



# The Wittenberg Way

In Christ, for the Church and the World

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GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## LITURGICAL CALENDAR

February 19  
Transfiguration of Our LORD

February 22  
Ash Wednesday

March 25  
Annunciation of Our Lord

## What's Faith Got to Do with It?

University of San Diego upper-classman, John Endres, wrote me last week inquiring about the place of faith in historical considerations of Jesus - a topic that loomed large in The Problem of God course I recently taught. His email put it this way:

I also wanted to (try and) articulate more clearly the idea I was fumbling around with the other day after class. We were talking about whether or not witness/testimony as presented by [the New Testament] was sufficient in [the] adjudication of [the] Christian truth claim that Jesus is the messiah. I was wondering if this leaves out the element of 'faith'?

Here John is expressing a concern over where "faith" fits in the truth claims of Christianity, especially since the onus of the class fell on the sufficiency of evidence from history and archeology to *rationaly* cede to the claim that Jesus of Nazareth was in fact hailed as the Messiah. For a skeptic like John, the answer was "Yes," there is sufficient evidence to reasonably deduce that

Jesus was a, if not *the*, Messiah foretold in the Hebrew scriptures and Jewish expectations. But, he asks, is Christianity just about the reasonable acceptance of substantiated truth claims about Jesus and his accomplishments? Is that what it means to have "faith"? The following was my response to John.

John, there is very much a sense in which you are right: "faith" is something more than mere intellectual assent; it also has a volitional component. It is that volitional component, where one is inclined and disposed to Jesus AS the Christ which is more categorically justifying faith, as understood in the New Testament. That categorical difference constitutes that thing by which Christians speak of their "relationship with Jesus" and, indeed, our very bond with Christ. In class, however, I am dealing with first order considerations, namely the attempt to remove obstacles, intellectual and culturally biased obstacles, from the student's mind, so that a consideration of Jesus not only as the Messiah rings true to them, but also that Jesus is lovely and therefore worthy of love, honor, and praise.

The point I was making was that when talking about “Jesus”, we are either dealing with (1) the preconditioned Jesus of fruitful imaginations or, significantly, (2) the Jesus of real, authentic, concrete, history. The real Jesus stands up in history. Once we encounter *that* Jesus, then we are on our way to considerations of faith. First, however, you have to be confronted with true-to-life Jesus before we can talk about faith in Jesus, because only the real Jesus is a saving Jesus.

*“Jesus did not spontaneously appear a thirty-year-old man in Galilee; that would make him a mythical figure. Instead, he emerged from a particular context, a context about which we have robust knowledge, evidence, and understanding.”*

This is why we make so much about historicism at Grace Lutheran Church. We are interested in history and not history in every detail, mind you, but in one history that actually happened, one that we can access, one that we can investigate. This approach is the only honest and viable approach to Christianity because Christianity is, above all, news about particular things that happened to a particular someone during a particular time. History gives us access to those particularities.

When atheists and agnostics come to understand that the rising and falling of Christianity happens with history, then historicism becomes the focus of their attack.

G.E. Lessing, famed source of “Lessing’s Ditch,”<sup>1</sup> rejected historicism. Likewise, liberal New Testament scholar and devotee of Martin Heidegger’s existential and phenomenological

philosophies, Rudolph Bultmann rejected it, at least in his earliest influential works. So, too, E.P. Sanders (best known for his demolition of St Paul’s doctrine of justification by faith) rejected historicism, at least in his celebrated 1990 University of London lectures. They all said that you cannot ground the object of faith in a subject of history. In other words, they all gave common assent to Lessing’s Ditch - the contingent truths of history cannot get you to the eternal being of God. History and faith are opposed. Christianity is a proposition of faith, not of empirical fact. Religion, they want to say, cannot be tied to facts, which are by nature extremely hard to verify, let alone interpret. As skeptics, they are pessimistic that we can really know anything from history.

But it is time for thinking people to be skeptical about such skepticism. The truth is, faith divorced from fact does not exist. So, too, hope divorced from prior facts is hopeless. Professor Paul Zahl states it well, “Fact-less Christians, un-historicist believers, are [like] persons in a Tennessee Williams play, feeding on illusion.”<sup>2</sup>

The person of Jesus of Nazareth is self-presenting and self-authenticating in history, the same history that beckons us to be critically real about it. Jesus did not spontaneously appear a thirty-year-old man in Galilee; that would make him a mythical figure. Instead, he emerged from a particular context, a context about which we have robust knowledge, evidence, and understanding. So there is unarguable continuity between Jesus and the historical context in which we find Jesus in the annals of history.

## What's Faith Got to Do with It?

Jesus was a Jew. His ministry was situated almost wholly within Judaism. He was educated as a Jew and conditioned by Jewish thought and practice and customs. He was a man who carried out almost every aspect of his work with Jewish people and to Jewish people. That is unarguable. Historiography, both

*"It would be the restored, indwelling, sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit that would motivate and enable us 'to love our neighbors as ourselves'."*

friendly and unfriendly to Christianity, has given us those facts and the artifacts of archeology, geology, and cultural anthropology have made it certain. There is continuity, but there is also discontinuity.

History also shows us that Jesus brought something substantially or essentially new to his context of first-century Judaism and the Roman Empire. Jesus brought about a shocking and unexpected discontinuity with Judaism, too. The result, I should say the *historical* result, was that everyone after him was breathing in or reacting to the

air of his newness, of this spectacular discontinuity with Judaism. That new thing that Jesus ushered in was the kingdom of God, a kingdom that radically challenged the Judaism of his day, as well as the grandiose claims of the Caesars.

The kingdom was characterized by Jesus by a vibrant concept of mutual love, which extended the second great commandment of the Law (Leviticus 19.18) to one's enemies; by a fervent ideologically driven active association with lawbreakers and unclean people. The kingdom of God manifested itself in radical departures from established biases against female disciples, Samaritans and Gentiles as subhuman, children as incomplete and unworthy entities, and a ridged caste system. The kingdom of God was something new and it came with a new and renewing power - the Holy Spirit of God. It would be the restored, indwelling, sanctifying presence of the Holy Spirit that would motivate and enable us "to love our neighbors as ourselves."

The discontinuity forged by Jesus is also bound up with history, and inescapably so. Both Christian and non-Christian resources show us that it was because of the message and actions associated with discontinuity that Jesus was identified as a threat to the prevailing ideologies of the

day, both Roman and Jewish. His discontinuity was the reason for his reputation, arrest, trial, and crucifixion. All of this comes straight from the most reliable and best attested historical sources from antiquity. And it is the discontinuity of Jesus that beckons a response by faith. History will only take you so far in terms of a commitment to Christ. At some point, in fact the point of discontinuity with Judaism and the Roman world, faith is the only proper response.

The kingdom of God was breaking in and through Jesus' own ministry. He embodied it. He spoke it into spatiotemporal existence with the authoritative decree of a king. He illustrated its reality through signs and symbolic actions. He achieved its irreversible initiation on the cruciform throne of Calvary. He triggered its advancement as a global empire on Easter morning and signaled the end (or discontinuation) of the Judaism of his day, along with the oppressive reign of Caesar, with the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in AD 70. With the Temple destroyed, Old Covenant Judaism ceased to exist and has persisted in that state for nearly 2,000 years. But the Temple was also emblematic of the rule of Rome - Herod the Great and Herod Antipas, Rome's puppet monarchs, made it a symbol of their willingness to live life subservient to a regime in which the Caesars were self-styled lords and gods. Jesus challenges all of that with a call to humanity to be renewed within God's kingdom, to be governed by a gracious, non-partisan Lord. And that Lord, that King of both Jew and Gentile, was none other than Jesus himself. The discontinuity concerning Jesus is real and requires a real decision - acquiescing and embracing the reality of Jesus, the One to whom all authority in heaven and earth has been given and trusting that His reign is a re-

deeming, restorative, regenerating reign. *That* requires faith. And such faith comes by hearing and hearing the good news about God's kingdom come in and through the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, and owning it. And *that* is where the relationship with Jesus begins; that is where and when we begin to experience his love and love him in return.

History can take you only so far. It is enough to bring you into an intellectual and concrete understanding of the Jesus of Jewish and Roman continuity and discontinuity. But that is not the place of salvation. That is not the place of faith; not the place of love. But that is also why the Lord gave us the Church. It is within the Church, the kingdom of God community in which there is neither male nor female, rich nor poor, slave nor free, that one hears the real voice of the King, senses his real presence, witnesses His real actions, and sees the effect of his love upon his people and between them. Faith is born within us in Church and love for Christ and one another is to be the result. This Lenten season, let the faith given to you kindle or rekindle your love for Christ and your love for one another.

Pastor John  
Epiphany, 2012

<sup>1</sup> Lessing's Ditch: The contingent truths of history cannot get you to the eternal being of God. What Lessing is saying that history cannot yield the ahistorical, physics cannot lead to metaphysics, contingency is the antinomy of the non-contingent. Plainly, neither history nor creation bring one to a "Creator."

<sup>2</sup> Paul Zahl, *The First Christian: Universal Truth in the Teachings of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 72.

**2011 Grace Statistics**

20 - Baptisms  
(16 children and  
4 adults)

15 - First Holy  
Communion  
(7 children and  
8 adults)

7 - Marriages

28 - New Members

204 - Average  
Sunday Attendance  
(an increase of 33  
over 2010)

20 - Average  
Wednesday Evening  
Attendance  
(an increase of 6-8)

At the Voters Meeting this month, the Congregation approved our 2012 budget totaling about \$800,000. The breakdown of our revenue sources is interesting:

Preschool tuition – 68%

Facility rents – 10%

Stewardship offerings – 22%

A big Thank You to Ms. Rexanna, the Deaconess, the Board of Education and all our preschool staff! Their contributions to our mission – and our finances – are exceptional. This is all the truer for the fact that, while the preschool generates 68% of our income, it accounts for only about 50% of our

expenses.

Our revenues from facility uses – Harbor Presbyterian, AAA groups, the German and Swedish Schools, and weddings – are likely to hold steady in 2012. But that will change quickly once we start a Sunday evening service, taking over Harbor Presbyterian's time slot. Offerings gathered in both services need to go further in making up the income that Harbor now generates.

We enjoy such blessings in our beautiful parish. The most important of them are gracious gifts straight from God, of course. But many others are the product of our service and giving to one another in this place. Through our stewardship, we both serve the Lord and spread His gracious bounty to our fellows. The numbers above point to a real opportunity for stewardship growth. Please stay tuned for ideas of how we can make the most of that potential this year.

Over 75 members attended the voters meeting.



Members reading over the budget for 2012 at the Annual Voters Meeting on January 22, 2012 .



## What is Lent?

Lent is a season of preparation leading up to Easter. It is the forty days plus the six Sundays before Easter. For centuries, it has been observed as a special time of self examination and penitence. Lent is a time for concentration on fundamental values and priorities, *and is not a time for self punishment.* Throughout Lent, the worship services of the church take on a simpler and more sober tone, appropriate to this season. Banners are removed from the church; crosses showing the risen Christ are veiled. The word *Alleluia* is not used in the words of the liturgy or hymns. These practices help us to mark this season of renewal as a special time in the church year.



## Observing Lent

The custom is to mark the season of Lent by giving up some things and taking on others. Both can serve to mark the season as a holy time of preparation. Some examples of things people give up for Lent include sweet or certain foods, alcohol, and God help us...Starbucks! In most cases, giving up something for Lent can be made more meaningful by using the money or time for another purpose. For example, meal times on fast days could be spent in prayer. Another example is that if you gave a morning latte, the extra money saved could be given to a worthy cause, charity, or added to your weekly offering on Sunday mornings.

Lent is also an especially appropriate time for the sacrament of Absolution. While confession to a pastor is not required to

receive God's forgiveness, many have found it be a meaningful rite of reconciliation to God, one that Luther said he would gladly run one hundred miles to receive.

## Special Days and Services

### Ash Wednesday

The first day of Lent is marked with a special liturgy. The theme for the day, though not for all of Lent, is that we stand as sinners condemned to die, but for God's grace. This is symbolized by the imposition of ashes on the forehead, with the words, "You are dust and to dust you shall return." In the Old Testament, ashes were a sign of penitence and mourning. Ash Wednesday is one of two days of special observance (the other being Good Friday) for which fasting is recommended. While this usually refers going without food for the entire day, this practice is not practical for all persons, including, but not limited to, diabetics. Use your own discretion in determining how you can best observe this day.

### Palm Sunday

This Sunday before Easter is the last Sunday in Lent. The day commemorates Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with a blessing of palms and a procession in which the whole congregation carries palms. The day is also marked by reading the story of Jesus' passion (the word used to describe his death comes from "suffering"). Some of the Palm Sunday palms are kept and used to make the Ash Wednesday ashes for the next year.

### Maundy Thursday

This is the Thursday in Holy Week (the week leading up to Easter). The day is a time for remembering The Last Supper. The name comes from the Latin word, *mandatum*, for "commandment" as Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment; that you love one another." At the conclusion of this service, altars are stripped of any ornamentation and crosses are removed or veiled to mark the solemnity of the occasion.

## Keeping the Lenten Season Alive (cont.)



Ash Wednesday  
Palm Sunday  
Fat Tuesday  
Maundy Thursday  
Good Friday  
Easter Vigil  
Easter Sunday

### Good Friday

The Friday in Holy Week is a time for remembering Jesus' death. Traditionally there is a Good Friday service at noon as Jesus hung on the cross from noon until 3 PM; we also offer an evening service, commonly known as a *Tenebrae* service, which is Latin for "shadows." This service is particularly solemn as the Passion Story is read by ever diminishing candle light. I have personally found this service to be one of the most profound, simple, and emotionally moving services each year.

### The Easter Vigil

This service is appropriate from after sunset on Holy Saturday

until sunrise Easter morning. This was the traditional time of baptism in the early centuries of Christianity. This service begins in darkness and a new fire is lit, from which the Christ candle is lighted. It signifies the light of Christ coming into the world anew at the resurrection. This service ends the season of Lent and begins the joy of the Easter season.

If you have not kept the full season of Lent in the past, let this be the season you keep it with your brothers and sisters at Grace Lutheran. Your faith will be enlivened and your appreciation for our Savior will swell with thanksgiving.

## Toys for Tots

Christmas was a little bit merrier for the many local San Diego children who benefitted from **Grace Lutheran Preschool's Parent Teacher League's First Annual Toy Drive**, initiated by parent and parishioner, **Christina Milligan**. The PTL joined forces with the congregation to collect toys for the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve **Toys for Tots** San Diego program.

The mission of the program is to collect new,

unwrapped toys to distribute as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community. Their goal is to deliver, through a shiny new toy at Christmas, a message of hope to needy youngsters to motivate them to grow into responsible, productive, patriotic citizens and community leaders. Here at Grace Lutheran, we collected eight large bags full of toys for Toys for Tots in just a few days! Thank you to everyone who participated for your generosity and loving hearts. We can't wait to collect even more toys next year!



# Book Review

by Pastor John Bombaro

*Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible Today*

BY N.T. WRIGHT HarperOne, 2011  
210 pages (hardback), \$25.99

Storm winds are blowing.

Two generations ago a tempest blistered through the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod over the doctrine of Scripture, rending a seminary in two, shredding hundreds of congregations, entrenching polarizing factions and leaving permanent scars on virtually all participants. What happened among confessional Lutherans was not an isolated incident. Presbyterians, Anglicans, Baptists, Methodists and various evangelical associations were doing their best to abate storm damages within their respective enclaves and can tell a similar tale. Among the enduring results from that period were the International Council for Biblical Inerrancy (ICBI), the 1978 Chicago Statement's fortification of bibliology, and an Evangelical-Protestant climate within which anything less than the strictest allegiance to the newly forged dictates about Scripture was utterly *verboten*.

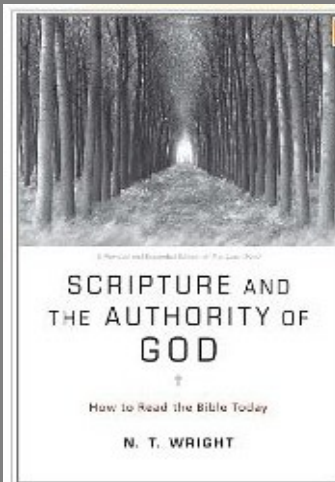
Once again a storm-head is gathering around the nature and use of the Bible's authority within evangelicalism. Whereas in the late 1960s and 70s the perceived opponents were an admixture of theological liberals and sympathizing if not compromising evangelicals driven by higher critical scholarship, today the critique is brewing almost entirely from within the camp of conservative Christianity. Now, however, the shoe is on the other foot.

The former battle fought over the Good Book was to ensure that Christ remained preeminent in Scripture. The Bible as the divinely authoritative, infallible, inerrant, sufficient, perspicuous, Holy Spirit-inspired, verbal plenary word of God delivered Jesus

with resolute certainty. The irony was that the very definitions employed to preserve a true witness to Christ in Scripture surrendered Scripture to the suffocating and failing enterprise of epistemological foundationalism, by which the authority, nature, and purpose of the Bible died the death of a thousand untenable qualifications. Bibliology ostensibly replaced Christology. It could not be said that there was any revelation, any divine authority, any word of God found outside this leather-bound book. History, Church, Liturgy, Creeds, and Councils were effectively rendered mute and moot. The legacy has been an all-authoritative book that engenders no shared recognition of its authority on virtually any biblical maxim, doctrine, or inference within evangelicalism. The attempt to save Jesus with the ark of the Bible sank the ship in a morass of biblicism and Jesus was lost at sea.

*Scripture and the Authority of God*, a revised and expanded edition of *The Last Word* (2005), is popular author N.T. Wright's fully-accessible contribution to the high pressure system building over evangelical bibliology and hermeneutics. The Prologue launches the book's agenda by proposing Christocentric, redemptive historical, and critical realist answers to the following three questions: "1. In what sense is the Bible authoritative in the first place? 2. How can the Bible be appropriately understood and interpreted? 3. How can its authority, assuming such appropriate interpretation, be brought to bear on the church itself, let alone on the world?" (p. 16).

The answer to the first question provides the central claim to the whole book: that the phrase 'the authority of Scripture', Wright says, "can make Christian sense only if it is a shorthand for 'the



Tom Wright is one of today's best known and respected New Testament scholars. Born in 1948, he studied at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, and was ordained as Junior Research Fellow and Junior Chaplain at Merton College, Oxford. He was Fellow and Chaplain at Downing College, Cambridge, and then Assistant Professor of New Testament Studies at McGill University in Montreal. He returned to Oxford as University Lecturer in New Testament. He became Dean of Lichfield in 1994, and Canon Theologian of Westminster Abbey in 2000. Wright was then elevated in 2003 to Bishop of Durham and is presently Professor of NT and Christian Origins at St. Andrews University in Scotland.

authority of the triune God, exercised somehow *through* scripture." (p. 21) The point that since it is the Father has given all authority in heaven and Earth to the Son (Matt. 28:18), who is *the* Word of God, then the Bible's authority can only ever be a "*delegated or mediated*" authority. Divine authority is exercised *through* Scripture but is not limited and cannot be limited to Scripture, but rather in who Christ is and what he says and does; yes, through the word, but also the sacraments, the Church, the liturgy. What is more, and directly to Wright's second point, the divine authority exercised through Scripture, happens through a *story*, a story whose principle metaphor is "kingdom." Here Wright insightfully states that "It is enormously important that we see the role of scripture not simply as being able to provide *true information about*, or even accurate running commentary upon, the work of God in salvation and new creation, but as taking an active part *within* that ongoing purpose" (p. 28), which of course spills over into the spheres of Christic exercises of authority, viz. The sacraments, the Church, the liturgy. To be sure, Scripture is God's speech-act, but it is not all of God's speech, for "now in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son" (Heb. 1:1). The Son, of course, is not confined to Scripture, let alone absorbed by it.

Later chapters substantiate Wright's multi-pronged thesis. Notable is the fourth chapter, "The 'Word of God' in the Apostolic Church," which sets forth a lucid explanation of how the "Word" serves as a vehicle of the Holy Spirit's authority "energizing, shaping, and directing the Church." (p. 51). The seventh chapter, too, under the heading "Misreadings of Scripture," delineates misreadings on the "left" and "right" of, especially, Protestant Christianity, concluding with a plea for a fresh, kingdom-oriented, historically rooted exegesis. Wright's valuable contribution, not dissimilar from Kevin Vanhoozer's own proposal in *The Drama of Doctrine* or the contributions of Graeme Goldsworthy, is the "five-act" hermeneutic best fully articulated in *The New Testament and the People of God* (ch. 5).

The other chapters are relatively thin on insights and feel patently contrived in the attempt to translate (reduce) theological and hermeneutical discourse into common parlance.

Notwithstanding, the value of the book arrives with Wright's satisfying strategies for honoring the authority of Scripture by a faithful Christocentric, kingdom-drama

reading that totally contextualizes the Bible. And here is where Wright offers fascinating case studies of how such an approach works on large-scale, testament-traversing themes. Chapter nine's case study is the recapitulating concept of sabbath and, by consequence, jubilee. Chapter ten focuses on monogamy. The case studies alone are worth the price of purchase.

*Scripture and the Authority of God* is an essential, elementary entrance into a critical topic that is only building momentum and may yield a hurricane of conversation and controversy among evangelicals of every stripe. Once the reader's interest has been piqued by Wright, acquire Christian Smith's *The Bible*

*Made Impossible* and then batten down the hatches.

The evangelical world, including confessional-types, better start taking notice of the admonishments, as well as the encouragements, of the likes of Kevin Vanhoozer, Christian Smith, Daniel J. Treier, Peter Enns, Scot McKnight, John Webster, John Barton, Mark Noll, John Goldingay, and Tom Wright, before evangelical redundancy becomes total and totally despoils bona fide gospel witness with an already jaded post-Christian milieu that already sees evangelicalism as a backwards subculture gravitating toward abject ignorance and fundamentalistic extremism.

Rev. John J. Bombaro (Ph.D. King's College, University of London) is parish priest at Grace Lutheran Church, San Diego, and teaches theology and religious studies at the University of San Diego.

## Weddings on the Rise at Grace

After a lull in wedding ceremonies for 2011, they are making a comeback. We currently have 12 scheduled to be performed here with Pastor performing over half of the ceremonies. The first wedding of the year joined Ken and Mary Monasterio and they sent this lovely letter .

*Dear Rev. Bombaro,*

*We are so grateful for the insightful, inspiring, meaningful and personal homily you gave at our wedding. We have only one regret about our wedding and that is that we didn't have a video recording of it . . . All of us have been talking about how wonderful the wedding ceremony was. My family loved it as much as Ken and I did. My mother said it was the best sermon she has ever heard. My older brother and Ken's sister cried as well as some of my friends.*

*Ken and I are very glad to have had our wedding ceremony officiated by you. We loved every detail of it. Like you said about the flowers, many, many guests commented about how they enjoyed the homily and ceremony. Some even called to say so, which is not common.*

*We all enjoyed the amazing organ music, too. Please let everyone involved in our wedding know how much we appreciated all you did for us. Michael [Burke], Kim [Newton], Sophia [Bombaro] and Grace [Newton] were wonderful too. Give them our love and our thumbs up . . .*

*Again, thank you for being part of our blooming relationship and for the very worthwhile advice in all respects. We will keep you posted on our life journey.*

*A very grateful,*

*Ken & Mary Knapp Ortiz Monasterio*



## Member Directory Coming Soon

In case you missed having your photo taken for the new member directory, there is still time. You can update your information by calling or emailing the church office at 619.299.2890 or [gracelutheran-sd@cox.net](mailto:gracelutheran-sd@cox.net).

Members can stop by the office Monday through Friday from 9-4 to have a photo taken or you can email your own photo to the office. Unfortunately, we cannot use your photo from the old directory, so you will need to have a new one if you want to be included in the 100th anniversary directory.

Vicar Thomas looks on in the photo to the left as Steve Hollman and Pat McDowd update member information. Gretchen Jordan made sure everyone smiled when she took their photo with the church's new Kodak digital camera. It has a special "you look mahvelous" lens so everyone looks great!



## Military Care Packages a Huge Success!

Thank you to everyone who participated in Grace's outreach to our military. Over the last four months in 2011, collections for all kinds of items that our military personnel requested came in to fill the priority mail boxes. We collected everything from chapstick (constantly requested from military stationed in the desert regions) to hot sauces and Christmas cards from the preschool children.

We made sure the Grace members that were deployed were also included in our outreach, which was a great way to stay in touch with our friends. The other service men and

women that received outreach packages were found on the website [anysoldier.com](http://anysoldier.com). We selected Marines, soldiers, and sailors who were in Iraq and Afghanistan in some of the most remote places and had a very limited amount if any of our daily conveniences.

To date we sent 19 boxes weighing almost 250 lbs.! We have enough to send out two more boxes of goodies. If you have any questions about this outreach, please contact Gretchen in the church office at 619.299.2890 or by email at: [gracelutheran-sd@cox.net](mailto:gracelutheran-sd@cox.net).

**THANK YOU!**





Linnette Hollman, Melinda Bombaro and Michelle Thompson are getting the food ready for fellowship.

Joanna, David and Laura Paylor



Ken and Maria Knapp were married on 7 January. It was the first wedding of 2012.



Jake , Michael and Kendra Ogdahl



The Cecil Family had their photo taken for the directory. Don't forget to have your photo taken too.

## A Season of Grace - 100 Years by Kim Newton

*In the spring of 1912 three members from Redeemer Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Missouri arrived in San Diego to establish the first English-speaking Lutheran mission in San Diego. One of those three was Rev. Clarence Damschroeder, the first Pastor of Grace Lutheran Church; Redeemer Lutheran was what would become the Missouri Synod; and the first English-speaking mission would become Grace Lutheran Evangelical Church.*



After many meetings, there are various activities in the works for the 100th anniversary celebration, entitled *A Season of Grace*. Included in planning and preparation are a 'Save the Date!' mailing piece, musical celebrations, special additions to our regular Oktoberfest celebration on Reformation Sunday, and special fundraising events.

The 100th anniversary team (Laura Latham, Kim Newton, Dan Paylor, Lois Paylor, Dcs. Snashall, & Christine Tripp), is particularly pleased to present the commemorative Grace Lutheran cookbook. The cookbook features recipes from Grace Lutheran members from yesterday and

today. Many thanks to all of recipe contributors; to Natalie Brown for her diligence in the organization and data entry; and Alisa Moore for organizing the ordering process. Pre-orders for the cookbook can be filled out and left in the designated box by the congregational mailboxes. Pre-ordered cookbooks are only \$10; when the books arrive, the price will go up. So get those orders in today!

Keep an eye out for your Save the Date! mailer regarding important information about events scheduled for the celebration.

Be sure to check out the March issue of the Lutheran Witness, as Grace Lutheran has an announcement in that publication regarding the anniversary.

Lastly, the anniversary team is requesting the assistance of a graphic designer to help with some mailing pieces; as well as someone with the time and ability to build photo books online. If you have skills that you would like to share with us, please contact Kim Newton at [newton-fam@cox.net](mailto:newton-fam@cox.net) or 619-299-5212.

### ***A Season of Grace***

*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2:8*

## Ladies Bible Study

Take a look at Isaiah, read a little. Have you ever wondered what he was really saying? Come to a bible study and find out! The Ladies Bible Study meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays each month for one hour @ 6:00 p.m. in the Teachers Lounge. The time is early enough for you to get home have your dinner and still have your evening! For more information contact the Deaconess and join the study!

The subject of prayer was the focus of the November meeting of the LCMS' Commission on Theology and Church Relations (CTCR).

CTCR Executive Director Rev. Dr. Joel Lehenbauer noted that every meeting of the commission includes set times for the Word of God and prayer, but at this meeting the CTCR focused much of its time on a long-standing assignment to provide a theological study of prayer. He said the study was requested because of prayer's importance to the Christian life and because of differing views and misunderstandings about it.

The report, titled "Theology and Practice of Prayer: A Lutheran View," will be published in early 2012. Lehenbauer pointed out the purpose of the report by quoting from its introductory section: "This study's goal is to encourage prayer and to guard against potential misunderstandings, from the

standpoint of Lutheran theology."

The report has three major sections: What is prayer? Why do we pray? How do we pray? The report begins with the obvious fact that "Prayer, as any little lamb of the Good Shepherd knows, is simply 'talking to God.'"

"But Christians do not pray to a god of our imagination," Lehenbauer said. "Christian prayer is distinctive because we are responding to the real God, who 'has introduced Himself' to us. God reveals Himself in Christ and we respond to Him in prayer. This understanding is at the heart of the entire document. And, since Christian prayer is the response of believers who are forgiven and redeemed through faith in Jesus, Jesus' own prayer (the Lord's Prayer) is the best way to learn how to pray."

Copies of this report will be available to members of Grace early in 2012. See the Deaconess if you would like to obtain a copy.

## Faces of Grace

Anyah St. Pierre and Boston Runnells welcomed their new baby sister, Annalie Jane on Jan 28 at 6:57 AM. Proud parents of this 8 lb. 12 oz. baby are Katie and Tim Didjurgis.



### Upcoming Events

Sunday 5 February  
Amadeo Brown Baptism  
Brannon Blosser Baptism

Sunday 19 February  
Lucas Browne Baptism

Saturday 25 February  
Laura Green -Brannon Blosser Wedding

Saturday 10 March  
Andrew Burke-Brandi Lincoln Wedding



New members Jennifer Berge, Brenda Roth and Esther Dohl (hidden) are being greeted by Pastor, Deacon and Elder Daryl Newton on 22 January.

**Wanted!**  
Photos of people, events and happenings around Grace. It's easy, just email to the church office at [gracelutheransd@cox.net](mailto:gracelutheransd@cox.net) and be sure to list the name (s) of the persons in the photo and the date and any other info about the photos.



# Faces of Grace



Grace Lutheran Church  
and Preschool  
3967 Park Blvd.  
San Diego, CA 92103  
619.299.2890  
www.gracesandiego.com

The Reverend  
John J. Bombaro, Ph.D.

Resident Missionary  
Pastor Yong Mo Lee

Vicar Brian Thomas  
Deacon Gleason Snashall  
Deaconess Doris Snashall

Office Manager  
Gretchen Jordan

Preschool Director  
Rexanna Blas

Music Director  
Michael Burke  
+

Divine Service  
10:00 am  
+

Adult Bible Study  
9:00 am  
+

Sunday School  
9:00 am  
+

Wednesday Evening  
Prayer & Eucharist  
6:00 pm  
+

Eucharist  
Every Sunday  
+

Nursery available



Grace and Madeline Taylor, granddaughters of Deacon and Deaconess are all smiles and ready to sing Christmas carols.

Grace members sang Christmas carols at our annual visitation to the residents of San Diego Health Care Center.

