

THE WITTENBERG WAY

PASTOR'S PAGE



Dear Grace Family,

It's a busy season at Grace in October as we plan for Oktoberfest, Reformation celebrations, not to mention the organ concert and gala. In fact, there's so much going on it can get a little overwhelming.

If you ask the average Christian if they desire to be better Christians, they will answer, "Of course!" The theological word for this is sanctification. Christians generally understand this term to mean, "being made holy." If you are like me, a quick inventory of an average day's worth of "things done and left undone" leaves me rather unconvinced of my own sanctification. I seldom feel holy.

According to Baker's Dictionary of Biblical Theology, to be sanctified is to be "in the state of proper functioning." In other words, to sanctify someone or something is to set that person or thing apart for the use intended by its designer. For example, a lawnmower is "sanctified" when it is used to cut grass. That means that you and I are sanctified when we live our lives in the knowledge of God's love, grace, and forgiveness.

We often begin our Sunday service the words of St. John: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9). The gospel tells us that we have already been sanctified by Christ's blood shed on the cross. To be in a state of proper functioning is to be honest with God about our sin and receive again and again the assurance of his grace and mercy. In Him, our true and proper happiness is found.

I pray this Good News brings you great comfort week in and week out as you seek to live out your various vocations to God's glory in this world.

In Christ's Service,

Pr. Brian Thomas

October 2019
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Lord, Thee I Love with Half My Heart by Chad Bird

A cringe-worthy, albeit honest, look at the heart of a justified sinner praying the Lord's Prayer

Lord, Thee I love with half my heart.
The world has claimed the other part.
I pray Thy name be hallowed, Lord,
But want my name to be adored.
Thy kingdom come, Thy reign extend,
And rain on me wealth without end.
Thy will be done, my lips shall pray
And curse when I don't get my way.
I thank Thee for my daily bread,
But cakes and steaks I crave instead.
My million sins forgive, forget,
While I collect a one-cent debt.
From tempting evils keep us free
Unless I find they pleasure me.
Lord, Thee I love with half my heart.
Destroy, reclaim, the other part.



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CAN YOU FIND THE MUSIC WINDOWS?

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By Pastor Brian

Our Sunday morning worship at Grace is not about what we offer to God—it is all about what God offers to us. This is why Lutherans refer to their Sunday worship as The Divine Service. Each week we gather before God as sinners to be served by Him and receive everything He promises to us: the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation. He delivers these blessings through the proclamation of His Word and the administration of the Sacraments. As He gives, so we receive and respond joyfully with songs, prayers, and thanksgiving. For this reason, our tradition has been called the “singing church” as we have a long history of investing in rich hymnody, choral music, and the ongoing training and support of church musicians.

In the sanctuary, you can find our stained glass “musical windows.”



King David

The greatest king of Israel was the youngest son of Jesse. Born at Bethlehem, David spent his youth here as a shepherd until he was admitted into the court of King Saul, whose melancholy David soothed by his skillful playing of the harp. King David wrote 73 of 150 Psalms in the Bible that have helped lead God’s people in praise of their Creator and Redeemer.

Bishop Ambrose

Born in Italy in 340AD, Ambrose did much to reform and develop church music. He wrote what is now called the “Ambrosian Chant,” a mode of singing in a form of lively, rhythmical, congregational singing.

Martin Luther

During Luther’s early days, it was customary for the priests and choirs to do all of the singing. But following his discovery of the Gospel and subsequent reforms—one of them being the “priesthood of all believers”—Luther felt that all believers should participate in the divine service. This left a practical need to recover and write hymns for the congregation to sing. Martin Luther once wrote, “Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world.” Luther was a singer, accomplished performer on the lute, and composed some of the greatest hymns of the Reformation. In addition to his more than seventy hymns, he also composed simple polyphonic settings of hymn tunes, chants and secular melodies. He maintained regular correspondence with some of the greatest musicians of his time, such as Josquin des Prez and Johann Walter.

Johann Sebastian Bach

In 1723 Johann Sebastian Bach became Cantor of the school of St. Thomas and director of music at both St. Thomas and Nikolai Kirche. Here he wrote The Passion according to St. Matthew and St. John, The Christmas Oratorio, several motets, his B Minor Mass, The Musical Offerings, and the Art of Fugue. Bach is one of the outstanding geniuses of the Lutheran tradition as his works have stood the test of time.

The Circular Window

Standing above the “four musicians” is the circular music window. The words, “Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbath” provide the Trinitarian theme of all true worship. Surrounding this are four biblical instruments mentioned in the Psalms: the harp, lute, trumpet, and cymbal.

Don't Miss These Very Special Events

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1 AT 7:00 PM

Our organ will be given the workout of a lifetime by San Diego Civic Organist, Raul Prieto Ramirez! Raul is world-renown for his dazzling concerts and artistic style. He is performing this benefit concert on the Grace organ as a kick-off to our Organ Restoration Capital Campaign. Doors open at 6:00 with wine and hors d'oeuvres in the courtyard. This is an event you will not want to miss! This event is advertised within the San Diego community so come early to get a good seat. A donation will be accepted with ALL proceeds directed to the Organ Restoration . After the concert, there will be a "meet and greet" in the Fellowship Hall with refreshments.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16 AT 6:00 PM

Our Fellowship Hall will be transformed into 2019's Premiere Party Venue when the Grace Organ Restoration Committee hosts a Fundraising Gala. Attendees will be treated to some of the finest Italian food this side of the Atlantic along with jazz entertainment and dancing. Begin in the courtyard with beverages, appetizers and silent auction. With a \$20 purchase, you can test your luck on a "Balloon Pop". Each balloon is valued at \$20 or more !! Check your mail box for your invitation and event details. Seating is limited, so don't delay in purchasing your tickets. Please see Gretchen Jordan or Betty Burke after service, or contact the church office at (619) 299-2890 or by email at: gjordan@gracesandiego.com or Betty at 858-837-0106 or email her at: unadillarose@gmail.com

WAYS TO HELP

- "Balloon Pop" project. Gift card—any \$\$ amount or item! Each balloon will be valued at \$20 or more.
- Silent Auction. All gifts accepted. The Committee will put the baskets together.
- A truck is needed on Sunday, October 27th afternoon to move equipment from Spreckles Organ Pavilion to the church. Return on Saturday, November 2.
- Greet people!
- Sell popping pins at the Gala for balloon pop.
- Servers to assist in the Dining Room and Courtyard.
- Parking lot attendants.
- Set up & decorate for the Concert and the Gala
- Fill balloons with helium and prizes.
- Clean up crew - (a very important task!)
- Set up for sound equipment
- Assist with bundling the Silent Auction items
- Set-up for both events
- Organize silent auction donations.



BUY GRACE BAGS AND RECYCLE

How many times do you run into the grocery store and forget your bag? Buy a few red Grace bags for \$5 each to support the organ restoration and put the bag next to your seat in the car. You'll always have it and get some nice compliments in the stores.

HOW OUR OFFERINGS STACK UP AS OF 9/30/19

September Actual	\$19,919	YTD Offerings Actual	\$188,873	2019 Budget	\$246,000
September Budget	\$22,824	YTD Offerings Budget	\$179,439	Amount needed	
Shortage	\$ 2,905	Overage	\$ 9,434	By 12/31/19	\$ 57,127

Knock! Knock! Who's There?

Correcting a Commonly Abused Passage of Scripture

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.
—Revelation 3:20

For a long time, well-intentioned evangelical pastors and college evangelists have applied Jesus' words from Revelation 3:20 to the unconverted. As I recently heard this passage explained:

"Jesus is knocking on the door of your heart, but the doorknob is on the inside, so it's up to you to let Him in. God is not going to force a relationship with you. The decision to accept Jesus is up to you."

Is this a proper application of this passage? In short, no. Here's why.

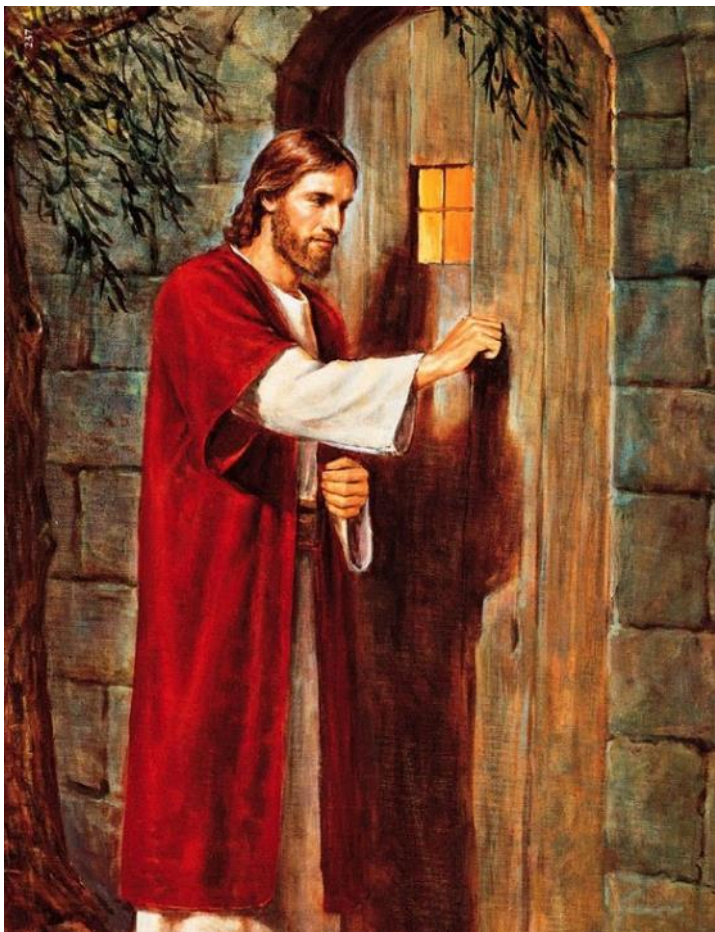
Whenever you begin to study a passage of scripture, you must understand its original context. In this case, our passage is just one verse of a short letter of rebuke from Jesus to the church at Laodicea. Because of Laodicea's great wealth, Jesus condemns this church for their attitude of self-sufficiency that has resulted in spiritual complacency.

'I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth.'
—Revelation 3:15

The city of Laodicea was well situated along a prominent trade route and known for its banks, black wool, and medical schools. One deficiency was the lack of a good water supply. Nearby, Hierapolis had natural hot springs, but the water traveled down over limestone cliffs and became lukewarm and salty. Thus, Jesus' imagery reflects His knowledge not only of their particular cultural situation but of their true spiritual condition. Though they thought they were rich, Jesus reveals they are, in fact, destitute (3:17). Jesus' offers some tough love to His wayward church:

Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.
—Revelation 3:19

Jesus' words are one hundred proof Law, climaxing in a call of repentance with the imagery of a warning knock on the door, summoning those with "ears to hear" to jump to attention as servants ready to greet



their Master (3:20). This verse harkens back to Jesus' teaching concerning His second advent in Luke 12:36—37:

³⁵ "Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, ³⁶ and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks. ³⁷ Blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, I say to you, he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table, and he will come and serve them.

To put it in contemporary terms, it would be like Lord Grantham returning from London to Downtown Abbey, his castle. His butler, Mr. Carson, opens the door of welcome, where his Lord surprisingly invites his servants to join him upstairs for a meal that he will provide. It's a complete act of kindness for it is *his* house, food, and table.

The emphasis in both of these passages is the honor of awaiting servants who stand ready to answer the

Knock! Knock! Who's There?

door and welcome the Master home upon His return: He will serve dinner to his servants (Luke 12:37) and will dine with them (Rev 3:20). While this certainly has some connections to the Lord's Supper, the meal in the book of Revelation is always pointing forward to the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev 19:9).

So What?

Now that we have set the passage in its context, let's examine the popular evangelical notion that this verse is about Jesus standing at the door of unbelievers' hearts, hoping they'll answer and receive Him.

First, as we noted, the passage is directed to a church of unfaithful believers, not an individual unbeliever.

Second, the problem with individual unbelievers is not a locked door but a dead heart. Prior to conversion, Paul tells us that we were all "dead in our trespasses and sins" (Eph 2:1). Dead people do not answer doors. They just lay rotting. What dead sinners need is resurrection; they need to be born again (see John 3:3). Those espousing a synergistic misconception of Revelation 3:20 typically have a low view of sin's corruption coupled with an equally unorthodox notion that Jesus somehow needs your help to save you. The A-to-Z of your salvation is 100% Jesus working through His means of grace alone and the work of the Holy Spirit to apply it—bringing to life that which was dead (Eph 2:4—10).

Third, as Dennis Johnson notes, the Laodiceans in our passage cannot avert Jesus' arrival by ignoring His knock, but their response to His warning will determine whether His entrance brings them the joy of the banquet or the exposure of their shame (*Triumph of the Lamb*, 93). In other words, the call to repentance in the letter to Laodicea is to turn from self-sufficiency to the only One who can save. Thus, the paradoxical challenge. When the church recognizes they are completely poor and naked, Jesus invites them to buy from Him.

I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see. —Revelation 3:18

How can those who are destitute afford precious metals such as gold? Jesus is echoing the words of the prophet Isaiah:

Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. — Isaiah 55:1

Everything the church needs—then and now—must be the free gift of God. Free to us, but at great cost to God, who sent His only begotten Son to die for sinners like us.

Looking for Volunteers



Money isn't everything!

You may not be able to write a check for \$100,000 but you can help the organ restoration project in other ways. We need volunteers to help with the two major events next month—the Benefit Organ Concert on Nov. 1st and the Fundraising Gala Event on Nov. 16th.

Jr. and Sr. High School age members of Grace are needed to serve during both events. Please let Ms. Gretchen Jordan know your availability and willingness to serve on either or both dates. 619-299-2890 or gjordan@gracesandiego.com.

There is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board with a list of jobs, please help by helping with these Grace events.

MEET OUR PRESCHOOL TEACHERS

MISS CAROL SMITH

Carol was born in San Diego and raised in Torrance California with her sister. Ms. Carol has been working at Grace for less than 2 years but she brings a lot of experience with her. She has been in the child development field for over 42 years working with all different ages. She still loves teaching because she is a part of the children's lives and can help them grow into strong adults. She still feels she can learn more and grow spiritually working at Grace and plans to stay here with us until she's ready to retire.

Her favorite teaching memories are the special pre-k graduations and being able to keep in touch with former students.

Carol enjoys visiting her life long friend in the high desert along with her goddaughter and husband. She likes amusement parks and loves roller coasters. Carol's day to day is busy caring for her 92 year old father, a retired pastor but she takes time out for herself for camping and enjoying coloring. Her favorite foods are Italian, Chinese and Mexican. She likes to relax by playing solitaire, reading, coloring and listening to music. Her favorite flowers are sunflowers and roses.



MISS SHAYNISSA ORGAN

Shaynissa was born in San Diego and grew up in Chula Vista with her brother.

Shaynissa is special to many on the Grace Preschool staff as she was our student at Pilgrim Lutheran Preschool and is the goddaughter of Ms. Anita, our preschool assistant director. We have watched her grow and become an amazing young lady. She has shown her special talent of organization and gift of positivity in the year she has been here and is sought after to help all the teachers at Grace.

She is currently a student at SDSU majoring in mathematics with an interest in single subject teaching. She will be graduating in May 2020 and then applying to their credential program and teaching high school geometry.

She loves teaching because she wants to have an impact on her student's lives. Her favorite teaching memory so far was when she came in the gate and the children ran to give her a hug as soon as they saw her.

Shaynissa likes to relax by working in her bullet journal and going to the beach. She and her high school sweetheart, Gilbert, are planning for a future together. Her favorite flower is a hibiscus.



ADOPT A TEACHER

Parishioners can "adopt" a teacher! Simply by taking one of the bio cards and praying for them, acknowledging their birthdays or work anniversaries, leaving them notes of encouragement or whatever you see fit. Bio cards are available from Rexanna, our Preschool Director or from the church office.

PODCAST OF THE MONTH

THE CHRISTIAN HISTORY ALMANAC

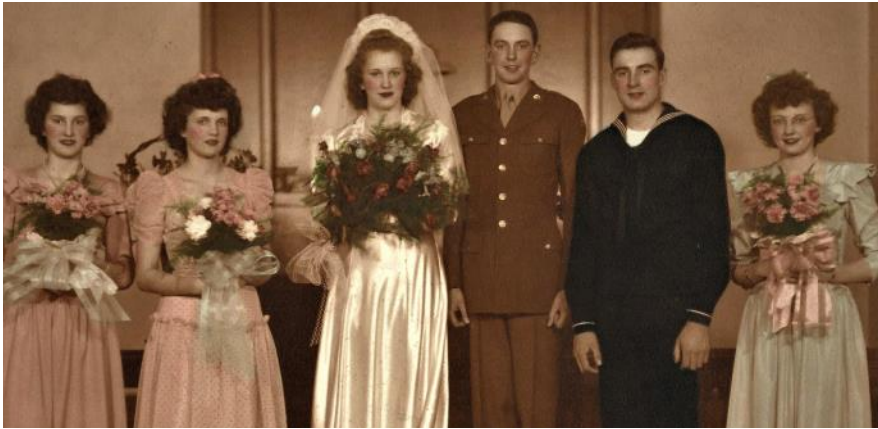
This 5-minute podcast consists of stories from the past about the saints and sinners who have shaped the history of the church and concludes with a piece of prose, poetry, and the reminder that everything is going to be ok .

<https://www.1517.org/podcasts/the-christian-history-almanac>



Virginia Ruth Fassler

We celebrated Virginia Fassler's 95th Birthday just a few weeks ago in the Fellowship Hall with her favorite foods, BBQ pork and flan. Many of her family members from NM and AZ came for the celebration. Sadly, Virginia went to the arms of our Lord shortly after the celebration on September 5th and joined her husband and daughter. She was a faithful member of Grace for over 75 years. She and her husband, Bob, were very involved at Grace and had many friends. We will miss her wonderful smile and kindness.



Benefit Concert

**Friday Nov. 1
7:00 pm**

**Featuring world-renowned
and San Diego Civic Organist,
Raúl Prieto Ramirez**

Free!
First Come-First Seated
Donations Accepted

Festive Gala

**Saturday Nov. 16
6:00 pm**

Dinner, Auctions
and Jazz Entertainment

**For tickets or more info:
www.gracesandiego.com
619.299.2890**





3967 Park Blvd.
San Diego, CA 92103
619.299.2890
gracesandiego.com

The Reverend
Brian W. Thomas

The Reverend
Gleason Snashall

Deaconess
Doris Snashall

Music Director
Michael Burke

Office Manager
Gretchen Jordan

Preschool Director
Rexanna Blas

Divine Service
8:00 am & 10:30 am

Augsburg Academy
9:30 am

Nursery available



PRAYERS

Today and every day include some time for prayer . . . for yourself, for your church family, and for those in need.

Prayers for strength in time of need: Bill, Dee, Samuel & Henry, and Rev. Dr. Mueller. For our military and first responders.

Prayers for our missionaries: Rev. James May (Kenya), Daniel Conrad (Central America), Dr. Rev. Ron and Mary Anne Rall (Papua New Guinea), Rev. Dr. John Bombaro (Latvia)

Prayers for the military: Thomas Abbott, Nathaniel Beaver, Andrew Bund, Andrew Burke, Alex Cavins, Gaby Cavins, Christian Cole, Jon Feazel, Jonathan Fisch, Brenda Fonseca, Tajy George, Jack Lynn George, Jr., Joseph Jindrich, Jack Ogden, Dave Miceli, Matthew Morgan, Eric Mitchell, Jacob Neuberg, Heath Russert, and Andrew Warren

Prayers awaiting the arrival of a child of God: Brandon & Jennifer and Michael & Karen.

Prayers for those unable to come to services: Lorna Winterstein, Mary Jane Robinson and Dottye Allen

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thu-Sat	Oct. 16-18		Here We Still Stand 1517 Conference
Sunday	Oct. 20	11:30	Chili Cook-Off Fellowship
Saturday	Oct. 26	2-6 pm	Oktoberfest in the Courtyard
Sunday	Oct. 27	9:15 am	Rev. John Bombaro talks about his new call as a Missionary to Latvia Fellowship Hall
		10:00 am	Reformation Sunday - one service No Augsburg Academy
Friday	Nov. 1	7:00 pm	Organ Benefit Concert
Sunday	Nov. 3	10:00 am	All Saints Sunday - one service
Saturday	Nov. 16	6 pm	Organ Restoration Gala
Sunday	Dec. 1	8 & 10:30 am	First Sunday in Advent
Sunday	Dec. 8	11:45 am	Voter Assembly Meeting

BIRTHDAYS

OCTOBER

13- Rebecca Kiperts
14- Cindy Hansen
15- Dillon Weissman
17- Wesley Newton
17- Mike Thompson
20- Zaro Razak
22- Greyson Whitmer

28- Christina Burke
28- Jeremy Fullam
30- Betty Burke

NOVEMBER

1- Lois Paylor
1- Daniel Lindsey

If we missed your birthday, please contact the church office with your special date.
gjordan@gracesandiego.com