

GRACELINES

School News

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I hope that many of you were able to hear the messages presented to us at church by Dr. Moon and by Pastor Byrd. All three messages spoke to being on fire (ablaze) for Christ which translates into telling others about Christ and showing compassion to all those around us. Some of us may go to do missionary work around the world such as Cindy Charlton is doing and what both Prisca Van Duzer and Jim Roberts have done. Many of us will do our ministry work closer to the Antelope Valley.

With that in mind, I want to reprint what Kathy Rottman wrote for our Sunday bulletin recently. The Day School Committee is working on ideas to reach out into our community with the Gospel by finding ways to offer our school to those who might not otherwise be able to attend a private Christian school. Kathy wrote:

“In this time of financial uncertainty many families are forced to make some difficult choices. Unfortunately, tuition for a private school is often an expense that must be cut. We have several students who would like to return to our school this fall but may be unable to do so. Several years ago, a scholarship fund was established for this very purpose.

“Would you consider contributing to this fund? Grace Lutheran School is perhaps the main mission outreach for our church. Help us to continue to provide for these students a top-notch education as well as a firm foundation in the truths of Holy Scripture. Please note on your check memo ‘Grace Lutheran School Scholarship Fund.’ Thank you for your prayerful consideration.”

My other thought for this August Gracelines is about purchasing what is called “scrip” that helps support the school. “Scrip” is literally the same as gift cards that you can purchase to use at grocery stores, clothing stores, gas stations, general department stores, and many restaurants. We all buy gas and probably shop at Walmart if nothing else. I am going to make a big effort to be available with the scrip during the coffee time between first service and Bible study. I can show you and tell you more about this program and how it helps our school.

Serving the Master Teacher,
Wanda Vandrey Principal

“Providing a
Christ-centered
education
for today,
tomorrow
and eternity?”

August 2009

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856 W. Newgrove Street, Lancaster, CA 93534-3092
Telephone: (661) 948-1018 Fax: (661) 948-2731

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem And crown Him Lord of all.

Let ev'ry kindred, ev'ry tribe, On this terrestrial ball
To Him all majesty ascribe And crown Him Lord of all.

MUSIC NOTES

When we consider the news headlines, it is easy to come to the conclusion that our world is a mess. Considering just the economic news, things look bad. People are concerned about jobs, investments, while showing some slight signs of improvement, are still down; people continue to argue over advisable stimulus projects for the economy, gangs and crime are still a concern, and I could go on and on. Our world is a mess.

We could argue over who is to blame – which politicians or political parties, which greedy corporate leaders, or look at a combination of factors. But regardless of who is to blame, we still have the situation to deal with. Plus, we would be completely missing the truth. The real problem lies within each of us. We are self-centered, greedy, and we don't care about others like we should. We are concerned about our bank account, our job, our retirement investments. We want a pay raise because we think we deserve it. We want more vacation time. We want more leisure activities. We want more recognition for our kids. Oh, we may try to deny it, or even rationalize it, but the bottom line is that's pretty much where we are. Human beings are self-absorbed and greedy.

But that isn't really anything new. Those same problems existed in Martin Luther's time (500 years ago Martin Luther received his bachelor's degree in Biblical studies and began lecturing at the University of Wittenburg). Those same problems existed in Jesus' time, and even clear back to the time of Noah. In fact, this preoccupation with self began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve decided to eat the forbidden fruit because **they** wanted to. In other words, all the problems we have in our world today come down to one thing: sin. We go our way instead of the way God designed.

The good news is that even though we human beings caused the problem, and each of us as individuals continues to cause the problems we have in this world, God did something about it. Jesus came at just the right time. He lived the perfect life, following all of God's commandments, and then voluntarily accepted the punishment we deserve.

The ridicule, the beatings, the humiliation, the torture that ended in Jesus' death on the cross is nothing except what we deserve. Make no mistake: because of your sin – your focus on yourself – you deserve the punishment that Jesus accepted on your behalf.

Of course the best news of all is that Jesus took our punishment willingly out of His love for us. Jesus paid the price. Our sins are forgiven! That means that God can look at us and say we are perfect, sinless people. That means that we can now forgive each other just like we have been forgiven.

There is no better news than that. Our future is secure! Eternal life in heaven is ours and cannot be taken away from us – regardless of our financial situation.

Does that mean that we don't have to still take care of the problems of this life – pay the bills, take care of our families, etc? Unfortunately, no. But it does mean that Jesus is in control. If He had power over death – and He demonstrated that power by rising from the dead on Easter – He certainly has power over the problems we experience each day.

The Jesus who loved us enough to die on the cross for us loves us enough to work all things together for our good (Romans 8:28). Jesus is still the Lord of the universe! He is still in control!

Because Jesus is in control, we are free – free to worship Him, to praise Him, to forget ourselves and help others!

I invite you to celebrate the control Jesus has as we gather for worship and to be built up, equipped, and encouraged for our daily lives. We gather each weekend around Word and Sacrament so the Holy Spirit will keep us strong.

If you'd like to be a part of our worship lives and serve in the music ministry of Grace, give me a call. I still have openings for musicians, singers, etc. to use their God-given gifts to serve others. Praise the Lord!

In Christ's Service,
Larry D. Wooster

Dear Congregation,

A hearty thanksgiving to you from your new Deaconess. You have been generous in your call to me both financially and with your open arms and hearts. I will try to with St. Paul Eph. 1:16 thank God for you remembering you in my prayers.

I will have regular office hours Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30 am-11:30 a.m. for the summer. I am working on my schedule hoping to visit shut-ins at least once/monthly. Stop by and say howdy if you happen to be around. I want to get to know you. I will firm up my schedule by the fall. Let me know how I may serve you.

On August 15th we commemorate St. Mary, the Mother of Our Lord. No I am not getting Roman Catholic on you. Gal. 4:1-7 talks about our freedom from the slavery of sin by the birth of His Son from this woman. Mary was humbled by this honor in her thanksgiving prayer in the first chapter of Luke; the magnificat.

Let us also be humbled and honored by the role that God has called us to do. Because of our inheritance we are free from the strangled hold of sin in our lives. Free to act, think, and talk as God's children.

"For behold from now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me and holy is His name" (Luke 1:48) ESV Call Mary, the throne of Our Lord blessed, she is the mother of the new Adam, from her womb our salvation comes. Someday with her we will share in His eternal kingdom.

Thanks Be to God!

Deaconess June Nuckolls



Prayers and Squares is Two Years Old!



The Prayer Quilt Ministry started two years ago in July. Since that time **77 quilts** have been on display for you to tie knots and say prayers. Let's do a little math. That's 77 people who have been impacted by our prayers. If each person has 3 additional family members they also have been effected by the prayers and the quilts so that means over 200 people touched in some way. And then there are all the caregivers and medical staff who have seen the quilts and been in someway effected as they learn about the purpose of the quilt and how the person received the quilt. And let's not forget all of the people at Grace who have prayed and received the benefit from doing that.

Each quilt has a minimum of **60 knots**. If each knot has only one prayer said for it that would be **4,620 prayers**, but we know that many of those knots have several knots in them so multiply that out and the number of prayers increases tremendously! It doubles and triples and the number and we really have no way of counting the prayers. WOW! What an impact our prayers have had. The important thing to remember is that **"IT IS NOT ABOUT THE QUILTS ~ IT'S ALL ABOUT THE PRAYERS!"**

Quilts are available as you read this. Do you have someone who is in need of prayer and could benefit spiritually from receiving a quilt and knowing that people are praying for him. Not only do the quilts give warmth but, more importantly, they give a spiritual message to the receiver. We know that some of the people who have received a quilt and some who have seen the quilts have been strengthened in their relationship with their Lord. That is the greater benefit of the witness the quilts give. Request a quilt by completing a form from the Parish Hall bulletin board and turning it in to the church office or giving it to Marge Barckholtz.

**QUILTERS ~ WE'LL MEET AUGUST 10 TO ASSEMBLE AND TIE QUILTS!
ANYONE IS WELCOME TO JOIN US AT THAT TIME.**

GivingPlus®

To date we have received over \$28,000 from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans in matching funds for our school and preschool. Our goal is to receive \$55,000 by the end of the year. This is enabling us to keep our high standards of Christian Education even during these financially difficult times. If you have a Thrivent product you can join this worthwhile effort by completing a form available in the Parish Hall, making out your check to "Grace Lutheran School" or "Grace Lutheran Preschool", write "Thrivent" on your envelope and place it in the offering on Sunday or bring it to the church office. Thrivent will match up to \$600 with \$300. Contact Marge Barckholtz, 661-946-6806, for details or help.

Thrivent members
are making an impact
on Christian
Education at
Grace Lutheran
School & Preschool!

\$1,825,000.00 MITE GOAL FOR 2009 ~ 2011

At the recent LWML Convention in Portland, Oregon the 601 voting delegates chose 19 mission grants to receive funds in the biennium of 2009 to 2011. Originally there were requests for 88 different projects. A committee worked and prayed over the past year to narrow the list to 28 from which the 601 delegates voted to accept the following list. All of the projects were worthy of receiving funds so after much prayer the following were selected to receive LWML MITES during the next two years.

1. Defray the cost of Shipping Quilts by Lutheran World Relief	\$80,000
2. Concordia Seminary, St. Louis Food Bank Relocation	\$80,000
3. The Carpenter's Hands ~ Youth Refurbish Homes in Florida	\$26,000
4. Psalm 69:14 Project ~ Emergency Disaster Aid in TX, OK, LA	\$50,000
5. Digitize Classes for Specific Ministry Pastor Program, Concordia, Ft. Wayne	\$36,000
6. 10 Chapels, transportation, and Pastoral Training in Tanzania	\$88,000
7. Body and Soul Care for Children in India	\$50,000
8. LCMS Prison Ministry Provides Devotional Materials	\$50,000
9. Lutheran Braille Workers Provide English Braille Bibles - Africa	\$100,000
10. Kyrgyzstan Locals Trained for Evangelism	\$100,000
11. The Hope Center for Refugees & Immigrants ~ Ohio	\$90,000
12. Human Care and Pastoral Ministries Developed In Latvia and Lithuania	\$36,000
13. Mission Support for Disabled Children ~ Dominican Republic	\$50,000
14. Native Leadership Scholarships at Ethnic Immigrant Institute of theology	\$100,000
15. Humanitarian Care Outreach in Kazakhstan	\$30,000
16. International Student Ministry Providing Bibles and Christian Resources	\$30,000
17. Earthquake Relief aid and Church Plants in Peru	\$100,000
18. Light of Christ Chinese Lutheran Mission ~ St. Louis, MO	\$75,000
19. Humanitarian Aid Opens Mission Field in North Korea (Partial grant)	\$82,482
5. Digitize Classes for Specific Ministry Pastor Program, Concordia, Ft. Wayne	\$36,000

Future issues of *Gracelines* will spotlight each of these projects. Keep this list with your **MITE BOX** and pray for them as you give your **MITES**.

Marge Barckholtz was delegate for the Sage and Sand Zone and Mary Szalai attended with her. Ask either of them and they will gladly tell you what an exciting and rich spiritual experience it was to be a part of such a vital group of committed Christians. A total of 3,310 people registered for the convention and everyone knew "Our God Reigns!" as the convention theme.. Over 4000 worshiped in the opening service when the Rev. Dr. Warren Schumacher, President of the Northwest District LCMS was the proclaimer for the Communion Service. Missionaries gave reports of their work; Bible study leader Dr. Mary Hilgendorf led the assembly in a study of Naomi and Deborah and how God reigned in their lives; ladies worked on numerous servant Event projects including tying quilts and marking Spanish Bibles; and Dina Vendetti led rousing singing at various times. No one went away without a strong sense of the urgent mission we have to spread the gospel to the four corners of the globe.

News from the DCE

“Christ-Fragrance”

I would like to share with you another excerpt from something I have read recently. These words come from David Bosch when he wrote *The Why and How of a True Biblical Foundation for Mission*.

“Our conclusion is that both Old and New Testament are permeated with the idea of mission. There is only one scriptural symbol that corresponds to the question of the dynamic and functional relation of the Church to the World. That symbol is mission. ‘A Church which is not engaged in mission is a galvanized corpse!’ (Bosch quotes Johannes Verkuyl who quotes Hendrik Kraemer). We have to elucidate [*explain*] this statement by adding: not everything we call mission is indeed mission. Paul dismisses the claims of the “Hawkers” in Corinth that they are engaged in mission. They are not, in spite of all their expansion programmes. They are what Hans Hoekendijk once called ‘a club for religious folklore’. It is the perennial temptation of the church to become just that – religious folklore or program expanders. She may slip so easily into this situation, without even becoming aware of it. The only remedy for this mortal danger lies in challenging herself unceasingly with the true Biblical foundation of mission.”

God has called each of us to be “Christ-fragrance” and we can be that as Grace Lutheran Church and School. In the Old Testament, Bosch as well as other scholars, point out that Israel was reaching out to non-Israelites just by being a Holy Nation – the people of God. We don’t have to create new and exciting things for people so people come to Grace. We don’t even have to be the best or biggest church in the A.V. God has called us, each of us, to be who He has made us to be – forgiven and chosen people ... His Redeemed People.

The sad truth is that if our faith is only lived out on Sundays for an hour (or two hours if you go to a Bible study), then we aren’t being missional; we are just trying to sustain something ... something we like to call “faith”. With such a sustaining attitude, we might not be all too concerned with faith, faith growth or our spiritual journey anyway. God saw His people – Israel – in the Old Testament becoming complacent and trying to find new ways to satisfy their lives on their own. Read some of the Old Testament prophets to see how God deals with complacency.

However, when you read how God deals with complacency, do not read over the parts where God is continually and relentlessly CALLING HIS PEOPLE BACK TO HIMSELF. Through faith, baptism and the renewal which we get weekly in the Eucharist, we are and have been given Christ-fragrance and God still today calls us back to Himself! This fragrance is what draws people in to wanting to know more about Christ’s Redeeming Love for His People – even us in the A.V.

We don’t have to go very far to expose the sweet fragrance of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5). We can share these fragrances along with forgiveness, mercy, and hope in the grocery store check-out line, doctor’s office or while we are driving/walking around town.

We – Grace Lutheran Church and School – can be a Holy Nation, a Display Nation, and a Christ-fragrance by truly and regularly coming together as God’s people and living “scented” lives that permeate all that we do. Bosch concludes, “Wherever the apostle lives as ‘Christ-fragrance’, something happens to the surrounding people.” We were given Christ-fragrance in our baptism and God sustains that fragrance through His Word and through His Body and Blood in the Eucharist. Let’s be fragrant – as a church, school and as followers of Jesus in all that we do in our daily lives.

1 J. Verkuyl, *Inleiding in de Nieuwere Zendingwetenschap*, Kampen: Kok, 1975, 122-124.



GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
856 W. Newgrove Street
Lancaster, CA 93534-3092

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CHURCH STAFF

Pastor	Vacant
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	Vacant
Council of Elders	Leo Thibault

Jim Roberts: jroberts@gracelancaster.org

Pastor Niebling: thewellav@yahoo.com

Dr. Wooster: lwooster@gracelancaster.org

Wanda Vandrey: principal@gracelancaster.org

Church Office: church@gracelancaster.org

Visit us on the web: www.gracelancaster.org