Ash Wednesday Service

Join us on Wednesday, February 18 at 7PM in the Fellowship Hall. Set aside this hour for worship in very special ways:

• Praise Songs
• Message
• Prayer
• Fellowship
• Communion of the Bread & the Cup

We prayerfully ask God to renew us with the meaning of Jesus’ life, sufferings, and death for us.

Please speak to Pastor Don if you have any questions.

11AM Adult Class

The 11am adult class will now be surveying the New Testament, since we have completed the Old Testament. We start with our creeds, our liturgy and beliefs as we go to Matthew in the second half of February. Come join us if you need a study to grow.

Glenn Koons

Responding to Critics of the Bible

Shortly before Christmas, Newsweek ran a cover story that criticized the Bible’s integrity, raising questions about its composition, transmission, and translation. If you’d like to read a response to these objections. Below are links to two different articles for you to read over.

http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2015/01/14/darrell-bock-responds-to-kurt-eichenwalds-newsweek-article-on-the-bible/

http://www.thegoodbookblog.com/2015/jan/10/newsweeks-assault-on-bible-believing-christians-a/
Hello and Welcome to February!

I pray you are having a great start to this new year. This is the month we always think about our loved ones and how special they are to us. Valentine’s Day helps to bring that to the fore. It’s always important to tell those we love and hold dear that we Love them on a regular basis, daily if you can manage it.

Each month I will be highlighting different amenities and ministries that we have here at Grace!!

Karing Kitchens is another way we try to aid our members when they are in transition. How does it work? If a member of our church has a baby, post-hospitalization, surgery, death in the family, illness, etc this ministry provides meals on a short-term basis. We facilitate this ministry in the office so if the need arises please contact us in the church office.

Calling all Cooks because we are in need of more volunteers to help fulfill the schedules for Karing Kitchens. You are not obligated to cook all the time and there isn’t any quantity of meals required. If you would like to volunteer and be put on our list please email us at gracekaringkitchens@yahoo.com and you will be included in all the email blasts that go out with the info when this is put into action.

The Long Beach Rescue Mission is one of the ministries we send support to. They come twice a month and pick up the barrel that we keep at the bottom of the front stairs. The barrel is for food that anyone in our church family donates for the mission. It is there all the time for anyone to put items in.

Men’s Breakfast Fellowship

Men of Grace will be meeting on Saturday, February 7 at Malarkeys Grill in Long Beach at 8:30 am. We’re honored to have Sgt. John Scott from Seal Beach Police Department come and share with the fellows. Sgt. Scott will discuss the current state of policing in our community. He will also give us some insights on the relationship of the PD to the citizenry. Pastor Don will share how the Bible gives guidance on our relationship with government authorities and seeking peace in our communities. Should be a great time of fellowship, breakfast and good coffee on the water. Come and join us!

Please call Scott Batstone (562 431-4042) if you plan to attend so the restaurant can plan accordingly or contact Bob Wissmann (562-889-2728) if there are any questions.

Minister of the Month

Matt Shondeff

Our "Minister of the Month" for February is Matt Shondeff. Matt is in his second year on the Leadership Council and Finance Committees, respectively, and is the new treasurer of the Leadership Council, working with a team of lay people to ensure that our church operates with integrity and effectiveness in ministry. Additionally, Matt and his wife Shannon have been a core part of the Crossroads life group for a number of years, as well as helping with ushering, communion, and Scripture reading at the 11 am service. Matt also added the ministry of being a new dad recently, as they welcomed Claire into their family. Congratulations, Matt and Shannon!
Missionaries of the Month
Dan & Tori Beaver

Dan Beaver’s parents were missionaries to the Central African Republic. When they returned to the United States, they joined our fellowship here in Seal Beach. Dan and Tori taught at the International School in Manila for many years until one day a speaker challenged the staff by asking “What is your ministry?” Their answer was, “We teach here.” His reply, “That’s your job. What’s your ministry?” The result was manifested as First Love, a ministry to the impoverished on the island of Boracay.

You may remember last year’s devastation, when during the monster typhoon, a tidal wave surged on shore in the eastern region of the Philippines. Thousands of lives were lost. Today Nov. 2, Dan reports from Tacloban - "So many people attended the One Year Anniversary to remember what God has faithfully done and how He has blessed the work through First Love. It has been the hearts and concern of caring people who have made donations from around the world. Now almost 100 homes have been built. These are new homes for families who lost not only their homes and everything they had, but they lost lives, family members! Now one year later, they rejoice as God's faithfulness has prevailed. During the anniversary there were testimonies given. They came to the microphone and shared their stories to the many in attendance. One thankful man said that his house and his life has been restored. He exclaimed, Bagong Bahay, Bagong Buhay! This was to say, "Now he has a new home and a new life in Christ!"

The Ati people are an indigenous tribe living in poverty on the island of Panay in the Philippines. They have dark skin and curly hair, and they are similar to the Aborigines living in Australia. As a minority, the Ati people regularly endure discrimination. Due to their suppressed life style, the children are not given opportunities and suffer from social disadvantages. Because they 'look' different and generally carry a passive nature, the Ati have poor nutrition, health care, and little education. Up until recently attending school has been challenging for a majority of the Ati children who endure social concerns in the govt. school.

In 2010, First Love missionaries under the direction of Dan & Tori Beaver began to visit the children and mothers to bring nutritious food to the malnourished children and health care to the Ati families.

Six thousand (6000) meters of land was purchased in the central area where the Ati are living. This is where the Ati MASA school began in 2012. MASA sits on a mountain side, as a beacon, a shining light of hope and opportunity for the Ati children and families.

We ask you to pray for and help with the Ati school. We are also asking for anyone with willing hearts & hands to bring a mission team to help with the construction of the school. If you cannot come, can you help donate to the needs in order to keep the Ati school going? Donations for the Ati school and ministry can be sent to First Love International or write to us at ap_so@yahoo.com.

If you would want to give some material things, the students are in need of 200 small notebooks with lined empty pages. We are asking for someone to send LBC box of these type of notebooks. This would meet an urgent need. We are also in need of small backpacks and shorts of all the same color (S,M,L,XL). Other needs are fold up umbrellas and thin rain ponchos for the children, as they travel back and forth to school.

Please help the Ati Tribal School (MASA). If you can even make a small monthly donation commitment, it will help meet the many ongoing needs that help to keep the school going.

Write to us at ap_so@yahoo.com and we can give you options for making a donation, or send a gift donation directly to First Love International. Be sure to mark it for the Ati Tribal School.
Women’s Ministry

Women’s Bible Study
It’s not too late to join our eight-week study, *Sabbath*, by Lynne M. Baab. The Sabbath was one of the distinctive marks of God’s people in the Bible. The other nations labored seven days a week, but the Jews rested from work one day out of seven. The day of rest was a sign of God’s goodness to them as Creator and Redeemer. Because of the increasing pace of life, many people today are experiencing a renewed interest in finding rhythms of rest. The biblical Sabbath pattern has much to teach us about how and why to rest, and how to keep God at the center of a day of rest.

Join us Tuesday evenings (6:30-8:00) or Friday mornings (9:30-11:00). Both studies meet in the Offshore room. Though there are currently some study guides available ($5.50), please contact Lisa Latham (lisa@gracesealbeach.org or 562-596-1605 ext. 16) if you plan to join either of the two groups.

Women’s Retreat Planning Meeting
All women are invited to attend our upcoming retreat planning meeting at Lori Griffin’s home (413 Crystal Place in Seal Beach, 90740) on Sunday, Feb. 8 at 7:00 p.m. This will be our only meeting for planning our retreat, and is a unique opportunity to experience the principle that “many hands make light work,” plan, and serve with others as we seek to add special touches to enhance everyone’s experience that day. Hope to see you there!

Women’s Spring Retreat “Extreme Makeover”
Are you so overwhelmed with life’s struggles that you feel emotionally drained, overworked, underappreciated or just plain insignificant? Well, as children of God we are significant to Him. But, in order to walk in that significance we must know what He says about us and what our responsibilities are as His ambassadors. We are called to be the light of the world. We are called to love God and others unconditionally. However, we cannot do this unless we are made new in Christ and renewed in His Word daily. This can and will take place when we experience an Extreme Makeover in Christ!

Join us for a spiritually-rejuvenating one-day retreat and consider inviting a friend who could use a refreshing break. We will meet at the Mary and Joseph Retreat Center in Rancho Palos Verdes on Saturday, March 14. Our speaker will be Pamela Hale-Burns and the cost will be $70 (scholarships—partial and full—are available to those in need). Sign-ups begin Sunday, Feb. 22.

Vacation Bible School 2015

A VorBiS at Shipwrecked Cove will be the theme of this year’s Vacation Bible School and the crew find themselves lost and marooned at Shipwrecked Cove. What will they do? Is anyone looking for them? Follow the footprints of Jesus as we learn, “For the Son of Man (Jesus) came to seek and to save what was lost.” Luke 19:10

The adventure is July 6-10, 2015 (8:45am – Noon). Sign up early to guarantee your spot!

You can find a registration form on our website (www.gracesealbeach.org) under Children’s Ministry, on the patio Information Table on Sunday mornings, or on the 2nd floor by the main office.