

Grace Notes

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Culver City, California

December 2011

A Word From Our Pastor

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!

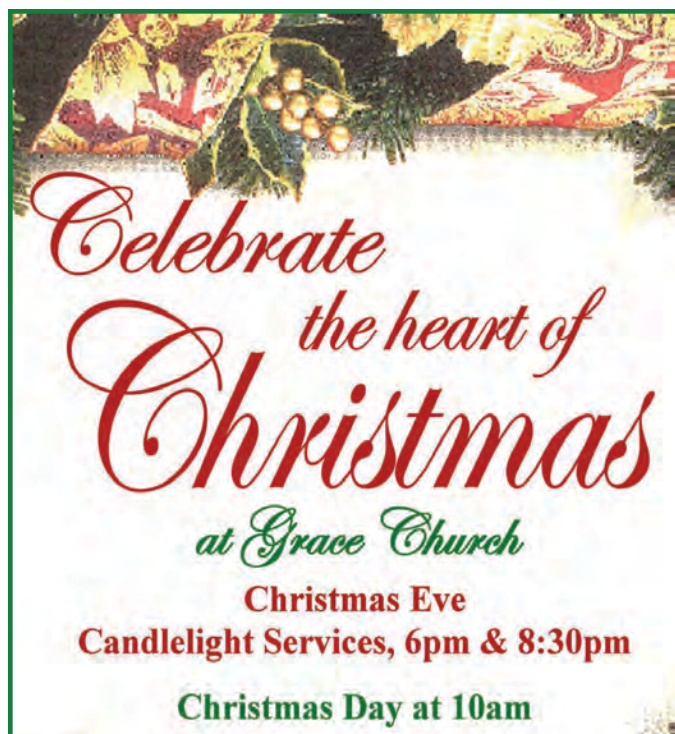
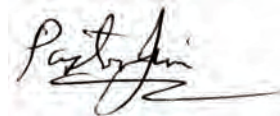
I also know that we — who are often so busy with the trappings of the season — easily lose the significance of such a birth, not only for our own lives, but for our world as well!

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. Indeed, 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!



Celebrate
the heart of
Christmas
at Grace Church
Christmas Eve
Candlelight Services, 6pm & 8:30pm
Christmas Day at 10am

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Spirit Matters . . .

Tuesday Night Bible Study with Pastor Jim at 7pm—The Book of Matthew

Tuesday Night Young Women's Group at 7:30pm— Study and sharing for young women. Please contact Michelle Moreno for more info: (818) 294-0289 or junglecruisebarbie@gmail.com

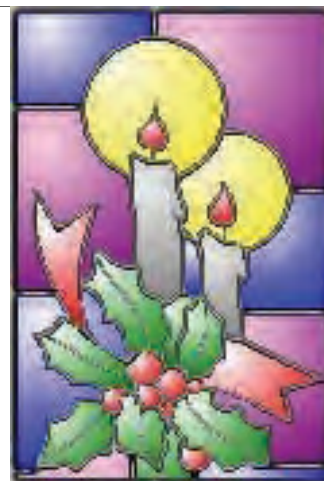
Wednesday, at 10am, "God Renewing Our Women" (GROW)

Dec. 7 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

Dec. 14 Romans 16:25-27 and Hebrews 1:1-12

Wednesday night Worship service 6:45pm—with the Holden Evening Prayer. A mid-week, faith-filled, pick-me-up, featuring the Holden service.

You do not want to miss these beautiful sung services for Advent! Join us for potluck supper at 6pm.



Top Five Symbols of Christmas and Their Christian Meaning

- ♥ **Christmas Tree** is an evergreen to symbolize the ever-living Christ. Martin Luther brought a tree indoors and decorated it with candles to celebrate the birth of Christ.
- ♥ **Santa Claus**, or St. Nicholas, was born in 4th century Turkey. He was a devoted Christian and Bishop of the church. He was known for his generosity and love of children.
- ♥ **Candles** were often placed in windows during the Christmas season as a sign to those passing by that shelter and warmth could be found within.
- ♥ **Star** of Bethlehem guided the three wise men and announced the birth of Christ. Eventually, stars were placed on the tops of Christmas Trees to celebrate His birth.
- ♥ **Holly** serves as a reminder of the crown of thorns worn by Jesus Christ at his crucifixion.

All-Church Cleanup Day

Dec 3 from 8:30am-12:30pm

To get ready for the holidays, our church needs just that little extra scrub to the bathrooms, kitchen, pews, carpets, library, Fireside Room . . . Many hands make light work!
Coffee and donuts free for all helpers! Holiday decorating starts, too.

Poinsettias

Help decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas—

\$8.00 per potted plant.

You may specify "in honor of" or "in memory of" a loved one, and donate the plant to a shut-in or take yours home after the 8:30pm service Christmas Eve.



Grace Notes Sponsorships are \$25 to defray the cost of materials and postage. Please sign up in the Narthex.
The December issue of Grace Notes is sponsored by:

**Dolores Johnson in memory of Sofie Johnson
and**

Marty & Elaine Hente to the glory of God for the birth of His Son

December at Grace

Let's start off with a clean "house"!

Dec 3 from 8:30am-12:30pm

All-Church Cleanup Day

Many hands make light work!

Holiday decorating starts, too, with outdoor lights.

Dec 3—Choraliers Concert at 7pm with dessert reception following.

Dec 10—"The Wishing Tree" musical at 7pm

With Michelle Moreno, Claire Skelley, Alexis Andrew, a special appearance by **Santa Claus**, and much more! Bring the kids and invite your neighbors! Admission is free.

Dec 11—5pm in the Parish Hall.

A Celebration of Doris MacGregor's 30 years of ministry at Grace Church. You MUST RSVP if you plan to attend, because the dinner is catered and we need to know how many to prepare for. Volunteers are needed to set up, wait on tables, and help clean up. Please call the office if you can help.

Dec 14—XYZ meet at 11:00am for an early lunch then tour historic Rancho Dominguez.

Dec 17 at 4pm. The Culver City Middle School Musical Theater class presents a cabaret of "You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown" at Grace Church. Admission is free.

Dec 18 Christmas Pageant during both services

Dec 21 from 5-7pm — Live Nativity. Carols, costumes, live animals, soup, and hot chocolate for all!

Dec 22—Decorate the church with poinsettias. Contact Betty Davis to volunteer.

Dec 24 Xmas Eve services at 6pm & 8:30pm

Dec 25 One Service at 10am Xmas Day

Christmas Card Exchange

Each year we put a box in the Narthex to exchange Christmas Cards with fellow Grace members and friends. We always enjoy reading all the cards — even the family letters are a joy to read — and of course we love the scripture cards that bring such glad tidings to the Christmas season.



God bless you
for helping decorate:

1. The Parish Hall December 5th
2. Fireside Room December 6th
3. Christmas tree in the church December 8th
4. Christmas garland in the church December 13th
5. More sanctuary decorations December 15th
6. Poinsettias on December 22st
7. Final church decorations December 22nd

Making the Advent Wreath a Daily Custom

Since the Advent wreath helps us keep our thoughts focused on the coming of Christ at Christmas, we should integrate it into our daily activities by making it a part of our evening meal. The family gathers around the wreath and lights the appropriate Candles (one in week One of Advent, two the following week, etc). Encourage children to participate, as they are able, by placing fresh evergreen branches around the candles, lighting the candles, saying a prayer upon the lighting, and so on.

Blessing of the wreath: O Holy Lord God, by whose word all things are sanctified, pour your blessings upon our family, prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, and give us joy in your abundant graces, through Jesus Christ. Amen.

COMING UP . . .

- ♥ One service on January 1 at 10am. Happy New Year!



December Birthdays

Karen McClain, 12/02
Evelyn Quinn, 12/04
Daniel O'Brien, 12/07
Cavyn Simon, 12/07
Robyn Johnson, 12/08
Rebecca Engel, 12/09
Terry Grimm, 12/10

Carl Lundquist, 12/10
Andrew Sick, 12/12
Ellen Jennrich, 12/16
Sarah Danner, 12/20
Patricia Millett, 12/20
Christine Hernandez, 12/25
Linda Schumitzky, 12/29

ATTN: Young Adults

- ♥ **Tuesday Night Young Women's Group at 7:30pm.** Bible study for young women.
- ♥ **YOUNG ADULTS GROUP** (age 20-30s) Monthly service projects, fellowship, & food.
Dec 4th Bake Sale to support St. Joseph Center/Good Works Campaign.

For more info, please contact
Michelle Moreno at 818/294-0289
junglecruisebarbie@gmail.com



If you would like to give a special gift to Grace for Christmas, how about signing up for Simply Giving, the automated payment program? Your regular donations help keep the church on track financially. Contact Marina.

ELCA gifts of livestock, poultry, plants, water, medicine, food, education . . . Given in honor of the person who has everything, this is the gift that can enrich other lives permanently. See the catalogue in the Narthex or on-line at www.ELCA.org

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

Youth Ministry



Confirmation class
WEDNESDAYS at 3:15pm.

6th to 8th grade. Kids explore their faith in this lively class of education, fun and fellowship.

Cherub Choir— Wednesdays at 2:30

Thursdays at Grace—3:15pm

The youth and children of Grace are working on two musicals:

1. "The Wishing Tree"

Performance Dec 10 at 7pm. With a special appearance by Santa Claus! **Rehearsals for "The Wishing Tree" are during TAG on Thursdays AND**
12/3 at 2:30-4:30pm
12/10 at 4pm



2. "The Greatest Gift" Nativity Play for the church on Dec 18 at both services. Rehearsals for the Nativity Play are during Sunday School weekly, Cherub Choir on Wednesdays, During TAG on Dec 15 from 2:45-5pm AND
Saturday Dec 17 9:30-11:30am

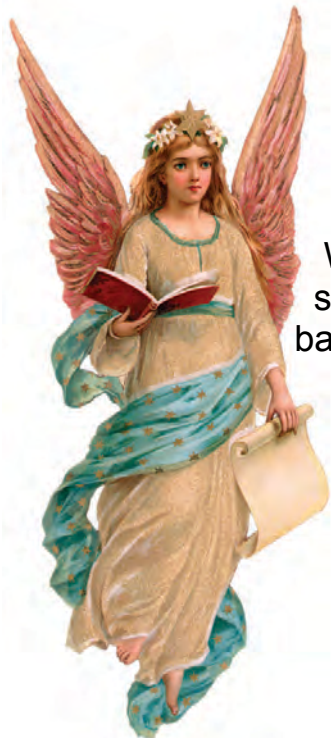
YOUTH ACTIVITY

Friday Night Kick Back, Dinner, Bible Study and Awesome Instruments Group

All youth ages Middle School to freshman college are invited. The evening begins at 6:30pm. Contact Michelle Moreno for info:
junglecruisebarbie@gmail.com

The Power of Giving

Romans 12:13 — “Share with God’s people who are in need.
Practice hospitality.”



Special Collections for winter and Christmas

♥ Can you be Christmas Angel?

We’re looking for gift certificates, care packages, sweets or some small, festive presents. Lisa Skelley will be putting together goodie bags for the holidays to go out to members and friends of Grace who may need a little tender care this Christmas.

Donations needed by Dec 18th.

♦ Please remember the Homeless . . .

We’re collecting clean blankets, jackets, beanies, scarves, shoes, and (especially) new socks in the wheelbarrow the Narthex.

♥ Toy drive for Angelica Lutheran and Grace Diner

Toys needed for ages infant to 18 years old.

Please drop off at the church by December 18th.

Thank you and God bless you!

Prayers

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

Patti & Sean Baker
Paula Boelsems
Fran Codd
The Dankos
Sarah & Isaac Danner
Betty Davis
Lynn Erickson
Marion Firnhaber
Goller family
Elaine Goodyear
The Gottschalks
Bette Gregory
Jack Harrier
Lorene Jones
Patti LaBarbera
Brenda Langdon
LLeung
Wayne Maass
Trudi Moore

Shirley Nowlin
Brian & Cherie Parks
Albert Prabhu
Maxine Stenstrom
Claudia Van de Ven
Margey Whalen

Members in the Military

Freddie Wilson
Natalie Meyers
John Meyers
Sean Sloan

Your Prayer Partner

We give thanks for all the babies of Grace! During the past year there have been 6 newborns. Please keep them and their families in your prayers:
Kiri Swenson, Logan Silva, Kennedy Thompson, Asher Chandler, Emily Asheghian, and Chloe Elder.

God bless you in your prayer ministry!

GRACE COUNCIL & STAFF

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
Colin Tidwell, TAG Club, Cherub Choir
Laura Chapman, Bookkeeper
Don Martin, Custodian
Jim Harrold, Facilities Manager
Wanda Hunter, Nursery Attendant

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

December Calendar



				<p>1</p> <p>1pm-Office Angels</p> <p>3:15-5pm TAG Wishing Tree rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm-Chancel</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6:30-Youth Meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>8:30-12:30 ALL CHURCH Clean up Day</p> <p>(TAG rehearsal 2:30-4:30)</p> <p>7pm Choraliers Concert and dessert reception</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Services 9 & 11am</p> <p>Nativity rehearsal during Sunday School</p>	<p>5</p> <p>4:30-6pm Grace Diner</p>	<p>6</p> <p>5:30pm—Bells</p> <p>7pm— Bible Study</p> <p>7:30-Young Women’s Bible Study</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10AM GROW</p> <p>2:30 Cherub Choir</p> <p>3:15 Confirmation</p> <p>6pm-Potluck</p> <p>6:45 Worship Service</p>	<p>8</p> <p>1pm-Office Angels</p> <p>3:15-5pm TAG Wishing Tree rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm-Chancel</p>	<p>9</p> <p>6:30-Youth Meeting</p>	<p>10</p> <p>“Wishing Tree” PERFORMANCE 7pm</p>
<p>11</p> <p>Service 9 & 11am</p> <p>Nativity rehearsal during Sunday School</p> <p>5pm —Celebration Dinner for Doris MacGregor’s 30 years of Ministry at Grace RSVP to the Office!</p>	<p>12</p> <p>4:30-6pm Grace Diner</p>	<p>13</p> <p>5:30pm—Bells</p> <p>7pm— Bible Study</p> <p>7:30-Young Women’s Bible Study</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10am—GROW</p> <p>11am —XYZ</p> <p>2:30 Cherub Choir</p> <p>3:15 Confirmation</p> <p>4:15pm-W&M mtg</p> <p>6pm-Potluck</p> <p>6:45 Worship Service</p> <p>7:30—COUNCIL</p>	<p>15</p> <p>1pm-Office Angels</p> <p>3:15-5pm TAG Nativity rehearsal</p> <p>7:30pm-Chancel</p>	<p>16</p> <p>6:30-Youth Meeting</p>	<p>17</p> <p>All Cast Dress Rehearsal 9:30-11:30am Nativity show</p> <p>4pm PERFORMANCE “You’re A Good Man, Charlie Brown” Culver Middle School Musical Theater</p>
<p>18</p> <p>Services 9 & 11am</p> <p>“The Greatest Gift” Nativity musical at both services</p>	<p>19</p> <p>4:30-6pm Grace Diner</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7pm— Bible Study</p> <p>7:30-Young Women’s Bible Study</p>	<p>21</p> <p>LIVE NATIVITY With Christmas Carols, animals, and costumes.</p> <p><i>No potluck or service but soup and warm beverages will be served.</i></p>	<p>22</p> <p>1pm-Office Angels</p> <p>7:30pm-Chancel</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6:30-Youth Meeting TBA</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve</p> <p>Candlelight Services 6pm & 8:30pm</p>
<p>25</p> <p>10am Christmas Day Service</p>	<p>26</p> <p>4:30-6pm Grace Diner</p> <p>Office closed</p>	<p>27</p> <p>No meetings— See you in the New Year!</p>	<p>28</p> <p>No meetings No service—See you in the New Year!</p>	<p>29</p> <p>No meetings— See you in the New Year!</p>	<p>30</p> <p>6:30-Youth Meeting TBA</p>	<p>31</p> <p>New Year’s Eve</p>

December Service Assistants

Blessed are those who serve the Lord's house! If you are unable to make your assigned time, please find a replacement and contact the office with the information.

December 4—2nd Sunday of Advent		
	9:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m.*
Asst Minister	John Priebe	Patti Baker
Com. Asst	Joan Engen	Jerry Gottschalk
Lector	Katie Parks	Paul Lindquist
Cantor	Sherry Hutson	Michelle Moreno
Crucifer	Babak Kamjou	Jerry Gottschalk
Acolyte	Carly Priebe	Robert Condinus
Kid's Sermon	B Langdon	Brenda Langdon
Altar Guild	Timm/ Moreno	MacInnis/Jefferson
Greeters	O'Brien Family	Joy & Rooney

December 11—3rd Sunday of Advent		
	9:00 a.m. *	11:00 a.m.
Asst Minister	Tom Hayes	Marina Tidwell
Com. Asst	Carol Hayes	M Zamorano
Lector	MJ Petersen	K Andrews
Cantor	Jack Skelley	C. Snodgrass
Crucifer	Patrick Hayes	Alexis Andrews
Acolyte	Megan Hayes	April Andrews
Kid's Sermon	Tom Hayes	Patti Millett
Altar Guild	M Tidwell	Guy/Silver
Greeters	Engens	Biggs & Elliott

Sunday, Dec 18—4th Sunday of Advent		
	9:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m. *
Asst Minister	Ron Engen	Betty Davis
Com. Asst	Joan Engen	Patti Baker
Lector	Cathy Biggs	D Kirkpatrick
Cantor	Karen McClain	David Stamford
Crucifer	Babak Kamjou	Leah Wouters
Acolyte	Brendan O'Brien	Robert Condinus
Kid's Sermon	Brad Sick	Brad Sick
Altar Guild	Timm/Moreno	V MacInnis
Greeters	Danners	Erna Guy

Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve		
	6:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.*
Asst Minister	Marty Hente	Katie Parks
Com. Asst	Elaine Hente	M Moreno
Lector	Marty Hente	Marina Tidwell
Cantor	Claire Skelley	C Snodgrass
Crucifer	Leah Wouters	M Moreno
Acolyte	TBD	TBD
Kid's Sermon	Pastor Jim	Pastor Jim
Altar Guild	M Tidwell	B Jefferson
Greeters	Skelleys	Robert Tidwell

CHRISTMAS DAY--10AM	
Asst Minister	Marty Hente
Com. Asst	Elaine Hente
Lector	Jerry Gottschalk
Cantor	ML Basaraba
Crucifer	TBD
Acolyte	TBD
Kid's Sermon	Pastor Jim
Altar Guild	M Zamorano
Greeters	Doris MacGregor

As you can see, we have need of helpers on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The role of Acolyte on Christmas Eve is especially important because that person will light each candle along the walls of the sanctuary. We prefer to have two acolytes that evening at each service.

If you'd like to help, please let the office know!



GRACE NOTES
DECEMBER 2011
Vol. 41, No. 12

Grace Lutheran Church
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Fax: 310-559-9269
Youth: 310-841-5066

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

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.



December at Grace

Dec 3—Choraliers
Free Concert at 7pm.
(Donations accepted)

Dec 10 at 7pm
“The Wishing Tree”
Musical with a special
appearance by Santa
Claus, and much more . .
Bring the kids and
invite your neighbors!
Admission is free

Dec 18—Christmas
Pageant during services
at 9am & 11am

Dec 21, 5-7pm
Christmas Carols &
Live Nativity