

Grace Notes

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Culver City

December 2010

Our Mission

We are a Lutheran family in Christ—open, loving and caring. We seek to share God's love through our ministries of service and proclamation. We strive to nurture spiritual growth by understanding and teaching God's Word, and by listening and responding to the needs of others. We represent Christian witness to the community. We desire growth as an inclusive intergenerational family; we resolve to support a strong youth ministry.



Every good
and



Perfect
Gift

is from
above.

1 James 1:17

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Pastor's Page

I must again say... I know of no other event in all of history in which the world stops to observe the birth of a child, born of simple parents in a simple manger...

So simple... yet so profoundly glorious!

I also know that it is we, who are often *so* busy with the trappings of the season... that we easily lose the significance of such a birth, not only for our own lives, but for our world as well!

This holy season is THE time of anticipation, of preparation, of waiting with eager hearts the coming of the Promised One, the birth of the Christ Child... born *anew* into the hearts and minds of all of God's children.

Knowing how hectic the days ahead can be, I hope that we take the time to set aside all that distracts and deters us from knowing this Child in all His fullness... and may the gifts of His love, His light and His peace be ours in full measure!

It is my prayer that the glory of the Christ Child be reborn anew in our hearts and lives this busy Advent/Christmas season.

I hope that you will join with me this holy season in worshiping and celebrating the awesome birth of this Holy Child:

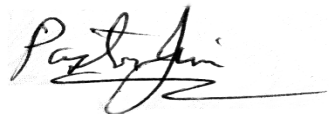
Christmas Eve Services

6:00pm Family Candlelight Service

8:30pm Christmas Concert

9:00pm Candlelight Service

All are welcome!



Spiritual Growth . . .

"I, the Lord, will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with My eye upon you." Psalm 32: 8



Pastor's Tuesday Night Bible Study. All are welcome!

G.R.O.W. during Advent! will meet each Wednesday at 10am in the Fireside Room during Advent. We'll be studying and sharing about the scriptures for the up-coming Sundays. Dec. 1 - Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matt. 3:1-12. Dec. 8 - Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10; James f:7-10; Matt. 11:2-11. Dec. 15 - Isaiah 7:1-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matt. 1:18-25. Dec. 22 - Isaiah 63:7-9, Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matt. 2:13-23.

All women are invited. Come when you can during this special season of the Church Year.

Mid-week in Advent

December 1 Holden Evening Prayer worship service 6:45pm
Please come for powerful healing and prayer

December 8 Choraliers Concert 8pm

December 15 Holden Evening Prayer worship service 6:45 pm

December 22 Live Nativity 5pm-7pm

With live barn animals, carols and costumes! Potluck supper, too.

Sundays in Advent

Would you and your family like to do special readings during Advent as the Advent candles are lit? Please call the church office to volunteer. We need two families each Sunday.



Christmas Eve Services 6pm and 9pm

Come early for best seating and for the
Christmas Concert at 8:45pm

ONE SERVICE December 26 at 10am.

Getting that Christmas Spirit . . .

Remembering our elderly friends

Some Grace members don't get out a whole lot and would love to have visits, cards, phone calls. . . **Oscar Carter, Jack Harrier, Pauline Lee, Trudi Moore, Elaine Goodyear, Lorene Jones, Fran Codd, and Lois Ostlund.** Call the office if you need addresses or phone numbers. God bless you for your ministry to these blessed saints!



Christmas Card exchange Beginning November 28th we will be putting out an alphabetical file box in the narthex for Christmas card exchange among the congregation. File your cards behind the first letter of the last name. Also we will have a donation can for Lutheran World Hunger if you choose to make a donation in lieu of paying for postage.



TOY DRIVE **Angelica Lutheran — Now through Dec 19th**



Angelica serves a poor, largely Latino population in downtown L.A. It has many outreach programs for the local community including food and clothing distribution, a computer lab, after school tutoring and even a parish nurse program through which a certified nurse provides basic health screenings for the local population and their Center for Arts and Music with offerings in dance, theatre, drums, recorder and piano for ages 6 - 18.



We hope you will prayerfully consider donating an unwrapped toy or other age appropriate gift for kids 6 months to 18 years. (Angelica also gratefully accepts wrapping paper donations.) You may drop off the gift in the narthex until Dec 19. God bless you!

Keeping up those traditions

- *Advent calendar* — little holiday scene with doors that open with a daily verse. Trader Joes carries the chocolate type that is always fun.
- *Advent wreath* — a circle with five candles, three purple, one rose, and one white candle (which is the Christ candle to be lit on Christmas Eve). There is an Advent service for your home in the narthex of our church.
- *Jesse tree* — This symbolic devotion traces the lineage of Jesus back to creation. Each day children place a symbol on a tree and then reads the words of inspiration. Nativity scene or crèche — put a few items each week. Have a great Advent!

Upcoming . . .

DEC 1 Holden Evening Prayer Service. 6:45pm. A beautiful, uplifting mid-week service. Dec 1 is a special service of powerful healing prayer. Give your cares and concerns to the Lord and let the prayer ministry help you feel God's goodness, love and healing — physically, financially and spiritually.

December 4th is a busy day! Although the CHIEFS will not be meeting in December (they'll meet again the first Saturday of Jan here's still some good stuff going on:

DEC 4 Work Day — 8:30am to 12:30pm

Clean and decorate the church for Christmas! Coffee, donuts, bagels and juice are supplied. We'll light the gardens and hang boughs in the church. We want our worship space to be worthy of a king. God bless you and thank you for your help. Remember many hands make light work. Children are welcome to accompany their parents for this work/fun fest.



Then, relax that evening with . . .

The Grace Praise Band! Under the name "Spirit Light," they will perform at Angel City Café — a Christian venue for music in Bellflower. Saturday at 8pm.



Let's turn out and support our Band!

<http://www.myspace.com/angelcitycafe> 16507 Bellflower Blvd. Bellflower, CA. Phone: 562/818-4065.

DEC 5 Cookie Sharing Sunday! Let's celebrate St. Nicholas by bringing Christmas cookies to share at coffee time. On St. Nicholas Day it's traditional to give sweets to children and friends. Whether homemade or store bought, bring them to share with others.

December 8th is another busy day. In the morning we have XYZ and in the evening the Choraliers come to Grace with beautiful music. . .

DEC 8 eXtra years of Zest (XYZ) Meet at church at 10am.
Carpool to Ronald Reagan Library in Simi Valley.



**DEC 8
The Choraliers
Christmas Concert at 8pm**

Culver City's best kept secret! This amazing singing group comes together once a year to help the community celebrate the holidays.

The Choraliers have been singing at Grace annually for 10 years. They will get you in the mood for Christmas with a mix of carols, standards, sacred and contemporary Christmas music. And their dessert reception (upstairs in the Parish Hall) is legendary!

This is a free concert, but Toys for Angelica and other donations are welcome.



**Choraliers
Concert**
8 pm
December 8th

Thirty-voice choir
of Classics & Carols

With
Kathrine Bates,
Joanne Kurman
Alan Wilson
& Dave Black on piano

Dessert Reception
following

FREE ADMISSION
Donations are welcome

Grace Church
4427 Overland Avenue
Culver City



DEC 12 Both Services: Christmas Pageant

Watch as Grace kids retell the story of the coming of the Christ child.

Between services: T.A.G SHOW

Experience the Christmas spirit through song and dance. The TAG club has worked for weeks on this presentation. Please show them your support!

DEC 15 Holden Evening Prayer Service. 6:45pm A beautiful, uplifting mid-week service. Potluck supper served at 6pm.

DEC 19 Reduce--Reuse Recycle. . .Rejoice!

Using only recycled and/or found stuff, make a Christmas Tree Ornament. (You can't start with an ornament). Each person can bring up to 3 entries. We'll display them and vote for the winners between services. The children's winner will receive a gift card for Mench's Frozen Yogurt. The adult winner will receive a gift card to Joanne's Arts & Crafts.

*Please CONSIDER making THIS
a CHRISTMAS family PROJECT!*



Upcoming . . .

DEC 19 Advent Breakfast at Grace

To celebrate the last Sunday of Advent the youth will host an Advent breakfast of French Toast between services. A freewill offering will be received. Come fellowship with one another as we witness the first homemade Christmas ornament contest held between services: *Re-Use, Re-Purpose, Rejoice!*

DEC 22 LIVE NATIVITY 5pm-7pm

This is a Grace tradition and a favorite with all ages! Let out that hidden actor . . . We need re-enactors for Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus, as well as Kings, angels and shepherds of all sizes!

Join us for Christmas carols on the lawn, with barn yard animals (live sheep & goats), and costumes for all to join in the fun of creating a Christian Christmas witness to the neighborhood!



This is also a great photo opp . . . there'll be a live pony for rides and pictures! (*Chicken soup, Scandinavian meatballs with lefse (gluten free), cookies and cocoa to feed the hungry participants and on-lookers*). *Free will offering accepted.*

DEC 24 *Christmas Eve Services* ***6:00pm Family Candlelight Service*** **&** ***8:45pm Christmas Concert*** ***9:00pm Candlelight Service***



*Communion Services of Christmas carols and Bible readings.
 Please arrive early for parking.*

DEC 26 ONE SERVICE at 10am offers a little respite for the Pastor and staff after the Christmas holidays, but please join us for this joyful "First Sunday of Christmas."

The Reason for the Season . . .

Lutheran World Relief
GIFTS



Looking for a special gift for someone who has everything? Please consider Lutheran World Relief Gifts. What better gift than to give a gift that changes lives, in honor or memory of a loved one?

When you purchase from the LWR catalog, your gift of love tells a story that eases suffering, ends poverty and promotes peace. Brochures and order forms are available in the Narthex. Or go to <http://lwrgifts.org/>

Poinsettias



According to an old Mexican legend, a poor boy had nothing to give the Christ Child on Christmas. He prayed sincerely, and a plant, called The Flower of the Holy Night, grew at his feet in the brilliant Christmas colors, red and green.

Beginning in December you may order a poinsettia plant at Grace to help decorate our sanctuary for Christmas Eve. It always looks so beautiful to have the plants in the sanctuary. We will put the plants out on the back patio after the 9pm service on Christmas Eve so you may pick them up and decorate your home on Christmas day. Thank you for helping us to make Christmas Eve so very beautiful and special. **Poinsettias will cost \$8.00** and you may dedicate them in honor or memory of a loved one.

Christmas decorating schedule. Please come lend a hand if you can!

- Dec 4 Garlands in church and outdoors lights at 9am
Fireside room at 2:30pm
- Dec 7 Tree at 3:00pm
- Dec 23 Pews, poinsettias, narthex at 9:00am
- Dec 24 Luminaries at 4:30pm



Blessing of a Christmas Tree

Holy Creator of Trees, bless with your abundant grace this our Christmas tree as a symbol of joy.

May its evergreen branches be a sign of your never-fading promises.

May its colorful lights and ornaments call us to decorate with love our home and our world. May the gifts that surround this tree be symbols of the gifts we have received from the Tree of Christ's Cross. Holy Christmas tree within our home, may Joy and Peace come and nest in your branches and in our hearts. Amen.

The Art of Gift Planning

Sometimes giving a gift takes more than just going to the store and picking out the gift, or more than simply writing a check. Most often when we give a gift we first think about what would be the appropriate amount to give. Then we might also consider when would be the best time to give the gift so that it would have the most impact. We also think about how the gift should be wrapped and what to say on an accompanying card. There really is a great deal to consider.

Giving a gift to your church or favorite ministry may also take some considerable planning. What is the appropriate amount, when to give it, how to package it, and what to say about your gift are just a few of the considerations. You also may want to think about whether or not you want the gift designated for a specific purpose or for general use. You also need to consider which is the most tax efficient way to give the gift. Using current and changing tax strategies can get quite confusing.

Fortunately, there is help. Greg Shepherd, our congregation's gift planner can help you plan both tax advantaged gifts during your lifetime as well as bequests left through your will, trust, or other financial instruments. Greg has over twenty years of gift planning experience. You may contact Greg by phone at: (909)910-6823; or by email at: gregory.shepherd@elca.org



Report on Autumn Renewal Convention

Held October 8-10 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Ventura, the session started by electing a new president, Rose Norris, and a Bible study based on Hannah from 1 Samuel. The theme of the weekend was "Carried by Him". Saturday the board was elected and the budget approved. There were workshops and Bible study sessions and at the banquet there was fun entertainment.

Margie Joy and Crystie Rooney had a wonderful experience and urge more ladies to go to the Autumn Renewal next year, October 14-16 at the Crown Plaza. It is a beautiful hotel, located right on the beach so you can take walks on the oldest, longest pier in California, plus you're 2-4 blocks from downtown so you can go shopping while you're there!

Kid News!



Children's Christmas Pageant rehearsals are being held each Sunday during the first service at the story time. Every child will be given a part. The Pageant will be presented at both services on Sunday, December 12th with a potluck brunch held between the services. This is always such a wonderful presentation to prepare your heart of the coming of the Lord.

DEC 4 All youth, let's go visit Mt. Olive Lutheran Church **Christmas party 6-9pm**. We need to meet at Grace at 5:30pm and ride together to the event. This is a chance to meet other youth from the area. Please let Doris know by Nov 30th if you are interested.

DEC 14 **Christmas caroling** We will take our confirmation class caroling at 3:00pm. We are looking for help transporting this group to the different locations; please call Doris MacGregor if you are able to join us. (310) 559-1027

High school meeting on Sundays at 10:15am in the Fireside Room come share your week.

Middle school meeting on Tuesdays at the end of confirmation at 4pm come discuss what adventures we will be attempting next.

Winter retreats coming up for Middle school & High school

El Camino Pines will host a retreat for high school youth on January 28-30 and middle school youth on February 11-14. And The cost per child will be \$129 with a \$79 subsidy from the youth account, so each person only pays \$50 Please sign up ASAP since these retreats book up quickly!



Prayer Concerns



Keep these members and their families in your prayers for health and in the loving care of our Lord.

Patti & Sean Baker
 Paula Boelsems
 Fran Codd
 Betty Davis
 Lynn Erickson
 Marion Firnhaber
 Jerry Frascella
 The Goller family
 Elaine Goodyear
 George & Bette Gregory
 Jack Harrier
 Derrick Hente
 Pastor Bob Johnson
 Lorene Jones
 Babak Kamjou
 Patti LaBarbera
 Brenda Langdon
 Peggy Ledlie
 Pauline Lee
 Len & Linda Lovgren
 Wayne Maass
 Joanie Maines
 Pastor Gary Marshall
 Trudi Moore
 Shirley Nowlin
 Lois Ostlund
 Brian & Cherie Parks
 Pastor Ed Petersen
 Albert Prabhu
 Maxine Stenstrom
 Thomas Tidwell
 Margaret Zamorano

Members in the Military

Freddie Wilson
 Natalie Meyers
 John Meyers
 & your
 Prayer Partner or Compadre

Church Staff & Council

The Rev. James S. Maines, Pastor

Doris MacGregor, Youth & Family Parish Worker
 Marina Tidwell, Church Administrator
 Mary Lou Basaraba, Director of Music Ministries
 Jim Snodgrass, Handbell Choir Director
 Bets Danko, Children's Music Director
 Laura Chapman, Bookkeeper
 Don Martin, Custodian
 Jim Harrold, Facilities Manager
 Wanda Hunter, Nursery Attendant

Jim Snodgrass	President & Property/Support
Marty Hente	Secretary & Property/Support
Marsha Heath	Treasurer
Norman Auslander	Fellowship & Outreach
Cathy Biggs	Fellowship, Christian Service
Margaret Lowe	Stewardship & Finance
Grace Elliott	Fellowship, Education
Dolores Johnson	Christian Service
Lu Petersen	Property & Support
Ken Smith	Stewardship & Finance
Len Lovgren	Worship & Music
Margaret Lowe	Stewardship
Colin Tidwell	Youth
Beverly O'Brien	Sunday School Superintendent

Happy Birthday



<i>Karen McClain</i>	<i>12/02</i>	<i>Lee Collins</i>	<i>12/12</i>
<i>Evelyn Quinn</i>	<i>12/04</i>	<i>Terry Grimm</i>	<i>12/12</i>
<i>Daniel O'Brien</i>	<i>12/07</i>	<i>Andrew Sick</i>	<i>12/12</i>
<i>Cavyn Simon</i>	<i>12/07</i>	<i>Ellen Jennrich</i>	<i>12/16</i>
<i>Robyn Johnson</i>	<i>12/08</i>	<i>Sarah Danner</i>	<i>12/20</i>
<i>Rebecca Engel</i>	<i>12/09</i>	<i>Patricia Millett</i>	<i>12/20</i>
<i>Linda Gripp</i>	<i>12/09</i>	<i>Maxine Stenstrom</i>	<i>12/23</i>
<i>Carl Lundquist</i>	<i>12/10</i>	<i>Linda Schumitzky</i>	<i>12/29</i>

GRACE NOTES
DECEMBER 2010
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Grace Lutheran Church
Rev. James S. Maines, Pastor

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Youth: 310-841-5066

Worship Services
Sundays at 9 & 11 a.m.
Wednesdays at 6:45 p.m.

Christmas Eve Services



6:00pm Family Candlelight Service

8:30pm Christmas Concert

9:00pm Candlelight Service

All are welcome!

One service on Sunday, Dec 26th at 10am