vigil with our 6:00 p.m. Saturday service. Hosts for each hour are needed! Please contact June Nuckolls, or Teri Morgan in the church office.



Pastor Riggert has Received a Call to serve as a pastor at Epiphany Lutheran Church in Kenmore, Washington. Your prayer and input are requested as God's will is determined for which call (Grace or Epiphany Lutheran) he should follow.

New Bible Classes -- Watch for details concerning the new Sunday morning Bible classes that will begin on Sunday, April 19th, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Sunday School classes for all ages meet during this Bible Class time.



Annual Family Easter Egg Hunt -

Mark your calendars and don't miss this fun filled morning with singing, the Easter Story, the HUNT, and goodies! Saturday, April 11th from 10:00-11:00 a.m. Individuals wishing to help can contact Teri Morgan in the church office 948-1018. **Donations of individually wrapped candies are NEEDED!**

Confirmation is Coming-- Confirmation Sunday for 8 youth will be on Sunday, May 10th, in the 11:00 a.m. service. A special evening for the Confirmands to express their "What Jesus Means to Me?" will take place on Wednesday, May 6th at 7:00 p.m. There will also be displays about their life in the Parish Hall. Please keep our Confirmands in your prayers as they confirm their baptismal faith.

A Note from Our Intern Deaconess

To God's People at Grace Lancaster, It has already been a pleasure and blessing to be serving you at Grace. I have found the congregation to be inviting and the returning home to the church of my youth a reassurance of God's direction in this walk on the way to becoming a called deaconess. I was a member with my family and even graduated from Grace Lutheran School in 1966. At that time I was June Schaus. My husband, Bill, also graduated from GLS, in 1961. We later transferred to Resurrection Lutheran where I acted as church secretary for a couple years. We moved to Tehachapi in 1998. I have two daughters, Amanda who attends Concordia, Irvine and Sarah who is working on becoming an electrician and lives in San Jose.

Why a Deaconess?

In 2004 my husband died in a car accident. My life changed and I was impelled to go to Fort Wayne, Concordia Theological Seminary to study theology and commit to being a deaconess. I will be an Intern Deaconess with you from March 10th to June 15th. I will be looking for permanent position at that time.

What is a Deaconess?

She is a full time church worker that has been trained to fulfill many roles. At Grace I will be a parish deaconess but many deaconesses serve also in institutions, i.e.; hospitals as chaplains, sr. care facilities, pregnancy crisis centers, adoption agencies, and food banks, etc. The Parish Deaconess is a visitor to those in need, an educator, a facilitator, and organizer. She holds a church office under the Office of the Holy Ministry. If you have any questions, talk to me. Here is a chance to tell me what should be done or extended at Grace. I welcome ideas. I would like to get to know you. I am the one trooping around in student deaconess garb of blue suit, white blouse, and white cross emblem on sleeve.

In His Bondage,
June Nuckolls, Deaconess Intern
4805 W. M-14
Quartz Hill, CA 93536
(661) 206-5880
(661) 808-0698

School News

Before we look forward to events in April, I would like to review one from March. The Lutheran Schools Sunday on March 1 was a really outstanding worship and fellowship time. I thank everyone for supporting the educational ministry we have at Grace. I feel I need to report to you all that I met my obligation of coloring my hair green. It was an extremely bright green color and I could be seen all over campus. Thanks to all who came to worship and participate in our service.

Our advanced band was able to participate in the Los Angeles Lutheran High School Music Festival this year. Dr. Wooster was able to secure a bus through Michael Antonovich's office. This allowed us to take the entire 5th grade along to experience a music festival. The students represented us well and the adjudicators were favorably impressed by the band's performance. We hope to make this an annual event for the band.

Re-enrollment and new enrollments have begun. If you know of a friend, family member or co-worker who is looking for a Christian school, please encourage them to call or come by the office for a tour.

We are in the 3rd trimester of our school year. April and May are both heavy months of full school days. We are off very few days. The 8th grade will travel to Washington DC April 19-24. This has proved to be a significant educational trip for the 8th graders.

We will have all the classes go to church on Friday afternoon, April 3, to begin the prayer vigil that is planned for that night until 6:00 p.m. Saturday night.

A focus point for us in April is Holy Week and Easter. We will have a brief devotional time in church on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. We will have a full Chapel on Maundy Thursday. Although we will not have school on Good Friday or Easter Monday, all of us will help our children know about the suffering and death of our Lord and the great joy in knowing of His resurrection on Easter morning.

Serving the Master Teacher through service to our children,
Wanda Vandrey



O sacred Head, now wounded, With grief and shame weighed down,
 Now scornfully surrounded With thorns, Thine only crown.
 O sacred Head, what glory, What bliss, till now was Thine!
 Yet, though despised and gory, I joy to call Thee mine.



Music Notes

We are rapidly heading into Holy Week and the central point of our church year. Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Easter Vigil are known, in Latin, as the Triduum (Latin for three days). These three days are the culmination of Jesus' life and lead from the celebration of Passover on Maundy Thursday through Jesus' arrest, His suffering through the trials, His crucifixion, and on to the first announcement of Jesus' resurrection at the Easter Vigil. It is the events of these three days that forever changed human history in general and our lives in particular.

Backing up just a bit, we actually begin our observance of Holy Week on Palm Sunday when Jesus enters Jerusalem and is hailed as a hero. Our school will hold short five to ten minute devotionals Monday through Wednesday (April 6-8). These devotionals will focus on Jesus' activities during the first holy week and will include prayer, Bible readings, and a hymn. Then on Thursday, April 9, we will hold our regular chapel service which will wrap our school observance of Holy Week. You are, of course, welcome to join us for these devotionals.

Wednesday evening, April 8, at 7 PM we will observe a service of Corporate Confession. Personally, this is one of the most powerful services each year as we approach the altar rail to receive personal absolution.

Thursday evening, April 9, at 7 PM we will observe Maundy Thursday. This powerful communion service ends with the stripping of the altar to the chanting of Psalm 22.

Then on Good Friday, April 10, at 7 PM we will observe a Tenebrae service. The Latin word Tenebrae means darkness. It is appropriate for this service as we focus on Jesus' crucifixion through Scripture readings and gradually extinguish candles. The service ends with the strepitus (another Latin word, meaning loud noise) which symbolizes Jesus' death, the splitting of the temple veil, the earthquake and the rocks splitting mentioned in Matthew 27:51. It also foreshadows the earthquake that accompanies Jesus' resurrection (Matthew 28:2).

The Easter Vigil (held on Saturday, April 11 at 6 PM) begins outside in the courtyard between the sanctuary and the church office. A small bonfire is held and once the paschal candle is lit from this new fire, we process into the church. It is during this communion and baptismal service that the first announcement of the resurrection occurs.

Our Easter celebration begins on Easter Sunday, April 12 with our 7 AM sunrise service. Festival services will be held at 9 and 11 AM as we celebrate our Lord's resurrection with brass, handbells, choir, and lots of joyous singing!

Our Easter celebration continues each Sunday as we recall Jesus' resurrection on the first Easter and all that He has accomplished for us. It is my prayer that you can join us for many of these services as we focus on the central event in history, and in our faith! Praise the Lord for all He has done for us – forgiveness, eternal life, and new life with purpose here on earth!

If you'd like to be a part of the music ministry as we strive to keep our Easter joy going, give me a call in the church office or send me an e-mail and we'll get you connected!

With You In Christ's Service,
 Larry Wooster

News from the DCE,

¹⁵Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them. ¹⁶In the past, he let all nations go their own way. ¹⁷Yet he has not left himself without testimony: He has shown kindness by giving you rain from heaven and crops in their seasons; he provides you with plenty of food and fills your hearts with joy. ¹⁸Even with these words, they had difficulty keeping the crowd from sacrificing to them.

In the coming weeks, there are quite a few opportunities for us at Grace Lutheran Church & School to gather together around God's Word in worship and festivities that are meant to draw us closer to our Heavenly Father and closer to each other as God's dearly loved children.

Some of the upcoming opportunities are:

FATHER/SON CAMPOUT **April 3rd**
(Friday night from 5:00pm to Saturday 12:00pm)

PALM SUNDAY SERVICE AND COOK-OUT **April 5th**
(A UNITIED Bible class hour @ 9:00am, ONE Worship Service @ 10:00am, and a Cook-Out @ 12:00pm)

EASTER SUNDAY WORSHIP AND BREAKFAST **April 12th**
(Sunrise Service @ 7:00am, Service @ 9:00am & 11:00am and Breakfast @ 8:00am – 11:00am)

MONKEYBUTLER YOUTH NITE **April 22nd**
(Wednesday night from 7:00pm – 9:00pm)

LA GALAXY SOCCER GAME SIGN UP DEADLINE **May 6th**
(Grace Lutheran has an opportunity to go to and watch a LA Galaxy soccer match. Tickets are \$17 per person)

With each of these services, events and activities, the intention is to draw people into a closer relationship with their Heavenly Father. Hopefully, nothing done here at Grace Lutheran is done in such a way as to say, "look at us, WE DO such great things," but rather "look at Jesus, HE HAS DONE great things for us." It is sometimes all too easy for us to look at what an organization – and even a church – is doing and say, "They're doing it right." To be honest, we'll never do it right. However, it is our hope that with each of the upcoming worship services, events, outings and activities that each of us looks to God and see how His Holy Spirit is moving and working in us to bring us closer to Him and in turn, by using us, to build relationships with those around us closer to Him. It is Him, Jesus Christ, who ALWAYS does it right and does it right in His own time.

I encourage each of you to use the opportunities listed above to reach out to those with whom you have a relationship. I pray that each of us sees how "God provides us with plenty of food (spiritual and chewable food) and fills your hearts with JOY!" God is providing for us and our needs let us therefore, share those provisions with those in need of permanent and eternal joy!

Jim Roberts – DCE



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
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CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Rich Riggert
Assistant Pastor/Church Planter	Todd Niebling
Music Director	Larry Wooster
Youth Director	Jim Roberts
Church Secretary	Teri Morgan

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE

Principal	Wanda Vandrey
School Secretary	Christine Calvert

CHURCH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	Ken Szalai
Vice President	Scott Smith
Treasurer	Dennis Klein
Recording Secretary	Marge Barckholtz
Member at Large	Gary Vandrey
Council of Elders	Leo Thibault

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