



Reverend Steven Beckham, Pastor
5872 Naples Plaza Long Beach, California 90803-5044
Website: www.gdlclb.org Telephone: 562.438.0929

GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

NOVEMBER 2015

GLORIOUS DEI

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

I came that you might have life and have it abundantly. —John 10:10

When all is said and done, our faith is about life. Not just life eternal in the sweet by and by, but life here and now that continues into eternity. More precisely, our faith is about life in Christ. "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving." (Colossians 2:6-7) Sometimes, though, we do or say things that actually get in the way of that abundant life that we're called to live. Throughout our history, the Church has always used the word "sin" to describe the things that interfere with fully living out our lives in Christ. Sin, then, is something that diminishes life.

Sin. It's not a very popular word anymore. You rarely hear it anywhere outside of a faith community, and in a way that's too bad because it's handy to have a single word that sums up all the things that get in the way of living a life that is spiritually, emotionally and psychologically rich and full. It's good to have a word that encompasses all the obstacles to becoming a whole and integrated person.

There are essentially two different ways to come at an understanding of what sin actually is, and interestingly, those two different ways find their roots in the two most common ancient languages of the Bible, Greek and Hebrew.

The Greek word for sin is *hamartia*. It's a term that was borrowed from archery and it literally means, "to miss the mark." When *hamartia*, "missing the mark" is your understanding of sin it can give rise to legalistic thinking. Sin quickly becomes "sins," specific actions or attitudes which somehow fall short of specific external standards. These actions or attitudes cause us to fail in attaining some kind of objective, definable perfection. In this way of understanding sin, the Bible becomes a kind of rule book and sin is anything that violates the rules. Take stewardship, for instance. The biblical "rule" as described in 28 verses in the Old Testament is that we are required to give to God a tithe, 10%, of everything we have. So if sin is "missing the mark," and "hitting the mark" means you're giving at least 10% of your treasure, time and talents to God, then anything less, technically, is a sin. There is, however, another way to understand sin.

The Hebrew word for sin is *chatta'ah*. *Chatta'ah* understands sin as a damaging or breaking of relationships. When Martin Luther defined sin, he focused more on this Hebraic understanding. Sin, he said, is the state of being curved in upon the self which leads inevitably to damaging and breaking our relationships. Sin, in this way of understanding it, is not merely specific actions or failures which violate specific rules

...Continued on page 2

GLORIA DEI . . . the little church with a big heart!

Inside this issue:

Mission Support	3
Call to Service	3
Jambo Jambo	4
Budget Update	4
Church Council Update	5
Call to Action	6
Calendar of Events	7

Thoughts Along the Way Continues....

and thereby diminish my personal fulfillment or keep me from attaining perfection, instead, sin arises from all the "me first" attitudes or actions which set up internal boundaries. These boundaries put me on guard against anyone or anything that might want something of me and what's mine, even if it's just my affection. Eventually these boundaries can become walls of hostility between myself and God, myself and others, myself and creation and even, in the end, myself and myself. To go back to our example of stewardship, then, a failure to give generously in this Hebraic understanding is not a sin because you failed to give a specifically mandated amount, it is, rather, a symptom of a damaged relationship with God that keeps you from responding to God's generosity with a generous gratitude of your own.

So, ideally, we give not because we are commanded to give, but because we want to respond with gratitude to what God has give us, and because we treasure our relationships with each other and want to support each other in our work together as the church. Healthy giving is a sign of healthy relationships with God and with each other.

Douglas John Hall writes in *The Steward: A Biblical Symbol Come of Age*, "In a world that offers people the choice not to believe and not to support the community of believers, the church must work to propagate the faith. It cannot be assumed that belief will occur, generation after generation, without effort on the part of the witnessing community. Christian witness may be the responsibility of every Christian and therefore the church ought naturally to evangelize; but practically this does not occur with great success or regularity, and therefore the mission must be organized, must be equipped with the best resources and persons, and must be financed. Stewardship begins to be a special theme at the point where all these necessities come together."

But if "all these necessities come together" merely so that we can perpetuate this organization called the church, it's not enough. God is not committed merely to saving the church. God is committed to saving the world and part of our stewardship as the church is to be a tool that God can use to bring health and more abundant life to the world through our relationships, not only the relationships we have with each other inside the church, but with all those we reach out to.

Life is sacred. Relationships are holy. When all is said and done, that is what our faith is all about, and stewardship is a marker of just how healthy we are in our relationships with God and with each other.

Pro Gloria Dei,

Pastor Steve

***But You are a God ready to forgive,
gracious and merciful. ~ Nehemiah 9:17***



**KIND WORDS ARE LIKE
HONEY SWEET TO THE SOUL
AND HEALTHY FOR
THE BODY.**

~ Proverbs 16:24



GROWING IN FAITH, LIFTED BY HOPE, GUIDED BY LOVE



— GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS —

PLEASE VOLUNTEER TO USE YOUR GIFTS AND TALENTS TO HELP OUR CONGREGATION ! JOIN THE **CHOIR**, THE **USHER TEAM** OR **BECOME A SHEPHERD** (CONTACT ERIKA EIDAM 562.858.2161) OR BE PART OF THE GROUP OF CREATIVE MINDS THAT CHAMPIONS PROJECTS THAT SERVES OUR MEMBERS & OUR COMMUNITY.



CALL TO SERVICE

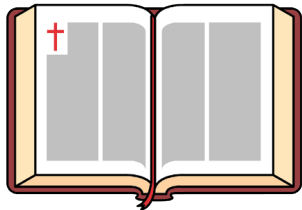
“Staying strong, and growing, in our giving to Mission Support is one way to defy the individualism and materialism that is rampant in our culture. When we share resources so our witness to the gospel is widespread and strong, then we declare a different story from the one the culture tells — it is the story of love beyond self-interest that transforms us and embodies God’s kingdom of love and justice in the world. It is a much-needed story of forgiveness and joy, and the ELCA is a powerful narrator of that story.”

~ Rev. Margaret G. Payne, Director, ELCA Mission Support

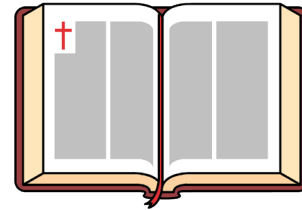
“We give thanks to God always for all of you...for your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”

~ 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3

BUDGET UPDATE



GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
 For the Period January 1, 2015 to September 30, 2015



	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Revenue			
Contributions	150,000	148,309	(1,691)
Hall Use	2,100	1,300	(800)
Interest Income	225	252	27
Rental Income	22,069	18,863	(3,206)
Total Revenue	174,394	168,724	(5,670)
Expenses			
Missions*	23,625	23,625	(0)
Properties	19,530	18,472	1,058
Worship	86,987	88,537	(1,550)
Administration	40,583	45,728	(5,145)
Church Programs	3,669	2,879	790
Total Expenses	174,394	179,240	(4,847)
Revenue less Expenses		(10,516)	

Respectfully submitted by Gary Bockman, Treasurer

* In addition to the budgeted gifts shown above, members of Gloria Dei have given another \$17,294 to LSS, World Hunger, ELCA Disaster Relief and other mission partners.

“What we are is God's gift to us. What we become is our gift to God.” ~ Monique Magna



GLORIA DEI SPECIAL EVENT
CONCERT & POTLUCK DINNER
NOVEMBER 8

New Life Band from Tanzania, East Africa, is an interdenominational ministry that serves as an instrument to transform the lives of youth and students within Tanzania through the gospel of Jesus Christ by giving them hope and opportunity by knowing that they are loved.

BLESSINGS ABOUND



Your Council met last on October 5th.

Parsonage Committee members were also present and their analysis report and recommendation was the first order of business to review with them. Council members had an opportunity to study the Committee's analysis in advance of the meeting and they were there to answer any questions presented. A motion was made for Council to endorse the committee's recommendation to retain the parsonage property, pending the Congregation's final vote at our annual January meeting. The motion passed by a majority of Council members. All members of the Congregation will receive a copy of this same report for their information and review early in November.

Council also received copies of bids obtained by Christie Berg, our Parsonage Property Manager, to replace the roof and the carpet. The bids were very reasonable and giving thought to predictions of the "Godzilla El Nino" and since funds were already available in the reserve account, a motion was made and passed to complete these needed improvements.

Our sincere thanks and appreciation to the members of the Parsonage Committee for their comprehensive report and their time and effort extended on behalf of Gloria Dei. Those members were: **Everett Parker, Christie Berg, Dondi Buchrucker, Karen Como, Mike Engle and Victoria Gammer.**

Danny Bach gave us an update on movement forward on the Kitchen Improvement Project and we will keep you posted as progress develops.

Frank Stanley reported that our Long Beach LSS will be renting their Church to a non-denominational community church name The New Harvest Christian Fellowship. This was made possible for them after receiving the needed funds for repairs to the ceiling and new flooring in the Sanctuary and will provide needed income. He also reported that **food and clothing supply was low and needed replenishing.**

After September's Council meeting, I failed to mention Mike Lynch's proposal to keep us current and informed concerning our Mission partners. It will be called "Moments for Missions" and a brief portion of our worship service each month.

We look forward to welcoming the "NEW LIFE BAND" at Gloria Dei on November 8th. There will be a potluck supper at 3:30 preceding their joyful and very special gift of music and entertainment at 5:00 p.m. Invite your family, friends and neighbors. They will enjoy it very much.

So - JAMBO and Blessings -
and have a Glorious Dei.

Barbara White, President

CONGREGATION UPDATE

"For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life." ~ Ephesians 2:10

September 2015 — ELCA presiding bishop calls for end to incursions onto Palestinian land, demolition of Palestinian property

The **Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**, has urged chairs and ranking members of the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations and House Foreign Affairs Committees to call upon the Israeli government to halt the ongoing incursions onto Palestinian land and demolition of Palestinian property.

In a Sept. 10 letter to U.S. officials, Eaton wrote to express her distress about actions of the Israeli government that make prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians “more difficult in the short- and medium-term and threaten further the realization of a just two-state solution which so many of us seek.” As ELCA presiding bishop, Eaton said that she follows closely the situation in Israel and Palestine, “because the events there directly affect the situation and ministries of our companion church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, and the lives, livelihoods and security of Israelis and Palestinians.”

“We join our sisters and brothers of the Roman Catholic tradition in expressing in the strongest possible terms our outrage over the resumption of construction of the separation wall in the Cremisan Valley in the West Bank,” wrote Eaton, who visited the Cremisan Valley this year. “I could see the existing and then-potential threats that the planned path of the wall would have on the Palestinian communities there,” she wrote. The Most Rev. Oscar Cantu, chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on International Justice and Peace, sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, urging the Israeli authorities to stop work on the separation wall in the Cremisan Valley. Lutherans and Catholics in the United States have been in dialogue for the past 50 years.

In her letter, Eaton noted that **The Lutheran World Federation (LWF)**, a member of the Association of International Development Agencies – a coordination forum of international non-governmental and non-profit organizations working in the occupied Palestinian territory – brought to her attention that a “surge in home demolitions by the Israeli Army in August. They determined that the recent demolitions ‘rendered 132 people homeless, including 82 children, accounting for a quarter of the displacement from demolitions in 2015 and marking the highest number of people rendered homeless from demolitions in nearly three years.’ They also note, ‘These demolitions are being carried out against the backdrop of the government of Israel’s plan to ‘relocate’ 7,000 Palestinians living in 46 communities throughout Area C. The international community has repeatedly called on the government of Israel to cancel the ‘relocation’ plan. The plan affects Bedouin and herding communities in the central parts of the West Bank, including the E1 area around Jerusalem, where the government of Israel plans to expand settlements, which are illegal under international law.’”

The LWF was one of more than 30 international organizations that called on world leaders to take action against the ongoing demolitions. The LWF is a global communion of 144 churches representing more than 70 million Christians in 79 countries.

The ELCA is the communion’s only member church from the United States.

The series of events are “very disturbing and destructive,” said Eaton, “both for those directly affected as well as the broader cause of promoting better understanding between Israelis and Palestinians and bringing to an end their too-long-standing conflict.”

Through the **ELCA Peace Not Walls campaign**, this church’s members are encourage to write their “members of Congress and senators to urge them to call upon the Israeli government to halt these harmful actions immediately and avoid further hostile activities that dim the prospects for peace between Israelis and Palestinians.” Information is available at

<https://secure2.convio.net/elca/site/Advocacy;jsessionid=209FABF285757E6DDAAED67017A08BDB.app296a?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=463>
<<https://secure2.convio.net/elca/site/Advocacy;jsessionid=209FABF285757E6DDAAED67017A08BDB.app296a?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=463>> .

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR NOVEMBER 2015

1 — All Saints SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

OLIVIA ADAMS CONFIRMATION

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

TURN BACK THE CLOCK!

2 — Monday

CHURCH COUNCIL MTG
@ 7 PM

3 — Tuesday

ADULT BIBLE STUDY 10AM/7PM

4 — Wednesday

JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

Happy Birthday Pastor Schaar

5 — Thursday

Happy Birthday Laura Subke

6 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday Carl Irwin

7 — Saturday

8 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP & HOLY

COMMUNION

@ 10:30 AM

PRAYER OF HEALING
SERVICE



NEW LIFE BAND

DINNER—3:30PM CONCERT: 5PM

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

9 — Monday

10 — Tuesday

ADULT BIBLE STUDY 10AM/7PM

11 — Wednesday

VETERAN'S DAY

JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

12 — Thursday

ELC WOMEN @ 10:30 AM

BRING A SANDWICH TO SHARE & A FRIEND

13 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday Jean Bet
Happy Birthday Eric Berg

14 — Saturday

15 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

** NOISY OFFERING

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

Newsletter Deadline

16 — Monday

Happy Birthday Marilyn Bittle

17 — Tuesday

ADULT BIBLE STUDY 10AM/7PM

18 — Wednesday

JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

Happy Birthday Margaret Chomin

19 — Thursday

20 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday: Nancy K.
Frida Layton & Lisa Mellow

21 — Saturday

Happy Birthday Marion Beckman

22 — Christ the King SUNDAY

WORSHIP & COMMUNION @ 10:30

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

Happy Birthday RuthAnn Montague

23 — Monday

24 — Tuesday

ADULT BIBLE STUDY 10AM/7PM

Happy Anniversary Conters

25 — Wednesday

JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM

26 — Thursday

THANKSGIVING DAY

Happy Birthday Judy Mellow



27 — Friday

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

28 — Saturday

Happy Birthday Denise Stump

29 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

** NOISY OFFERING

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

Happy Birthday Summer Stiles

30 — Monday

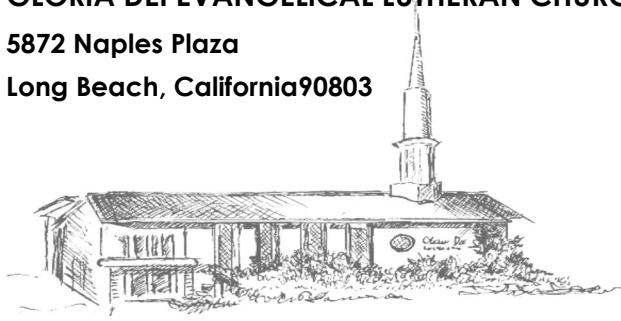
PRAYER IMMEDIATELY TURNS
US INTO SOMETHING GREATER
THAN OURSELVES.

~ Cardinal Timothy Dolan

GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

5872 Naples Plaza

Long Beach, California 90803



Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization

U.S. Postage paid

Long Beach, California

Permit No. 2190



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
the little church with a big heart!

