

GLORIOUS DEI . . .



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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

WE BELONG TO GOD

How do you deal with your critics?

We've all got them—family, friends, co-workers, bosses, customers, next-door neighbors, internet strangers. Life with other humans inevitably involves conflict, debate and even division.

In our lectionary readings this June and July, we learn of Paul's work in Corinth and those who opposed it. In his second letter to the Corinthian church, Paul offers a fierce defense of his ministry among them. Men whom Paul sarcastically calls "super-apostles" (2 Corinthians 11:5, 12:11) have called into question his ministry, his missed visit, his request for financial support for other Christian communities and even his teachings.

What's an evangelist to do? A preacher challenged on his authority might try many options for converting his "fellow workers" back to his side: sophisticated philosophy, an appeal to relationship and history, even a stern warning. While Paul fiercely defends his ministry, his theme throughout the letter isn't his competence in debate but the radical idea of power revealed in weakness. He focuses not on his skill as a minister but on his and his fellow preachers' suffering as they've worked for the gospel. Paul says their praise comes from "afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger" (6:4-5).

BUILDING UP THE CHURCH ISN'T ABOUT US—HOW MUCH WE GIVE, HOW HARD WE WORK, HOW LONG WE'VE BEEN HERE. IT'S ABOUT THE PROMISE OF NEW CREATION.

When our Christian character is challenged, we might want to point to our qualifications (and Paul certainly does that too). Nevertheless, at his best, Paul remembers who the gospel is about and pulls his authority from Jesus.

Building up the church isn't about us—how much we give, how hard we work, how long we've been here. It's about the promise of new creation. In Jesus, our successes are less important than the joy of knowing our past mistakes are forgiven. In Jesus, our personal skills and spiritual résumé are nothing compared to our reconciliation with God.

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We Belong to God continues....

So, how do you deal with your critics? Well, this summer's readings from 2 Corinthians present one option: stay grounded in who you are as a beloved child of God and who God is as your holy parent.

Paul doesn't accept an invitation to a debate. He tells his story, including the suffering and pain, because, even though not every chapter is finished, he already knows the ending: "an eternal weight of glory, beyond all measure." Paul refuses to let his suffering or his critics suggest that his work has been in vain. He knows to whom he belongs: not to his past, his mistakes or his detractors but to God.



WHERE ALL MAY DWELL

JOIN US FOR SUMMER
WORSHIP AT 10:00 AM

WE ARE A CHURCH THAT VALUES
AND ENCOURAGES DIVERSE VOICES
AND LIVELY DIALOGUE
IN OUR FAITH AND LIFE.



Emmy Kegler

Emmy R. Kegler is the pastor of [Grace Lutheran Church](#) in Northeast Minneapolis and the founder and editor of [Queer Grace](#), an encyclopedia of online resources around LGBTQ life and faith. She is a local and national speaker on biblical interpretation for women and the LGBTQ community.

In late June, leaders of the [Lutheran World Federation](#) (LWF) participated in a visit to Rome. The LWF delegation consisted of representatives from the seven regions of the global communion of churches, including Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA.

In their meeting, both Archbishop [Panti Filibus Musa](#), LWF president, and Pope Francis expressed hope that the 500th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession—the primary confession of faith for Lutheran churches around the globe—in 2030 can become common ground on which to strengthen Lutherans' and Catholics' commitment to unity and reconciliation.



Lutheran, Catholic leaders meet in Rome * ELCA Bishop Eaton (right)

*Ecumenical trip explores
theological, spiritual,
practical cooperation*

COUNCIL UPDATE



GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS

AUGUST 2 —
VIRTUAL CHURCH
COUNCIL
MEETING @ 7PM



“For God so loved ^{the} world,
that he gave his only Son,
^{that whoever believes in him} **should not perish**
but have eternal life.”

John 3:16

— 2021-2022 Council —

Pastor Steve Beckham, Karen Como, Gary Bockman, Beth Rotsel, Lark Adams, Marilyn Bittle, Beverly Pandora, Stephanie Siemer, Twyla Karkut, Phil Como and Robert Siemer. Music Ministry— Richard L. Hoover, Phil Como, Pastor Steve Beckham

Greetings:

During the month of July, we celebrated making a joyful noise in our sanctuary unmuffled and then muffled as we returned to wearing masks. We will continue to follow the recommendations of health officials regarding mask wearing inside. Please pray for an end to this horrible pandemic!

We were all blessed with messages from our supply pastors. Thank you to Pastor Tom Ford and his challenge to us to continue to get out and serve our community. Pastor Joseph Castaneda-Carrera reminded us to open our fists and hearts to new ideas and ways of thinking about others. Pastor Marj Funk-Pihl shared her thoughts on what it feels like to be an outsider, even in our own community. And Pastor Brenda Bos reminded us that there is abundance and always enough to share with others. Each of the visiting pastors acknowledged that Gloria Dei is known in the synod as the little church with a big heart!

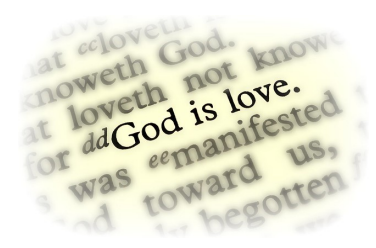
Members of Gloria Dei continue to demonstrate how big their hearts are with consistent donations of items for LSS and Fe Y Esperanza. Several carloads of food, clothing and household items were delivered this month. LSS and Fe Y Esperanza are so thankful for the on-going support of Gloria Dei because the need is so great within these communities. Please consider donating to LSS and Fe Y Esperanza — continue your efforts to sort & simplify—share your unused household items, clothing, food supplies and monetary donations.

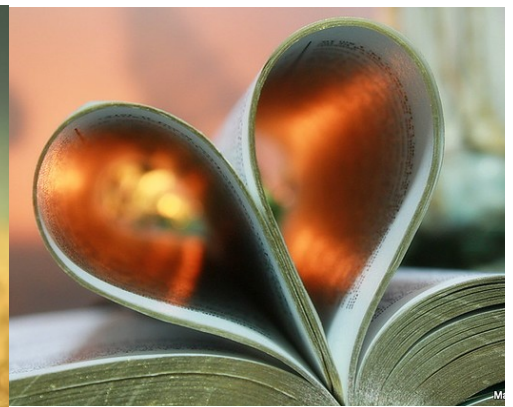
In addition to guest pastors, we were blessed with several visitors and guests from LSS. We also had family members join us for worship. It was so nice to see Susan Nestleroth (Nancy Sansum's daughter) and Laura and Haissam Baayoun (Sally Oberjuege's daughter and son-in-law). We pray that Pastor Steve and Meri have enjoyed a restful vacation and for healing for Pastor's back. We look forward to having Pastor Steve back with us the first week in August and receiving them with much Aloha!

Pray for our church family and all the guests and visitors who join us and that they will know the feeling of Aloha and welcome.

Your friend and family member in Christ,

Karen Como, Council President





**My soul magnifies
the Lord, and my
spirit rejoices in God
my Savior.**

~ Luke 1: 46-47



A LEGACY OF KINDNESS

"God's work. Our hands. Sunday"
September 12, 2021

This day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ — every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life — flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

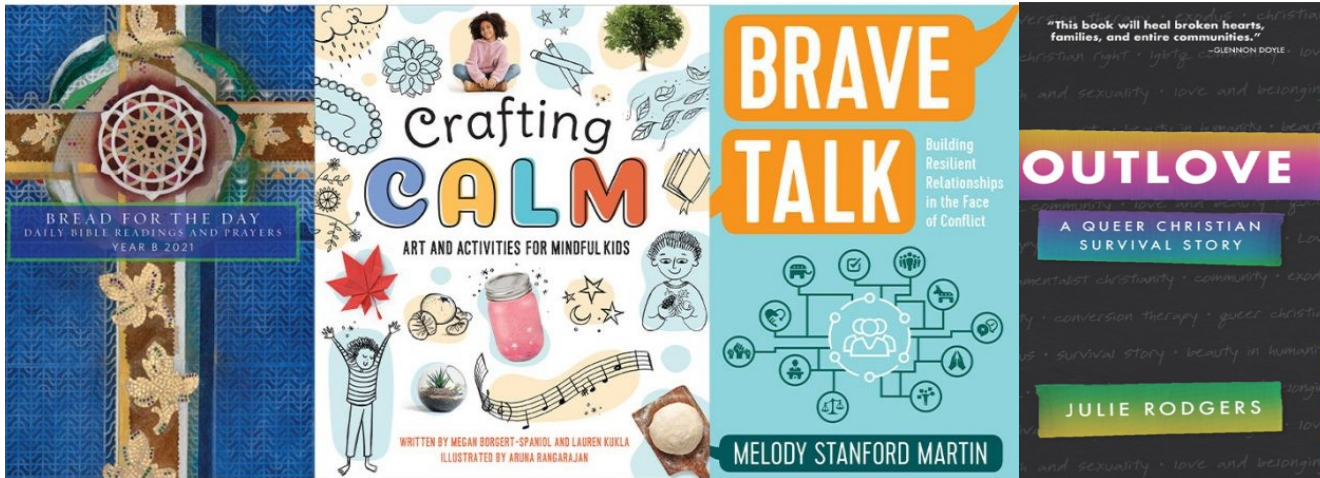
LONG BEACH MIGRANT CHILDREN UPDATE

Three months after the Long Beach Convention Center was turned into a massive shelter for migrant children who arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border unaccompanied, all of them have left the facility. The 1,538 children who were being housed there have either been reunited with family, a sponsor in the U.S. or taken to a more permanent shelter.

"We could not be more proud to know that, as a city, we played a part of a much broader mission," Mayor Robert Garcia said. Garcia thanked our community for its support, state and federal leaders, city partners, and the team who worked directly with these vulnerable children.

THANKS BE TO GOD!

RESOURCES FOR CONSIDERATION



For Gloria Dei member, **Dianne Keil**, losing her hearing dramatically changed the way she interacted with the world. As she described herself: "I'm very active—I enjoy music, art, church, exercise, and dining out. But when her hearing started to go, "it made me something of an introvert, because of embarrassment. I started missing out on the joys of life."

Over a period of seven years, Dianne says, she gradually withdrew from the world. She had her hearing tested several time, but she couldn't afford hearing aids. "I tried everything." But, in the end, it was a friend in Bible study who gave her a referral to the local Lions Club.



Now Dianne is back to the things she loves. She can participate in discussions with her book club. In her exercise classes, she can hear the instructor. If someone calls her name, she respond. She now goes to the duck pond in the park near her home and talks to the people she meets. Praise the Lord! Learn more about this resource and share it with family and friends who might benefit from this community service.

"Dios es nuestro amparo y fortaleza," ("God is our refuge and strength,") – Psalm 46:1



AMMPARO is a holistic, whole church commitment by the ELCA, as a church in the world, to accompany children today and in the future.

Source: ELCA website



LIVING LUTHERAN.ORG July 2021 Stories of God's People Living Their Faith



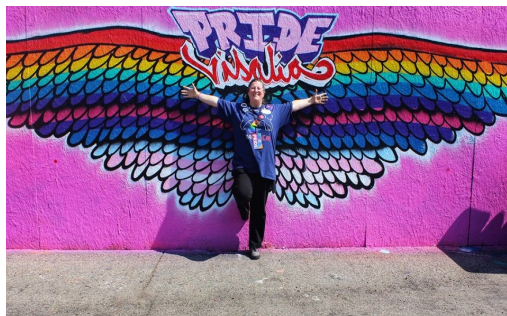
A TRAIL OF ALTARS

They Are Us: Lutherans and Immigration—In the book, we attempted to build a biblical case for embracing immigrants and refugees, tell the history of immigration in the United States and the Lutheran church, highlight policy issues and share the work Lutheran leaders and congregations were doing across the nation. The church that becomes the face of Jesus to the poor, the stranger and those without the gospel is a church that is always being renewed and reformed. Such renewal is powered by Jesus' resurrection from the dead.



AN ONGOING CIRCLE OF LOVE

Lutheran summer camps are scattered across our denomination. The experiences one finds at church camp can drastically change whole trajectories. The magic of church camp, really all of Lutheran outdoor ministries, is that we can, even if just for a moment, be our full and complete selves. Today Pinecrest is still a place where people can be whoever they need to be. Lutheran Outdoor Ministries facilities are places where God kneels down and reminds us that we are never truly alone in our struggles. Pinecrest has been and remains an ever-expanding circle of love for all of God's children—no matter what.



A HOLDING SPACE FOR HEALING

In the heart of California's San Joaquin Valley, Christ Lutheran Church has a story of groundbreaking reconciliation and restoration ministry to share. Called by the transformative love of God, the congregation's Agape Group invites people to share their stories of religious trauma and abuse. These traumas range from religious rejection to physical and sexual abuse at the hands of religious leaders and organizations. Participants agree to a group covenant of confidentiality and welcome. A brief presentation affirms that the congregation, the Sierra Pacific Synod and the ELCA all honor LGBTQIA+ people as unique and beloved children of God and value their participation at all levels of leadership.

SOMEONE CARES — PASS IT ON

MAGIC MAKERS — In 2015, my friend's 3-year old daughter, Lily, was diagnosed with cancer. As an oncology nurse, I knew the challenges that she and her family faced. I couldn't stop thinking about Lily's beautiful blonde hair, which she would lose during treatment. I decided to crochet a wig for her. Yarn is much softer on the scalp than a traditional wig. Using yellow yarn, I made a wig with long hair, just like Rapunzel's from the Disney movie *Tangled*. Lily loved it, and getting the wig really lifted her spirits. I knew I had to create more wigs for other kids battling cancer.

I talked to my friend Bree Hitchcock, and together we founded the **Magic Yarn Project**. We converted my garage into a craft room and enlisted other friends to help. We held workshops to teach people how to make the princess-themed wigs, as well as crocheted beanies inspired by kids' favorite animated characters, from Spiderman to Minnie Mouse.

Today, we have 15 chapters around the U.S. Our volunteers, including some who are incarcerated, have created more than 30,000 wigs for children in 51 countries. There is no cost to the children's families. **Want to help?** Visit themagicyarnproject.com, or find us on Facebook.

Thanks...Holly Christensen, Palmer, Alaska

NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS — AUGUST 2021

the newsletter

AUGUST 23 —
GLORIOUS DEI
NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

SUBMIT STORY IDEAS,
RESOURCES & SUGGESTIONS
to editor via email:
PBOCKMAN@FULLERTON.EDU

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

4 — Jonathan Blizer

5 — Judy Powell
Janet Sims

11 — Kay Berg

14 — Edie Graber

15 — Happy Birthday
Gus, Elijah & Casey White

16 — Sandy Irvine

21 — Danny Bach

26 — Judy Griggs

31 — Peggy Huggard



CELEBRATE GOD'S LOVE

8 — Donna & Mike Malbon

10 — Eric & Christy Berg

21 — David & Nancy
Kahakauwila

27 — Phil & Karen Como



For God...made His light
shine in our hearts.

"KEEPERS OF THE LIGHT"

~2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

10 WAYS TO LOVE THIS YEAR...

LISTEN without interrupting.

SHARE without pretending.

SPEAK without accusing.

ENJOY without complaint.

GIVE without sparing.

TRUST without wavering.

PRAY without ceasing.

FORGIVE without punishing.

ANSWER without arguing.

PROMISE without forgetting.

**Always leave people
better than you
found them.
Hug the hurt.
Kiss the broken.
Befriend the lost.
Love the lonely.**

~ Susan J. Decuir

"WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING
THAT IS NOT RIGHT, NOT FAIR,
NOT JUST, YOU HAVE TO
SPEAK UP. YOU HAVE TO SAY
SOMETHING; YOU HAVE TO
DO SOMETHING."



**NEVER,
EVER BE AFRAID TO MAKE
SOME NOISE AND GET IN
GOOD TROUBLE,
NECESSARY TROUBLE."
—JOHN LEWIS**

AND IT'S NOT JUST OUR
MONEY WE OFFER TO GOD,
BUT THE TOTALITY OF WHAT
WE ARE, AS EXPRESSED
IN THE HYMN
"We Are An Offering."

GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

**5872 Naples Plaza
Long Beach, California 90803**



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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ Congregation. At Gloria Dei Lutheran Church we welcome all who are seeking God's love and grace. We welcome all because God welcomes all, regardless of race or culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, or relationship status. We welcome all without regard to the social, cultural or economic circumstances that too often divide us. Our unity is in Christ in whom we are all made new. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19)

