

GRACELINES

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From our Pastor

Express Love Personally

Rev. Michael Mueller

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another" (John 13:34)

Can you really love someone if you do so out of duty? Would your spouse or parent or child be pleased if you told them that you loved them because it was your duty to do so? How about if someone held a gun to your head or took you to court?

And is this really a 'new commandment'? Didn't Jesus in Luke 10:27 agree that the summary of the Law was to love God and love your neighbor?

If we really think about it, coerced compassion is not really love at all but rather tyranny. God does not desire that you give of your time, talents and treasure out of a sense of duty nor to feel compelled because it is expected or required. You see, the paradox is you can never really show love if it is motivated by compulsion. It is only Grace that can enable true love.

This is why governments should never be permitted to do the things that rightfully are motivated by love. Governments can only exercise power. Even our own Constitution only grants State and Federal governments limited powers. Whenever we see a right it is always inherent to the people, and the Constitution just recognizes its existence—but does not grant it to the people.

The government is the left hand of God—Law. God establishes earthly governments to enforce the Law—to punish murder, false testimony, theft, etc. (Romans 13). Since it can only act out of power, it cannot rightfully perform acts that must come from love—Grace: nursing the sick, feeding the hungry, visiting the lonely, sheltering the homeless, etc.

Jesus always talks about helping the least of these in terms of personal responsibility (Good Samaritan) and the shared responsibilities of the Church (Acts Church)—because we are the living stones of His Body.

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Gracelines Calendar and Gracelines are monthly publications of

Grace Lutheran Church & School

856 W. Newgrove Street, Lancaster, CA 93534-3092

Telephone 661.948.1018 ✕ Fax 661.948.2731

Express Love Personally

(continued from page1)



“My mind belongs to Jesus. He redeemed it with His blood. When evil thoughts torment me, I choose to think on good.”



Never do you see Jesus teaching that the Romans should open soup kitchens, or provide free housing, income subsidies or free health care. The reason is that these are right hand of God things that must come from love.

Whenever the government gets involved in the things of love, it can only understand, accumulate and exercise power. So, it coerces those with money to pay for these things while creating and growing more powerful and controlling. It can't help itself, that's its self interest and only motivation. It might talk about compassion, but it can only understand and act out of power and control.

You see the love we are to show others is because of the love that He first showed us (1 John 4:19). The love that motivated Christ to go to the Cross for us when we did not deserve it is the same love that we show to those around us who also do not deserve it. It is only with godly love that we can truly feed the hungry, nurse the sick, shelter the homeless and visit the lonely—and not seek any return for doing it.

In Jesus' commandment to love we are motivated by Christ's love to His people in giving His life, and because we are His we act like 'little Christs' i.e. Christians. Not because we get a reward, receive love or recognition in return, gain power or control, or even feel better about ourselves—no, we do so because it is now just who we are. It's as if Christ commanded the fig tree to grow figs—it just does so because that is what it is. Now go and continue to bear figs!

Offering		Attendance				
Collected the Month of September 2016		Sept 18	Sun	133		
\$29,740		Sept 21	Wed	3		
Year -to- Date		Sept 25	Sun	121		
\$279,201		Sept 28	Wed	7		
<th>Building Fund (BTBC)</th> <td>Oct 2</td> <td>Sun</td> <td>114</td>		Building Fund (BTBC)	Oct 2	Sun	114	
Collected	852,756	Oct 5	Wed	8		
Available funds	289,831	Oct 9	Sun	138		
		Oct 12	Wed	3		
		<th>Average Attendance Sept.</th>		Average Attendance Sept.	2015	153
				2016	162	

School News



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD boxes due Tuesday, November 15. The boxes will be dedicated in school chapel on November 16.



Prayers for our teachers as they travel to and attend the Lutheran Educator's Conference November 20-23.



GLS Band will be in Lancaster Christmas Parade Saturday, December 3 at 10 AM - come to the parade and cheer on the Crusaders! Thank you Rottman Drilling for sharing a truck and flatbed with us!

Church News



Thanksgiving Eve Worship

Please take time to gather in God's House on Wednesday, November 23 at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 P.M. for a Service of Thanksgiving and Praise!



Advent Services/Soup Suppers- Our first midweek Advent soup supper and worship will be on **Wednesday, November 30**. Worship at 1:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. with **Soup Supper and fellowship** at 6:00 p.m. Other midweek Advent service/soup suppers will be on Wednesdays, December 7 and 14. Our final Wednesday Advent worship will be at 7:00 p.m. on December 21, no soup supper that evening.





The Progressive Dinner is fast approaching. It will be on Sunday, **December 11th at 5:00 p.m.** Would you like to offer your home for one of the courses? You don't have to do anything but decorate your home & provide water, punch or coffee. The 1st home is soup, the 2nd home is salad and the 3rd home is hearty appetizers. 20 people will be in your home at one time. We would like a large home for the last place with wonderful desserts. We all end up there for good fellowship & singing of carols. Mark your calendar for this fun event. Please call Arlene Klein if you are interested in opening your home for this event 943-4304.

Stewardship Article



“O give thanks to the Lord for He is good. His love endures forever” (Psalm 136:1). The love of the Lord does endure forever because the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, is risen from the dead, lives and reigns for all eternity. He was crucified for our transgressions, but He is raised and lives forever for our justification. We are acceptable to God in Christ Jesus.

This is indeed something for which we give thanks. We give thanks in our prayers. We give thanks in the hymns we sing in church. We give thanks by talking about it with our friends and neighbors and teaching it to our children and grandchildren. And we give thanks by giving to the church a generous, first-fruits portion of the income He provides us.

Giving is giving thanks. It is one of the concrete ways in which we thank God for all He has done for us. This includes not just what He has done for us here in time, but what He does for us for all eternity. He provides for all that we need in both body and soul. He is more ready to give than we are able either to receive or even ask. That is who He is. That is His character. He is good and His love endures forever.

Let us then give thanks in all these ways, not in one way or the other. But rather in all things, everything that we do and say, whether it be in word or deed, in prayer and praise, in teaching and giving, let us give thanks to God for He is good.

In His Grace,
Lee T. Jackson

November Abundance Sunday Collection For Grace Resource Center

Hats, scarves, and mittens for both children and adult.
Bring them to the narthex any time during the month of November.

Dear brother's and sister's in Christ,
Just a couple of things to bring to your attention. Fa' Nicol's neighbor JoAnn Pedrow has donated a walker to the church. Thank you for this generous gift. If anyone is in need of a walker please see Lee Jackson or Fa' Nicol , we will be glad to assist you.

On October 18, Edith Schuler and George Andrews hosted a Thrivent service workshop. We had 10 members sign up for the workshop. We gathered in fellowship on Tuesday night with refreshments to discuss the aspect of connecting faith & finances for good. To Edith and George, thank you both so very much for your faithful service to others.

In His Grace,
Lee T. Jackson
Stewardship



Our next "**Sew in Saturday**" will be on Saturday, November 19 beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the modular. We will work on Quilts, You don't have to be a sewer to take part, we have lots for you to do. Come join the fun and fellowship.

Lunch will be provided but please bring a snack.



Game Night with Mr. Nicol on Friday, November 18 from 5:00 to 7:30 pm. In the Parish Hall. Come join the game playing and fellowship.



Daylight Saving Time ends Sunday, November 6th at 2:00 a.m.

Don't forget to set your clocks back 1 hour before you go to sleep on Saturday, November 5th.



Ushers Meeting

If you signed up to be an usher there will be a mandatory meeting held at Grace Lutheran on Saturday, November 12 at 9:00 a.m. to go over the duties that are required of you as an usher.

Terry Snedigar and Lee Jackson, will be sharing head usher and Nickci Escamilla will be taking minutes at the meeting. Terry r will be head usher and Lee will back up to Terry when needed.

To all men and women who would like to be an usher please speak to Terry, Lee or Nickci or sign up on the sigh-up sheet located in the narthex and we will get back with you.

Thank you for your support in serving others,
Lee T. Jackson
Stewardship



You are cordially invited to join

The High Desert Lutheran Chorale on December 18, 2016 at 4PM
at the Antelope Valley College Performing Arts Theatre
3041 West Avenue K, Lancaster, CA 93536
for an afternoon of beautiful Christmas music
featuring the Chorale directed by Mrs. Sharon Hartwig
with special guest appearances by
violinist Rosalind Darbeau, youth pianist Arash Parravicini
and a 30 voice children's choir!

Crossfit

We are looking for kids who like to have fun, play games and discover the way to a "fit" life with Christ!

Crossfit is a youth group that will meet **Friday, November 4th from 3:15-4:30 p.m.** in the modular for fun, snacks and Bible talks. The adventure begins

All 5th-8th graders are invited to come and check out another way to find out about Christ's love for you!

If you have any questions you may call Pastor Mueller or Teri Morgan in the church office.



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

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LANCASTER, CA
PERMIT No. 200



We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.gracelancaster.org

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Church Office church@gracelancaster.org
