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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

Philippians 1.21-24 (The Message)

Alive, I'm Christ's messenger; dead, I'm his bounty. Life versus even more life! I can't lose. As long as I'm alive in this body, there is good work for me to do. If I had to choose right now, I hardly know which I'd choose. Hard choice! The desire to break camp here and be with Christ is powerful. Some days I can think of nothing better. But most days, because of what you are going through, I am sure that it's better for me to stick it out here.

There is a longing in us. Blaise Pascal said it comes from the "God-shaped hole" in every human soul. C.S. Lewis and Frederick Buechner have written about it as a longing for home, the hunger within us that draws us toward eternity. I think we've all felt it, some more often and more consistently than others.

In *Longing for Home: Reflections at Midlife* Frederick Buechner writes, "The word longing comes from the same root as the word long in the sense of length in either time or space and also the word belong, so that in its full richness to long suggests to yearn for a long time for something that is a long way off and something that we feel we belong to and that belongs to us. The longing for home is so universal a form of longing that there is even a special word for it, which is of course homesickness."

Sometimes our longing, our yearning for that undefined somewhere else lingers with us for hours or days or years. And sometimes it ambushes us when we're going about our quotidian business. I have had moments when I was feeling perfectly content and "at home" in my own little world, when suddenly the transcendently beautiful strains of *The Lark Ascending* by Ralph Vaughn Williams will awaken in me pangs of yearning for my true home, for that place where there is peace and reunion and wholeness and nothing is swallowed by the relentless appetite of time.

Plato believed that eros, the love rooted in physical attraction, is an expression of this longing for eternity; he called eros the highest form of love because it was the most immediate and passionate expression of the longing we all feel. His reasoning went like this. You are attracted to a person. But then you learn that what you're really attracted to is beauty. So you pursue beauty. In that pursuit, you learn that what you're really attracted to is truth. As you pursue truth you learn that what you're really

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GLORIOUS DEI

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Thoughts Along the Way Continues....

attracted to is the eternal ideal or heaven. So when that fetching someone across the room puts a little spring in your step and sparkle in your smile, what you're really drawn to, according to Plato, is beauty, truth and the eternal ideal or Paradise. Maybe. I've heard worse arguments. And at least Plato gets us to the right place in the end, which is a pretty good trick considering that carnal attraction is his starting point.

This yearning for where we are not and who we are not expresses itself differently in each of our lives. For some it is so unbearable that they try to quiet it with self-medication. Some experience it as a personal imperfection and will starve themselves to death or surgically alter themselves in an attempt to find their ideal self image. Others feel the hunger of the spirit as a hunger of the body and ruin their health feeding an emptiness that can never be filled by mere food. Some, sensing rightly that the yearning is really a hunger of the spirit, move from religion to religion, church to church, denomination to denomination looking for the place, the worship experience, the religious culture, the indefinable something that feels more like home. But even the most moving worship experience, the most profound religious encounter, the most comfortable culture or community give us only glimpses of the real thing. They point to it and reinvigorate our yearning for it, but they are not the thing itself, not the eternal home for which we are destined.

Philippians 3:20-21 (The Message)

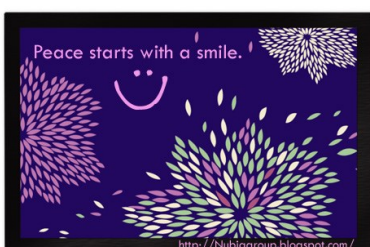
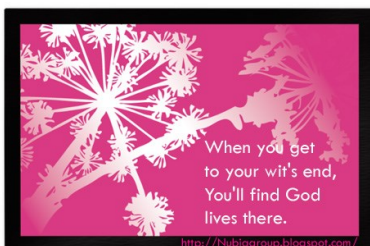
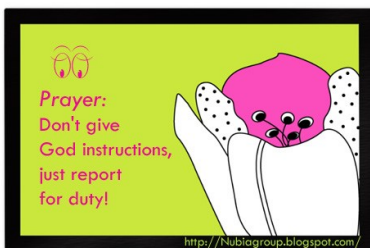
But there's far more to life for us. We're citizens of high heaven! We're waiting the arrival of the Savior, the Master, Jesus Christ, who will transform our earthly bodies into glorious bodies like his own. He'll make us beautiful and whole with the same powerful skill by which he is putting everything as it should be, under and around him.

We are meant to feel not entirely at home in this world, I think. It is built into us to yearn for the presence of Christ which we won't experience most fully until we come to our eternal home. It is built into us to keep looking for the experience, the place, and the people that speak most fully to our hearts. But it's also important that in that yearning and searching we don't overlook the gifts that God has put right in front of us, the people with whom God has surrounded us who reflect Christ to us in our life together. Maybe we see "dimly through a glass," but even in the dimmest light, Christ is in our midst.

"There is treasure buried in the field of every one of our days, even the bleakest or dullest, and it is our business, as we journey, to keep our eyes peeled for it."

— *Frederick Buechner, The Longing for Home: Reflections at Midlife*

Pro Gloria Dei, Pastor Steve





GLORIA DEI COUNCIL UPDATE

Your Council met on Sept. 8 after the traditional month of vacation and welcomed our two new members, Stephanie Siemer and Frank Stanley.

Pastor Steve has asked Council to read a new devotional study. The book is authored by Brian D. McLaren and entitled "Everything Must Change". He also informed us of a Conference Youth Program recommended by Synod, the progress of which we will keep you apprised of, as it develops.

Our summer schedule will come to a close, after our annual Church Picnic, which was held on September 21. The Fall Schedule begins with an enticing Tuesday Eve study of Myers-Briggs Type Indicators, led by our own Dr. Meri Beckham, beginning Sept. 23 at 7:00 p.m. In brief, the Myers-Briggs is a study designed to measure how we perceive the world and make decisions. I know many of you will be

interested to discover what your personality types are and how it influences/cause us to function as we do. Please plan to join us.

Sunday Bible Study will resume on September 28 with an in depth study of the Gospel of John. And believe me, when I say "in depth" that is what Pastor does and it is such a great, learning journey.

Council also met for a "Retreat" on September 10. While we did not really retreat somewhere in the "pines" or another peaceful place, we met in our fellowship room where Pastor presented the theme "Anchored in the Good". We were asked to think about how we present Gloria Dei, or our "self image". What our core values are and how those might need to change? What changes we can foresee and how to be aware of them and make them positive for our church? We talked about our basic

structure, which is **Evangelism** and our outreach into community, missions and stewardship. You will see some of this in the fellowship hall and are welcome to add your thoughts by placing "sticky notes" on the board.

It was a positive and thought provoking gathering and many ideas were presented. I think we all walked away enlightened with plenty to think about. Thank you Pastor. We needed that time together.

I have made this appeal before – for those of you who love to sing – we could use some more voices in the choir. It is good for the soul and would add some volume to our effort. Why not join us for a practice on Wednesdays and see how you like it.

Blessings to you and have a Glorious Dei!

Barbara White, President

MISSION PARTNERSHIP — CSULB UPDATE



The Rev. Sean Lanigan
Holy Ground Community
CSULB Interfaith Center
www.holygroundlb.org

An Update from Beach Progressives/Holy Ground

I'm writing to thank you for Gloria Dei's support of **Beach Progressives**, the new Episcopal-Lutheran young adult faith community based in Long Beach. We're excited to share that on the occasion of our first birthday and due to our deepening sense of vision and mission, we recently re-named our community. We're now calling ourselves **Holy Ground**, as we seek to intentionally create sacred space for encounter with God, neighbor, and our deepest selves.

On August 31, Holy Ground launched an exciting new Sunday evening worship service, which takes place at 5:00 PM at 370 Junipero Avenue in Long Beach. We hope you'll come visit us to experience liturgical worship with a contemporary beat. Holy Ground also continues to gather every Wednesday evening for study, formation, prayer, and fellowship, as we have been doing since our inception. We also hope to add additional midweek gatherings in the near future, as we continue to grow. Indeed: our community members come not only from Long Beach, but also from San Pedro, Downey, Huntington Beach, and Highland Park.

Holy Ground also has an active presence at **Cal State Long Beach**. In our second year on campus, we're trying something new and focusing our efforts on launching the CSULB Interfaith Project. Last year, interfaith events were our most popular offerings, so we've decided to orient all of our energy in that direction. Based on the work of the Chicago-based **Interfaith Youth Core**, our project's goal is to facilitate mutually inspiring relationships among students from different religious backgrounds and to leverage those relationships toward shared action for the common good. Our goals are audacious, but we also believe that genuine interfaith cooperation is essential for the future of humanity. And due to its incredible diversity, Long Beach State is a perfect laboratory for this collaborative work. If you would like to learn more about us or support our work with a secure online donation, please visit www.holygroundlb.org. We're very grateful for your ongoing support as we seek to build the faith of a new generation!

– The Rev. Sean Lanigan, Priest and Pastor



Urban Intern 2014-2015
Dominique Bocanegra

Urban Intern
Dominique Bocanegra
 will bring her energy and passion to the CSULB campus! She is originally from

Brisbane, California, a small town outside of San Francisco. Dominique fulfilled her dream of attending college in Hawaii, where she studied Criminal Justice and Business Administration at Chaminade University of Honolulu. At Chaminade, Dominique developed her leadership skills as an NCAA student-athlete (soccer and softball), as a campus representative for Make-A-Wish Hawaii, and as a participant in the Hogan Entrepreneurial Program. Dominique also has significant experience as a participant in service-immersion trips, retreats, and community service opportunities offered by Chaminade's campus ministry. For 2014-2015 Dominique is living in intentional spiritual community and doing a year of service as a member of the Jubilee Consortium's Episcopal [Urban Intern Program](http://www.jubileeconsortium.org/programs/euip/) (EUIP). Dominique is eager to accompany those in Long Beach who are searching for a more compassionate way of living in our beautiful-yet-complex world.

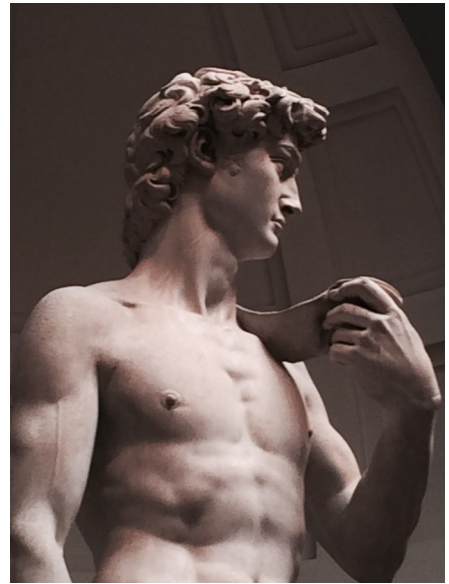
Learn more about the Jubilee program at <http://www.jubileeconsortium.org/programs/euip/>

TRAVELOGUE — TUSCANY & CINQUE TERRE

What a memorable trip — Rome, Venice, Tuscany, the five Cinque Terre villages, Portofino and Florence! Guided by an experienced friend Bob Siemer, our visit to Italy was a delightful combination of the key sights as well as the spontaneity of a good meal, topped off with yet another sampling of gelato! Our travels to Rome and Venice provided the awe factor that was complemented by great weather. We highly recommend *Classic Journeys* as the second portion of our vacation was amazing! What an awesome six days of walking tours in Chianti and Cinque Terre, great culinary experiences, and a wonderful Tuscany villa, a 2-hour hike along the coast to Portofino, and stayed at a fabulous seaside hotel on the Ligurian Sea. Beautiful art from many of the museums and churches in the region...we must have experienced over 100 images of the Madonna and child, amazing architecture, and incredible sculptures—including Michelangelo's David!

To quote Ericka Eidam, 'it's an amazing world — and it's amazing what we can do with the right attitude and appreciation of God's gifts!'

~ Gary & Peggy Bockman



A SHORT COURSE IN HUMAN RELATIONS

The SIX most important words:

" I ADMIT I MADE A MISTAKE"

The FIVE most important words:

"YOU DID A GOOD JOB"

The FOUR most important
words:

"WHAT IS YOUR OPINION"

The THREE most important
words:

"WOULD YOU PLEASE"

The TWO most important
words:

"THANK YOU"

The ONE most important word:

"WE"

The LEAST important word:

" I "

BUILD POSITIVE AFFECT & RESILIENCE

*Train Your Mind, Change Your
Brain: How a New Science Reveals
Our Extraordinary Potential to
Transform Ourselves*

Author: Sharon Begley

*Rewire Your Brain: Think Your Way
to a Better Life*

Author: John B. Arden

*The Brain that Changes Itself:
Stories of Personal Triumph from
the Frontiers of Brain Science*
Author: Norman Doidge, MD

— ANNUAL EVENT — SUNDAY PICNIC AT MARINA PARK



CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR OCTOBER 2014



**Live in
love,
as
Christ
loved
us.**

~ Ephesians 5:2

1 — Wednesday
JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

2 — Thursday

3 — Friday

- A.A. MTG. @ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

4 — Saturday

LSS WALKATHON @ 10:00 AM

5 — SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9 AM
WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM
HOLY COMMUNION

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

6 — Monday

NAPLES GARDEN CLUB @ 1 PM
CHURCH COUNCIL MTG @ 7 PM

7 — Tuesday

8 — Wednesday
JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

9 — Thursday

10 — Friday

- A.A. MTG. @ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

**Happy Anniversary Randy &
Patty Hoffman**

11 — Saturday

12 — SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9 AM
WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM
PRAYER OF HEALING SERVICE

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

13 — Monday

COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY
Happy Birthday Mark Salsgiver

14 — Tuesday

15 — Wednesday
JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

16 — Thursday

ELC WOMEN @ 10:30 AM
BRING A SANDWICH TO SHARE & A FRIEND!

17 — Friday

- A.A. MTG. @ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

18 — Saturday

19 — SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9 AM
WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM
HOLY COMMUNION

FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON/SSS
CHURCH OF CHRIST SCIENTIST

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

Newsletter Deadline

20 — Monday

Happy Birthday Jackie Anderson

21 — Tuesday

22 — Wednesday
JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

23 — Thursday

24 — Friday

- A.A. MTG. @ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

25 — Saturday

26 — SUNDAY

REFORMATION SUNDAY
SUNDAY SCHOOL @ 9 AM
WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM
CROP WALK 1:30 PM

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

27 — Monday

Happy Birthday Gary Bockman

28 — Tuesday

Happy Birthday Phil Como

29 — Wednesday

JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

30 — Thursday

31 — Friday

- A.A. MTG. @ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

**JOIN OUR
CHURCH CHOIR!**

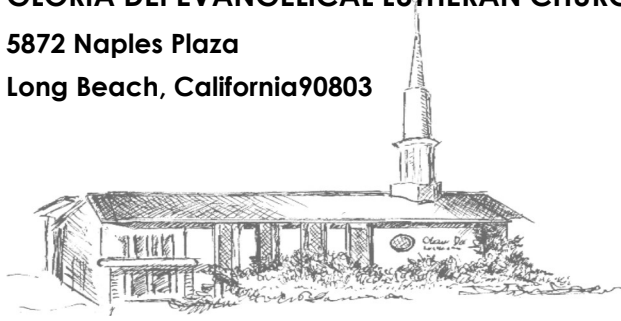
**We need your help to spread
joy and enhance our
Sunday Worship!**



GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

5872 Naples Plaza

Long Beach, California 90803



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Long Beach, California

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the little church with a big heart!

