

A Note From The Pastor

CAN'T GET ENOUGH GOOD NEWS ABOUT THE "GOOD NEWS"

A few months ago I attended a memorial service at our church. As with most occasions of this nature, it was a fittingly somber affair. I came prepared in spirit to mourn with those who mourn and provide comfort to those who weep. When I entered the sanctuary with my wife, my eye was immediately drawn to the large screen just above the podium that projected loving memory images of this dear soul that passed away. The service began with soft and contemplative songs, invoked by prayer, continued with some special music, followed by poignant remarks from family members giving tearful testimony of their great love and agonizing loss. When the final segment of the service (the message) came around, it was clearly evident to me that most everyone in the sanctuary was deeply moved and touched by this life and the powerful impact she had on others. What searing heartache, and what sorrowful pain. But then, through the mist and fog I, together with everyone else in attendance, heard the ole gospel message, the Good News about Jesus, His perfect life, painful death and praiseworthy resurrection. The burden of sadness and its stinging yoke were almost immediately lifted for me as I listened to the reason behind the reason. It was not a different message than the one I had heard so often before, no doubt hundreds of times now, but it was almost as if I'd heard it for the first time, fresh, anew and full of colorful insight that painted a deep and broad theologically soothing landscape. I left the church that day pondering why it was that this Good News message was such good news for me yet again.

Peter boldly professed in Jerusalem before his accusers, the elders, rulers,

scribes, Annas, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and others of high priestly decent that there is *"no other name... by which we must be saved."* (Acts 4:12b) Paul *"determined to know nothing... except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified"* (1 Corinthians 2:2). And before either one of these Apostles could ever make such robust claims, they had to come to the conclusion, just as each of us chosen of Jesus, that they/we have no where to turn but to Him for the *"words of eternal life"* (John 6:68b). We live, eat, sleep and breathe in a world that constantly bombards us (24/7) with claims counter to those of the Apostles. There are few places we go where such is not the case. Truth is masked at every turn. Even our own natural inclinations are driven to repel and forget this message (cf. Jeremiah 17:9). The writer of the hymn *Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, with apt and poetic prose, profoundly surmised that we're all *"prone to wander... prone to leave the God I love"*. Truth be known and sin confessed, I sometimes ashamedly lull and fall prey to this simmering pot of water that sits atop a burning flame of poisonous heat, waiting to boil my gospel good news down to a steam that vaporizes into an obscured cloud of oblivion. I know that to be the case when I hear that frightening voice in my mind say to myself, *"How many times do I need to listen to this? I know the gospel. Can't we talk about something a little deeper, meatier perhaps?"* It's right about then that the bellwether of His Spirit pricks my heart with conviction by the remembrance of the Apostle's commitment to the central truth of the gospel and that alone. It's the simplicity of this weighty message that answers the deepest longings for mankind, to know life's meaning and purpose, to be reconciled with his/her Creator, and to permit this truth to bring about joy for His fame from the

past, to the present and into the future. And that's precisely why this church, Grace Bible Church, is foundationally committed to preaching this culturally and presently relevant message over, and over, and over again. And that's why all of us should always hunger and thirst to hear, over, and over, and over again that easy, light, paradoxical and lovely story of Jesus, and Him crucified and resurrected. Pray we never, ever grow cold to consume this vast and fathomless more-than-a-story story, and conclude that we just can't get enough good news about the Good News.

-Thomas Kruggel



GRACE
BIBLE CHURCH

OCTOBER CALENDAR

Hospitality Homes
October 5

Parents' Night Out
October 11

Members Meeting
October 12

Women of Grace Game-n-Gab
October 24

Reformation Celebration
October 26

FUTURE DATES TO REMEMBER

Hospitality Homes
November 2

Election Day
November 4



Christian Education

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION UPDATE

What a praise it was as we began the Fall CE quarter and didn't have to make even one announcement that we needed more teachers and subs to be involved in serving in the children's Sunday school ministry. All that we needed was graciously provided by the Lord as not only past and current teachers stayed in or came back to their positions, but we also had a number of new people express an interest in serving as well. Be sure and give thanks to the Lord and to those who faithfully serve our GBC kids by teaching them God's word, week in and week out.

On another CE note, I want to let you know about a couple of things the leadership has decided to do regarding CE as it relates to those who serve in the CE ministry. Below you will find a letter put out by leadership a few years ago that speaks about why we require membership of those that desire to teach here at

Grace, including in the children's ministry. Up until now, we have allowed people who are in the membership process (not yet fully members) to step into teaching roles, but we have decided to no longer allow that. This, we feel, will be most in line with the desires we have to have the best opportunity to know someone who will be serving here in a teaching capacity. There is currently one person serving as a sub that is in the process that is being "grand-fathered" in as they complete membership. After that, all teachers and subs will be required to have finished their process before stepping into a teaching role.

In addition, our church was encouraged by our insurance provider that it would also be in our best interest to perform a simple background check, for a very minimal fee, on those interested in serving in the ministry. This would be an additional

way of helping to maintain the a high level of safety for our children and to assure parents that we want to care very well for their children. If you have any questions about these things, please feel free to contact either Scott Denny in the office or myself and we will be happy to discuss them with you. Please know that our desire is to be pleasing to the Lord in this, first and foremost and while we understand that ultimately He is sovereign of over the safety of all of us, we also want to be wise in how we oversee ministries here at the church.

Again, I'd encourage you to read the article below and please be praying for our ministry that the Lord will us those serving for His purpose and glory in the lives of our children here at Grace.

In His Grace,
Chris Kiiskinen

MEMBERSHIP AND SERVING AT GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

While formal membership at Grace Bible Church is not required to attend worship services, enjoy home fellowship groups, or to serve at Grace in many different ministry capacities, we do require membership as a prerequisite for a small number of ministry roles.

First of all, let us acknowledge that membership does not make a believer a different kind of Christian. It does not infuse greater qualifications for ministry, make a believer more spiritual, or in any way add to what Jesus Christ has already accomplished. Nevertheless, The Pastoral staff of GBC have determined that a formal process of membership does assist in establishing a few important things.

The formal commitment of membership encourages the believer through their covenant to care and serve the local church, and their affirmation to submit to the leadership and oversight of the eldership of GBC. It establishes accountability between members for the mutual edification, growth and love of one another. In addition, each applicant for membership is asked to review our By-Laws and Doctrinal Statement, and to provide "an account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15), that is, a Christian testimony of their salvation. They must also be personally interviewed by a member of the Pastoral Staff.

As such, the membership process provides the Pastors of GBC with the opportunity to ascertain some measure of each applicant's beliefs, doctrine, personal history and their essential

understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

All of this provides a measure of knowledge and familiarity with members which is of great advantage when considering specific ministry roles. For instance, we take very seriously the trust that parents place in us for the care of their children. The sinful society in which we live poses particular threats to children which were not wide spread in other generations. The depravity of the times mandates a high degree of caution, especially with regard to the safety of the children entrusted to our care, as those who may endanger or seek to harm may try to disguise themselves as harmless and defenseless, as "wolves in sheep's clothing", as it were.

As the membership application process provides an initial opportunity to discuss a believer's personal testimony, as well as the applicant's personal background and history, we maintain membership as a prerequisite for continuing service in ministry to children. This is a primary precaution, but by no means the only precaution, we maintain to protect the safety and well-being of the children we seek to care and serve.

We hope this provides some measure of explanation and encouragement regarding the requirement of membership for a small number of ministry opportunities here at Grace Bible Church. Our goal is not to arbitrarily restrict or frustrate the ministry and giftedness of believers, but rather to provide *reasonable pastoral oversight* to maximize the care, growth, maturity and protection of the saints!.

What's going on at Grace?

WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Parents' Night Out:

Parents, here's your chance for a date night without the kids! On Saturday night, October 11, the Women of Grace, College Career and Youth Groups are hosting a Parents' Night Out at the church from 6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Food, fun activities and qualified nursery care will be provided for kids from 0-11 years old. A minimum donation of \$5 per child (up to a maximum of \$25 per family) is requested for the entire evening. What a deal! All proceeds will benefit the church/ministry at San Quintin, Mexico. To ensure that we have enough staff, food and activities to make the night enjoyable for everyone, please sign up at the Women of Grace table in the courtyard starting Sunday, September 21. For more information, call the church office and talk to Chris Kiiskinen or Ben Nissen or call C.G. Senft at 925-323-0639.

Game & Gab Night:

Friday, October 24, 7:00 to 11:00 p.m. at Barbara Telle's home in Danville. Come enjoy playing board games, or gabbing, or both with your Grace sisters. Bring your favorite snack and game(s) to share. Call Barbara at 925-890-5987 or C.G. Senft at 925-323-0639 if you have questions or need directions.

Women's Ornament Exchange:

PLEASE NOTE THE DATE AND LOCATION CHANGE:
Saturday, December 6, 3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Wanda Vought's home in Lafayette. This year, along with an ornament to exchange, please bring a can of food or a pair of socks (any size) to be donated to the Bay Area Rescue Mission and share from the abundance God has granted you. If you'd like to help with appetizers or desserts or have questions, please contact C.G. at 323-0639 or Wanda at 925-313-9306.

Merry Mailbox:

will open on Sunday, November 30, for your Christmas cards addressed to current Grace Bible Church attendees only. No stamps are needed as we do not send any cards through the post office. Just put the person's/family's name on the envelope, slip the card into the mailbox located in the foyer, and it will be sorted and placed into the addressee's folder next to the mailbox. Check your personal folder often as any cards left after January 4 will be tossed out. Please contact Don or Cindy Ribergaard (285-4909) if you have questions.

HOSPITALITY HOMES

Hospitality Homes Dates:

October 5th
November 2nd
December 14th (*progressive lunch*)

If you have any questions please contact Louise Botelho at 954-7730 or email: loubo@comcast.net



FALL PRAYER PARTNERSHIP

On September 14th the elders called upon our congregation to respond to the recent pulpit series on prayer by participating in a focused prayer partnership during the fall. We were called upon to pray primarily for the renewal of Christ's people and the advancement of Christ's kingdom.

The elders have asked for individuals to commit to 30 minutes of prayer on the same day each week for 12 weeks. An optional response would be to commit to 1 hour and fast one meal per week.

Specific requests and direction for your prayers will be provided at gbcph.org/Prayer.php each week.

The Fall Prayer Partnership will conclude with an evening service and prayer vigil bringing all the prayer partners together on Sunday night December 7.

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Bonnie Allen ~ 1
Cynthia Herrmann ~ 2
Elisabeth Liu ~ 4
Brittany Morgan ~ 4
Julie Hardisty ~ 5
Samuel Scott ~ 5
Caleb Becker ~ 6
Peter Gomez ~ 6
Bailey Nissen ~ 6
Andrew Perri ~ 6
Megan Kamp ~ 9
Janet Redmond ~ 9
Samantha Shieh ~ 9
Kelsey Nichols ~ 11
Jessica Jones ~ 12
Brian Momaney ~ 12
Blake Dresdow ~ 13
Timothy Dufault ~ 14
Zoe Becker ~ 15
Katie Dresdow ~ 15
Barret Kruggel ~ 19
Davis Menez ~ 19
C.J. Carrigan ~ 20
Natalie Castel ~ 21
Jeff Jones ~ 24
Rick Axe ~ 25
Aidan Shellooe ~ 25
Christine Nichols ~ 28
Delbert Wyatt ~ 28
Deb Wat ~ 29
Diane Kinkela ~ 30

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NEWS & EVENTS

Reformation Celebration:

The year was 1517. The place, Wittenberg. The man, Martin Luther. October 31st is not just for ghost and goblins anymore. The last day of October marks the anniversary of Martin Luther's nailing of his 95 theses to the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, and the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. During this time of year we have traditionally focused our time on one of the five "Solos". Last year we looked at "Solo Christo" or "Christ Alone". This year we hope to focus on "Soli Deo Gloria" or "to the Glory of God Alone".

We will meet on what is known in Church history as Reformation Sunday, the last Sunday in October. It is simply a time to

recall some of the fundamental doctrines for which our Christian brothers and sisters in centuries past have fought. This year that day falls on October 26. The evening will be filled with singing, preaching, refreshments and games for the kids. It really is a time for the entire church family.

Members Meeting:

Please join us on Sunday, October 12, at 5:00 p.m. for our 3rd quarter members meeting. We will meet for a time of worship, prayer, and updating the church family on various aspects of the ministry here at Grace Bible Church.

CITIZENS CORNER

Though it is not the church's calling to change society through the electoral process, Election Day is a manner in which we, as Americans, may actively engage our elected officials and cast votes on ballot propositions that will impact our lives as American citizens and residents of California.

Not only are we facing an election cycle that will have national and even international implications, as Californians we have an opportunity to defend and protect the sanctity of life (Proposition 4) and the sanctity of marriage (Proposition 8).

Proposition 8

Limit on Marriage
Constitutional Amendment

Proposition 8 allows California voters to show their support of traditional marriage. The amendment will serve to add 14 words to the California State Constitution creating section 7.5 in Article I:

Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California.

This would restore traditional marriage to the state of California, once again prohibiting same-sex marriage within the state. It will safeguard the traditional family structure and protect California children.

Proposition: 4

Waiting Period and Parental Notification Before Termination of Minor's Pregnancy. Constitutional Amendment.

This measure amends the State Constitution to require, with certain exceptions, a physician (or his or her representative) to notify the parent or legal guardian of a pregnant minor at least 48 hours before performing an abortion involving that minor.

In California, a girl under age 18 can't get a tan at a tanning salon, a cavity filled, or an aspirin dispensed by the school nurse without a parent knowing. But a doctor can perform a surgical or chemical abortion on a young girl without informing a parent.

While this measure does not guarantee the protection of an unborn life, it's an important first step in protecting those who are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' (Psalm 139:14).

Don't let November 4th pass you by without your participation.

(If you have moved and did not re-register with your new address, you may want to call your county's election office to determine where you should vote. Contra Costa County residents call 925-646-4166. Alameda County residents call 510-663-8683)