

# THE WITTENBERG WAY



Dear Grace Family,

In the summer, Grace Lutheran rests from our normal pace. We pause some activities like Sunday School and mid-week Bible studies. The choir takes a break. This is not because God is less important than relaxing by the pool or summer road trips. It's rather a rhythm that reflects the fact that we find God more in resting than in doing. In Isaiah 30:15, God tells his people, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."

We are not saved by our to-do lists or our accomplishments. We are saved by returning to God, again and again, resting in the finished work of Christ. He saves us. We don't. We stumble, we fall, and God picks us up, inviting us to trust His grace once again. Rinse. Repeat.

This summer I plan to finish my next book for 1517, *Clothed: A Style Guide for Sinners*, as well as prepare Bible studies for the fall. I give thanks that Dale Sorenson has come on board as our new organist and parish music director. If you are interested in singing in the choir this fall, please let him know. I am also grateful for our trustees, Paul and Heath, who are here often taking care of an old building that is groaning for our Lord's return (see Romans 8:19ff).

I have included an article on the Holy Trinity by Dr. Phillip Cary in this issue. In my opinion, this is about the best distillation of a difficult doctrine that I have read. I get questions every year from young and old alike on this topic, so I commend it to you. Additionally, our very own Shannon Carreiro continues to write excellent articles on right-to-life issues. With the mid-term elections right around the corner, you better believe it is a subject that will play a prevalent role since a Supreme Court paper on the issue has been leaked to the media. Related to this topic, I wanted to pass on "thanks" from CAPS, who recently sent a very nice card letting us know how much they appreciate our church for our ongoing support for life and their ministry.

Though the pace slows for the next three months, there will still be wonderful times together at GLC this summer: Faith and film nights, Grace Gatherings, a 1517 Teaching Fellow talk, and some summer projects where I will ask for your help. Stay tuned for dates and times. But in everything, remember: *in quietness and in trust shall be your strength*.

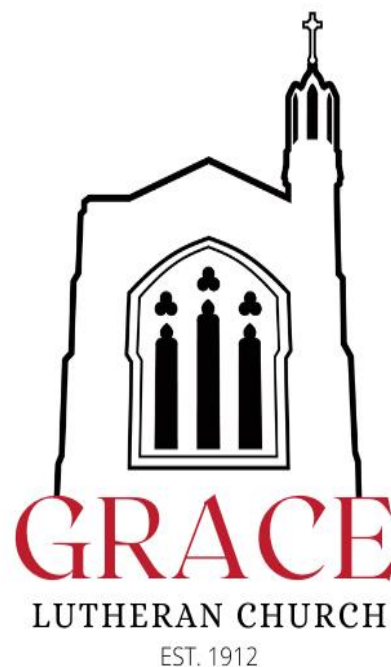
Prayerfully Yours,

Pastor Thomas

Summer 2022 Volume 9, Issue 5

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*From Religious and Theological Studies Fellowship Bulletin, Sept/Oct 1995.*

When I was growing up in the faith, I heard a lot about the doctrine of the Trinity, but never learned what the doctrine was. In high school and college I worshipped at faithful, Biblical churches in which pastors often affirmed the importance of the Trinity, even preached whole sermons on how important it was, yet never told us what the doctrine actually said. To find that out I had to go to graduate school and read the Church Fathers. This article and its sequel are intended to pass on what I learned from that reading to anyone else who thinks the doctrine is important but has never actually learned what it is. In the first article I will discuss the logic of the doctrine (i.e. the things it says and how they hang together) and in the second its history. In this first article I will do my best to stick to convictions that all orthodox (i.e. Nicene) theologies have in common.

To begin with, in talking about the Trinity it will be convenient to distinguish three levels: first, there is talk about the holy Trinity itself, i.e. about God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Second, there is talk about the trinitarian faith: because our God is the holy Trinity, our Christian beliefs, worship and prayer are (or should be) trinitarian. Thirdly, there is talk about the doctrine of the Trinity, i.e. about the propositions and concepts by which we give a theoretical account of the shape of our trinitarian faith. This article focuses on the third (and least important) level of discourse. Church life consists largely of the second—which is in turn directed at the first, i.e. at God himself.

The trinitarian faith is inseparable from the worship of any Biblical church, for the Trinity is the Biblical God. Hence to grow up without learning the doctrine of the Trinity is not to miss out on the trinitarian faith. Rather, it is to miss out on something much less important but still indispensable for thinking Christians: an explicit formulation of the basic assumptions of trinitarian faith. In the Biblically-faithful churches of my youth I did learn the trinitarian faith, even though I did not learn the doctrine of the Trinity. I learned to pray "our Father," to call Jesus "Lord," and to glorify the Holy Spirit as God. What I did not learn was how all these practices of prayer and worship hang together with the Christian view of the nature of God. That is what the doctrine of the Trinity is about: it articulates how the trinitarian Christian faith is grounded in God himself.

## FORMULATING THE DOCTRINE

The doctrine of the Trinity is the view of the nature of God that goes along with the confession that Christ is God. Of course the divinity of Christ is a theme of the doctrine of Christology as well as of the doctrine of the Trinity, but there is a difference: Christology is concerned with the relation between Christ's divinity and his humanity, while the doctrine of the Trinity is concerned with the relation between his divinity and the divinity of the Father and the Holy Spirit. The humanity of Christ, in other words, is strictly speaking a theme of Christological rather than trinitarian doctrine.

Unlike the Trinity itself, the doctrine of the Trinity is not incomprehensible or beyond our understanding. It consists of human words meant to be understood by human beings. And it can be formulated without using abstract or unbiblical language. All it takes is seven simple propositions. First and foremost are three propositions which together confess the name of the Triune God:

1. The Father is God.
2. The Son is God.
3. The Holy Spirit is God.

Then come three propositions which indicate that these are not just three names for the same thing (ruling out the heresy known as Modalism or Sabellianism):

4. The Father is not the Son.
5. The Son is not the Holy Spirit.
6. The Holy Spirit is not the Father.

Finally there is the clincher, which gives the doctrine its distinctive logic:

7. There is only one God.

These seven propositions are sufficient to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity—to give the bare bones of what the doctrine says and lay out its basic logical structure. The logical peculiarities of the doctrine arise from the interaction of these seven propositions.

Of course it is not hard to see what is peculiar about the logic—or rather the arithmetic—of these propositions. After describing three distinct things as God in propositions 1-6, we turn around in proposition 7 and claim there is only one God. This arithmetic is odd but distinctively Christian, and more familiar than it might seem. It is woven into the very texture of Christian worship, as for example in the opening of the Episcopal Sunday service:

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever.

# THE LOGIC OF TRINITARIAN DOCTRINE

It is as if Christians had their own special grammar when speaking of God: after mentioning these three distinct names for God, we go on to speak of his, not their kingdom.

Trinitarian grammar avoids plurals. Like the Bible, the traditional trinitarian liturgies always speak of God in the singular. Even in abstract doctrinal discussions, Nicene theologians avoid using plural terms whenever possible. Hence our seven propositions use no words in the plural. Notice that even the word "three" is absent—and in general, it is a word worth avoiding. To call God "three in one" is certainly not wrong, but it is at best only a label for the doctrine, not a way of stating it. After all, three peas in a pod are "three in one," but they are not at all like the holy Trinity. Notice also that our seven propositions do not contain any abstract language such as "essence" or "hypostasis." Such language is not needed to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity, though it is indispensable in defending the doctrine against certain heresies and misunderstandings.

In fact, the words we need to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity make a very short list:

We need the Triune name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We need the general concept "God."

We need the word "one."

We need to grasp the notion of identity and its negation—i.e. that when we say "the Father is not the Son", etc. (in propositions 4-6) what that means is that the Father is not identical with the Son, but different.

## TRINITARIAN GRAMMAR

The most important words on the list are clearly the names: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They are what give the doctrine its particular content, anchoring it in the Biblical narrative. The word "God", by contrast, is rather vague and general (after all, you do not have to be trinitarian or even Christian to talk about God) and in trinitarian grammar its reference is actually rather unstable. That is to say, Christians can use the word "God" to refer to the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit, or to the Trinity as a whole—and it is often hard to tell which. (However, as a rule when the Bible or Christian worship speaks of "God" without qualification, it is most often referring to the Father in particular.)

The peculiar logic of the seven propositions makes this vagueness and instability inevitable: the first three propositions refer to each member of the Trinity as God, and then proposition 7 claims there is only one God, which implies that the Trinity as a whole—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—is God. Thus the term "God" is hard to pin down, because it floats between four possible reference points: the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and the whole Trinity.

There is nothing particularly wrong with this vagueness. It just means that for trinitarian grammar the word "God" functions as a general term, while the concrete reality of God is represented by the words "Father," "Son" and "Holy Spirit," which are names rather than general terms. This has important consequences for the practice of the Christian faith. The vagueness of the term "God" causes no problems as long as our talk of God is trinitarian—i.e. so long as we remember to use not only the general term "God" but also the proper names "Father", "Holy Spirit" and "Son" (as well as "Christ"). But when Christians get into the habit of talking about God without mentioning the Father, the Son, or the Holy Spirit, the result is that they may literally forget what they are talking about. Their talk becomes abstract and far removed from the particularities of the Christian faith—becomes, in fact, less Christian and more generic. If we are not talking about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, then we are not talking about the Christian God but only about some general concept of God that is shared with other religions and philosophies.

What is true of the word "God" is true of general descriptions of divine attributes as well—including words like "holy" or "eternal" or "creator." Each of these terms applies equally to Father, Son, Holy Spirit, and the Trinity as a whole. Because they describe attributes of God, these words get drawn into the same peculiar trinitarian grammar as the word "God." Consider for instance what happens to the little sentence "God is the creator" when the doctrine of the Trinity gets a hold of it. It implies that the Father is the Creator, the Son is the Creator, and the Holy Spirit is the Creator (like propositions 1-3), and yet that there is only one Creator (like proposition 7). Thus the word "Creator" has the same vagueness and instability of reference as the word "God": it can refer to the Father, the Son or the Holy Spirit, or the whole Trinity. The same can be said of words like "Redeemer" and "Sanctifier," or "Holy" and "Most High."

One important consequence of this peculiarity of trinitarian grammar is that we cannot adequately state the doctrine of the Trinity by talking about "Creator," "Redeemer," and "Sanctifier." There is nothing particularly trinitarian about these three terms—no more than (say) "Eternal", "Infinite" and "Omnipotent." All these terms apply to Father, Son and Holy Spirit alike, and therefore cannot be used to distinguish Father from Son, Son from Holy Spirit, and Holy Spirit from Father. You cannot use general terms to distinguish the three members of the holy Trinity; you have to use the names, or something closely related to them. (This is a deep and important point to which we shall return later).

For instance, when we say "God created the world" we may of course have God the Father specifically in mind, yet it would be a mistake to deny that the Son or the Holy Spirit created the world. For the Son also is the Creator, and so is the Holy Spirit—for the Son also is God, as is the Holy Spirit. Indeed the Son is the Creator precisely because he is God—and not a different or inferior God either. He is not a different God from the Father (as if he were an uncreative God) nor a lesser God (as if he were not powerful enough or pre-eminent enough to be the Creator of all things). And of course the same must be said of the Holy Spirit.

Hence when we call the Father "the Creator," we are not denying that Jesus Christ is the Creator. Indeed very little of what we say about the Father excludes Christ, and likewise very little of what we say about the divinity of Christ excludes the Father and the Holy Spirit. Let me give two more examples of this, taken directly from Christian worship. First, in the Nicene Creed Christians confess that God the Father created "all things, visible and invisible." This is a phrase that the Bible originally applied to Christ (Col. 1:16). This transfer of language from Son to Father is entirely appropriate, for the Father did indeed create all things, visible and invisible—and he did so through the Son.

Second, in the Gloria, Christians extol the glory of Christ, saying:

You alone are Holy, You alone are the Lord, You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ...

Does this thrice-repeated "alone" imply that the Father is not Lord, or the Holy Spirit not Holy? Not a bit of it, as the song immediately indicates when it continues:

With the Holy Spirit In the glory of God the Father.

Just as the Father, who alone is the Creator, does not create the world without his Word (which is the Son), so Jesus Christ alone is holy and Lord and most high, in the sense that no other creature is holy and Lord and most high like him—but of course the Father too is holy and Lord and most high, and so is the Holy Spirit.

Hence even when we use words like "alone" or "only" in speaking of one of the Trinity, that does not necessarily exclude the other members of the Trinity. It is perfectly good trinitarian grammar to say "Christ alone is God"—for it is understood that the word "alone" does not exclude the Father or the Holy Spirit. And it is perfectly fine to say that "the Father is the one true God", for that does not exclude the Son or the Holy Spirit from being the one true God. Much misunderstanding of Biblical usage will be avoided if this little grammatical rule is understood!

## THE ARITHMETICAL PECULIARITY

Orthodox talk about God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit has a very peculiar grammar, and it is important to understand that grammar in order to speak the language of Christian faith well. But now we must move on to a different and more intractable peculiarity—one that is better known but even less well understood. And that is the peculiar arithmetic of trinitarian doctrine.

It is here that we must begin introducing abstract philosophical terms. So far, I have been talking rather loosely about "members" of the Trinity, in contrast to the "whole" Trinity. But that sort of talk can be misleading. When we see why it can be misleading, the value of the more abstract terminology will start to become clear. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are not "members" of the Trinity the way arms and legs are members of a human body. They are not parts of a whole. If they were, then there would be no logical peculiarity about the doctrine of the Trinity after all: God would have three parts, and when you put all three parts together you would get one whole God. But that is clearly not how the doctrine of the Trinity works. Each "member" of the Trinity is fully God, not just a part of God. Our first proposition does not say "The Father is part of God" but rather "The Father is God." Likewise, the Son is never called a "part" of God—for a part is an incomplete thing, and the Son is a complete individual being that is God. So what we need, rather than loose talk about "members," is a term for "complete individual being." The word for that, in technical trinitarian parlance, is "hypostasis" (from the Greek) or "subsistence" (from the Latin).

Now it is clear what the key logical difficulty in the doctrine of the Trinity is: Christians confess three distinct individual beings, and say each is God—and yet also say that there is only one God. That is the arithmetical peculiarity: the three hypostases of the Trinity do not "add up" to make three gods. It is as if when talking about the Trinity we forget how to count.

In other words, the logical difficulty of the doctrine of the Trinity lies in the arithmetic. In fact, if our seven propositions are interpreted using ordinary arithmetic, they produce a flat logical contradiction. Hence any logic that makes sense of the doctrine of the Trinity will be a logic without arithmetic. But this is less of a problem than you might think. As a rule, modern logicians devise their systems of logic without any mathematical concepts built in, and then add on set theory, arithmetic and other mathematical concepts. In talking about the Trinity, we are in effect using a logic that does not have these added features—which is a perfectly respectable thing for any modern logician to do.

Still, that does not solve all our problems. For what does the word "one" mean in proposition 7, if it is not a piece of arithmetic? It must mean a kind of oneness that is deeper and logically prior to the arithmetical number one. This



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may sound strange, but in fact there are many philosophies which have such a notion of oneness, including the leading school of philosophy (i.e., neo-Platonism) at the time of the Church Fathers. Hence the Church Fathers claimed that God is One in a deeper sense than mere arithmetic, they did not get any objections from contemporary philosophers.

A defense of the logical consistency of the doctrine of the Trinity hinges on the meaning of proposition 7. That is what must be interpreted in a peculiar way if the seven propositions, taken together, are to escape being logically contradictory. Which is to say: the logical difficulties of trinitarian doctrine cluster around the peculiar trinitarian notion of the oneness of God. Notice that there is no hint of logical inconsistency until we get to that last proposition—the monotheistic claim that there is only one God. Up to that point, our talk is perfectly consistent—like that of perfectly consistent polytheists. A pagan, for instance, could say:

1. Zeus is God
2. Apollo is God
3. Poseidon is God
4. Zeus is not Apollo...

and so on down the line, until he got to proposition 7, where the natural conclusion would be: there are three gods. But Christians are too Jewish to say that. And that is why the doctrine of the Trinity is so difficult, interesting and strange.

## WHY NOT THREE GODS?

Why not say there are three Gods? That was an urgent question facing the Church Fathers as they worked out the logic of trinitarian doctrine. Of course they knew the Bible would not allow them to say there were three Gods, and they were determined to follow the Bible. But they needed a logical answer to their heretical opponents, who were asking questions like: how can you say those first six things and not conclude there are three Gods? Doesn't the logic of your Trinity lead you away from Biblical monotheism? For example, if Christ is God just like the Father (proposition 2), and yet is not identical to the Father (proposition 4), then is he not a second God (contradicting proposition 7)?

To understand the Church Fathers' answer to this question, we will need some abstract philosophical terms. But four will be enough:

1. Hypostasis, or "concrete or particular being," e.g. a human being, a cat, a tree or a stone—or God the Father, or Jesus Christ.

2. Essence or nature, such as humanity or divinity (or "Godhead") or a species of animal or other kind of thing. Depending on which philosopher you ask, "essence" can mean something very different and very complicated, but Trinitarian doctrine does not have to take sides on such questions. It is enough if we associate "essence" (Greek ousia) with a kind of thing, as opposed to "hypostasis," which refers to particular or individual things—so that essence is to hypostasis as human nature is to Paul. Note that essences are always singular: there are many human hypostases, but only one human essence—many men and women, but only one humanity.

3. Quality is not a complete individual thing, but rather something that is in a thing. E.g. when we say Mary is old and brown and wise, we are talking about her qualities. She is a hypostasis, but "wise" is one of her qualities. (Qualities are typically referred to by adjectives rather than nouns—though of course you can make a noun out of the adjective, like "wisdom," and call that a quality as well).

4. Relations are not in a thing like qualities, but between two things; e.g. Mary is taller than Paul, or standing to the right of Peter, or the daughter of Anna. As you can readily see, some relations are rather superficial (e.g. "standing to the right of") while others may be a deep part of your identity (e.g. "daughter of").

First let me make clear what the answer was not. The Church Fathers did not argue that God is One because of having only one essence. Of course they did affirm that there is only one divine essence, but that does not mean there cannot be three gods. For there is only one human essence (i.e. one human nature) and yet there are many human beings. And a pagan could perfectly well say there is only one divine essence and still affirm that Zeus, Apollo and Poseidon are three different gods.

So why did the Church Fathers say there is only one divine essence? Why, in the Nicene creed, do we bother to confess that Christ is "of one essence [homo-ousios] with the Father"? Precisely because that means he is not a different kind of God than the Father—not a lesser or lower or later divinity (as the heretical Arians had claimed). This homo-ousios clause has the job of repudiating the Arian heresy, and it does that job quite well. It serves as a commentary on proposition 2, to the effect that when we say the Son is God, we mean "God" in exactly the same sense as the Father—not a different kind of God. Hence the homo-ousios clause does not rule out tritheism (the doctrine that there are three Gods), but that is not its job. We rule out tritheism by the simple expedient of confessing that there is only one God (proposition 7).

So the question still needs to be answered: why not conclude, logically, that there are three Gods? Of course the basic answer is still: because Scripture forbids it. But what answer can we give to the criticism that in confessing three distinct hypostases as God, we are falling into tritheism, whether we mean to or not? Peter, Paul, and Mary are three human hypostases, and whether we like it or not, they add up to three humans. So if Father, Son and Holy Spirit are three divine hypostases, why don't they add up to three Gods?

The basic answer given by the Church Fathers is this: each of the three hypostases of the Trinity has exactly the same qualities as the others. For example, the Father's wisdom is exactly the same as the Son's, which is exactly the same as the Holy Spirit's. And the Father's greatness is exactly the same as the Son's, which is exactly the same as the Holy Spirit's—and so on. This is quite different from three distinct human hypostases like Peter, Paul and Mary. Peter may be just as wise as Mary, but his wisdom is not exactly the same as hers. And he may be just as brown as Mary, but his brownness is not exactly the same thing as hers. As a rule, different individuals have different qualities. But the Trinity breaks that rule. In the Trinity, all three hypostases have exactly the same qualities. That is why Father, Son and Holy Spirit do not add up to three Gods—unlike Peter, Paul and Mary, who add up to three humans.

Notice how this answer fits the peculiar grammar of trinitarian doctrine. A word like "wise" or "omnipotent" works just like the word "God" or "Creator." It can be applied to either Father, Son or Holy Spirit, or to the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit—but it can never be applied in the plural. Just as there are not three Gods, so there are not three wisdoms or three creators in the Triune God. Indeed, there are not three Gods precisely because there are not three wisdoms, not three creators, etc.

This answer to the question, "why not three Gods?" is so radical that it immediately provokes the opposite question: if the Father, Son and Holy Spirit each have the same qualities, then what makes them three? How can you tell them apart? What makes them different from each other, if everything about them is the same? The answer is that not everything about them is the same. Their qualities are all the same, but the relations between them are not. The Son is different from the Holy Spirit because he is the son of the Father, and the Holy Spirit is not. "Son of" is a relation, and what makes the Son different from the Holy Spirit is that he has this relation to the Father and the Holy Spirit does not. There is another way of putting this, which amounts to the same thing. It is to say that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are distinguished from one another by their mode of origination (Greek *tropos hyparxeos*): i.e. the Son is begotten from the Father, the Father is unbegotten, and the Holy Spirit is not begotten but proceeds. (This is how theologians in the Eastern Orthodox tradition tend to put it, while the Western tradition prefers talking about relations.)

## CONCLUSION

At this point we have the basic logic of the doctrine of the Trinity, as it is shared by all the Nicene churches, East and West. We can briefly summarize the historical development of this logic thus: (1) First and most fundamental is the Biblical conviction that Christ is God (proposition 2, above). (2) The council of Nicaea (325 A.D.) in effect appends to this conviction the commentary: Christ is not a different kind of God than the Father (the *homo-ousios* clause). (3) Once proposition 3 (above) is interpreted in the same way (i.e. the Holy Spirit too is confessed as God in exactly the same sense as the Son and the Father) then the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity is completed. This takes place at the council of Constantinople in 381. (4) Meanwhile, however, a serious question arises: why not say there are three Gods? The answer to that question, given a generation after Nicaea by the Cappadocian Fathers, establishes the basic rules of trinitarian grammar: that all qualities in God are one, not three. Hence we always describe God in the singular: one God, one Creator, one Wisdom, one Omnipotence. (5) In that case, what distinguishes the Father, Son and Holy Spirit from one another? The Cappadocians answered: their relations of origin, e.g. the fact that the Father begets the Son but not the other way around.

In arriving at the relations of origin, we have come from the logic of trinitarian doctrine to what we could call its dynamics—its description of cause and effect. At this point things become richer, more complicated, and more controversial. Let me simply in conclusion mention a doctrine that all Nicene traditions agree on. Since the Father begets and is not begotten by the Son, he is cause rather than effect—and similarly with respect to the procession of the Holy Spirit, where the Father is cause of the procession rather than its effect. The Father is the cause of the other hypostases, and therefore he is "the source of divinity" (*pege theotetos* in Greek, *fons et origo totius divinitatis* in the official Latin formulation). Here the notion of *ousia* comes in for a richer use than in the *homo-ousios* clause. The Father gives his *ousia*, his very being and divinity and all his divine attributes, to the Son. Hence the Son is all that the Father is, except being Father. That is why all their qualities are the same. This complete self-giving of the Father to the Son and the Son's receiving his whole being and self from the Father, is one of the great starting points for Christian meditation on who God is. "All that the Father has is mine," says our Lord Jesus, and the work of the Holy Spirit is to "take what is mine and declare it to you" (John 16:15).

## PRO-LIFE IN POST-ROE AMERICA

On May 2, *Politico* published a leaked draft opinion by Justice Samuel Alito indicating that the Supreme Court will find in favor of the petitioner in the pending *Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization* sometime this month. [See sidebar.]

Right on cue following the leak pro-abortion protesters took to the streets and media released dire warnings that American law soon would regress to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. *Stanford Daily* predicted a "Constitutional Earthquake" that would rescind past SCOTUS rulings on individual rights. In an MSNBC interview, Nancy Pelosi stated that the abortion issue is simply a "frontman" to "undo" access to contraceptives and in vitro fertilization. *Time* envisioned a return to laws prohibiting interracial marriage!

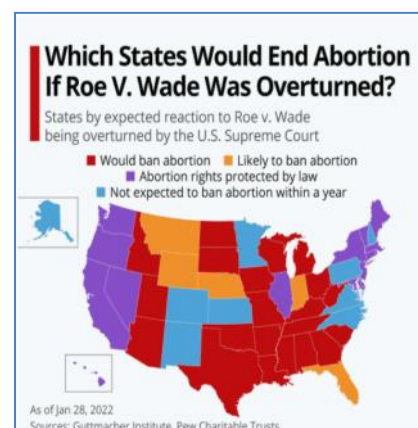
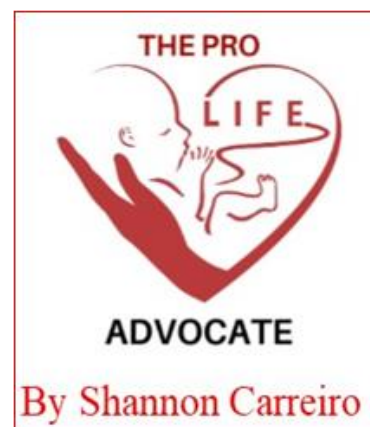
Those are extremes. The more common reaction is found in this *New Yorker* article: "The most immediate effect of *Dobbs*...will be that tens of millions of women will abruptly lose access to abortion. The ruling itself would not institute a ban, but it would give states almost boundless power to do so." The author fretted that while 16 states will continue to protect abortion rights, "This should be cold comfort to people who live in those jurisdictions or who have the financial means to travel. Their own rights will be conditional; they may feel that their choice of where to live is constrained...But the burden will fall most heavily on Americans with less money." None of this hand-wringing ever expresses any concern for the burden that falls on the aborted child.

### Reality Check

We can certainly expect more hyperbolic journalism and more protests post-Roe. We can also expect the status quo in the states that already have lenient abortion laws. Some states may up the ante (California, for sure), while some will prohibit abortion outright (as Oklahoma recently did). Still others will continue to push for more restrictive legislation. A *USA Today* (May 3) article reported that anti-abortion groups plan to focus on an array of policy goals including restricting access to abortifacient medication and challenging local prosecutors who say they won't enforce anti-abortion laws. In states like our own, where government is hostile toward the unborn, we can educate ourselves and others, actively oppose pro-abortion legislation, and support pro-life organizations like CAPS.

### Dobbs v Jackson Women's Health Organization

"This case asks the Supreme Court to determine whether Mississippi's ban on all elective abortions after fifteen weeks of pregnancy is constitutional. Petitioner Thomas Dobbs argues that the Court should overturn the precedent establishing a constitutional right to pre-viability abortions—*Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania v. Casey*—or alternatively, reject viability as a measuring tool. In response, Respondent Women's Health Center contends that the Court should uphold the constitutional right to abortion because there is no compelling reason to overrule the previous abortion precedents finding such a right." (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/cert/19-1392>)



## SEASON'S GREETINGS - PENTECOST

The longest season of the church year involves the Sundays after Pentecost, which lasts for nearly six months. Alternative names for the season in some church traditions are "Trinity Season" or "Ordinary Time."

The first half of the church year from Advent through Pentecost recounts the life of Christ and His saving work for us. We sometimes refer to this as the "festival half" of the year. During the second half, the Scripture readings focus more on Jesus's teachings and the Spirit's work among us. The primary color for the season is green, chosen because it is the color of living things, just as the Holy Spirit gives new life to all who trust in Jesus as their Savior. We are thus encouraged to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord" (2 Peter 3:18). The long season of the church before us presents ample opportunity for us to breathe in the Spirit and exhale the truth of our triune God.

The Pentecost season reaches its conclusion as we are taught that this same Lord who came to be our Savior will come again to restore all things.



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PAUL HIMMELBERGER  
Trustee

KELLEY SCHMIDT  
Fellowship/Activities

HEATH RUSSERT  
Member-at-Large

TED NILSEN  
Head Elder

JEREMY FULLAM  
STEVE HOLLMAN  
JASON HUNTLEY  
DARYL NEWTON  
TRAVIS WHEELER  
Elders

## PRAYERS

### PRAYERS FOR STRENGTH AND HEALING

Joyce, Dave, Bill, Michael, Bernie, Pat,  
Andrea, Mike

### PRAYERS AWAITING THE ARRIVAL OF A CHILD OF GOD

Jeremy & Alma Fullam

### PRAYERS FOR OUR MISSIONARIES

Rev. Tyler McMiller, Joshua Salas, Lorenzo Murrone, Luiz Lange,  
Michael & Nance Morizio (Lutheran church planters & seminarians in Italy)

### PRAYERS FOR OUR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS

William Baker, Tajy George, Jack George, Jr., Philip Hawthorne, Heath Russert  
Dylan & Linka Jensen, Josh Martin, Matthew Morgan, Rev. Dave Schleusener,  
and Dr. Holly Schmidt

### PRAYERS FOR THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND SERVICES

Joyce Rochester

## SUMMER BIRTHDAYS

### JUNE

12- Jack George  
20- Lily Newton,  
20- Thomas Gertz  
22- Renee Thompson  
24- Tony Mezzadri  
28- Fran Willis

### JULY

5- Scott Weselis  
8- Natalie Lukaesko  
13- Peter Gertz  
16- Chris Latham  
21- Brian Thomas  
26- Judy George  
29- Conner Russert  
31- Kris Fillius

### AUGUST

3- Stacie Mezzadri  
5- Virginia Torres  
11- Erin Dorris  
14- Joyce Rochester  
20- Josh Jensen  
24- Jackson Huntley  
25- August Lehman  
30- Maggie Jacobs

If we missed your birthday, contact the office: gjordan@gracesandiego.com

## OFFERINGS UPDATE

May 2022 Actual	\$ 18,631
Budget	\$ 26,441
Shortfall	\$ 7,810

YTD 2022 Actual	\$ 91,179
Budget	\$ 108,537
Shortfall	\$ 17,358

OUR MISSIONARY  
SUPPORT IN ITALY

AS OF MAY 31, 2022 OUR  
DONATIONS TOTAL  
\$2,556

### Giving to Grace

- Your weekly envelopes or those provided in the pews
- Online from your bank website
- Scan the QR code to the right
- Text the amount to 84321
- On the Grace Giving Page at [grace sandiego.com](http://grace sandiego.com)
- AmazonSmile is a simple way every time you shop
- Ralph's Community Rewards, link your card and shop

