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**We want to better present to our community that our church is a vibrant community of faith.**



## SEAL BEACH MAYOR GIVES PERMISSION TO BE PROUD OF NEW BUILDING

Earlier this year, Grace Community Church of Seal Beach finished renovating the exterior of their building, enlarging outdoor patio space and upgrading their entrance area. During the dedication service, the mayor of the city said, “Now you finally have a building to be proud of.” And while there is an undercurrent of humor and truth in that statement, it does accurately reflect the motivation of the church to invest significant finances, time, and energy into the project. “If you had looked at our building from the outside prior to these renovations,” says Bob Wriedt, Senior Pastor of Grace Community Church, “you would have assumed that we were a decaying and dying church with an irrelevant message. Obviously, there is nothing farther from the truth, but now our community can at least see that with their own eyes!”

“Over the last several years, our church has gone through a very intentional leadership transition from one generation to the next,” says Bob. “We are excited about our potential to reach the next generation with the gospel and these improvements help us to show that the gospel is not a relic of a bygone era, but rather a timeless and relevant message for today.” According to Bob, their building previously looked like a ‘time-warp’ from forty years ago. “One value of the church is to live a missional life and we want to better present to our community that our church is a vibrant community of faith and a place where they could envision themselves,” says Bob.

Located one block from the ocean in the heart of downtown Seal Beach, Grace Community Church made a commitment ten years ago to maximize its very limited space through a series of renovations called ‘Waves.’ This most recent project is the third and final wave in a series of upgrades the church has completed over the last several years. Wave One included renovation of their worship space as well as adult education classrooms. Wave Two focused on children’s ministry area and adjacent administrative offices. “I’m amazed at how God provided and our church has responded to the vision,” says Bob. “The recently finished project was under budget and we’re far ahead of our funding goals. Not only do we now have increased space for people to connect in fellowship on Sunday mornings, we also have a safer building for those with disabilities and children. The church is now well positioned for ministry in the future.”

Grace Brethren Investment Foundation is proud to partner with Grace Community Church of Seal Beach. “We know they are committed to faithful strategic stewardship of God’s resources and want to reach their surrounding communities,” says Ken Seyfert of GBIF. “That’s why we count it a privilege to come alongside this congregation and help them fulfill God’s vision and mission at this time.”

For more information, check out their website at <http://gracesealbeach.org>

# GRACE COLLEGE EXPANDS CAMPUS IN SEVERAL AREAS

Grace College has experienced several years of record enrollment and campus expansion. Because of this, Grace sought out financial partnership with Grace Brethren Investment Foundation for various projects and specific needs.

Despite building several dorms over the last several years, Grace still had a need for more student housing. Therefore, the Encompass World Partners' former 'Missionary Residence' building was added as a dormitory. Situated next to several other dormitories, its location is ideal and makes for 'apartment style' housing for students.

Increased enrollment and expansion has also made campus parking more scarce. Therefore, Grace has installed a parking lot on the perimeter of the campus to allow for well over 100 additional parking spaces. "This will help relieve parking pressure around campus," says Paul Blair, CFO of Grace College & Seminary, "and at the same time, move parking away from the center of campus and preserve as much green space as possible. This is a win-win for Grace."

Additionally, Grace has recently started a Worship Arts program. Funds were used in the Worship Arts department to help construct a recording studio, upgrade facilities, and invest in equipment for a state of the art music lab. "The Grace College Worship Arts program is designed to equip students to follow God's call on their lives in the areas of worship and musical leadership, audio and visual technology, and theater arts," says Wally Brath, Director of Worship Arts. "Our passion is to give students the vision and skills to think theologically, to be equipped in their worship arts specialty, and to have the ability to effectively lead others."



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