



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

If you want to do violence in the world, you will always find the weapons. If you want to heal, you will always find the balm. With Scripture, we've been entrusted with some of the most powerful stories ever told. How we harness that power, whether for good or evil, oppression or liberation, changes everything.
– Rachel Held Evans

“All scripture,” we read in 2 Timothy 3:16, “is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient.” That’s how it appears in the NRSV. The problem is, that’s not exactly what it says in the original Greek. There are, in fact, some missing words in the Greek and, of course the syntax is different. The original, literally translated, would read, “Every writing God-breathed and useful for teaching for reproof for correction for training in righteousness...” That’s rather confusing, even in the Greek, and you can see that how this gets translated depends in part on making your best guess at some missing words, deciding where to put them, and making a few punctuation decisions. There are also some important word translation choices. Writings, for instance, became scripture in most translations, a much more weighted word with implications that shift the meaning of the whole passage. The great Greek scholar Richmond Lattimore, translated this passage this way: “Every writing that is divinely inspired is also useful for...” Right at the beginning of the sentence is an enormous difference in meaning between the two translations.

This is a pivotal passage because Christians of almost every stripe will refer to the Bible as The Word of God and will appeal to its authority. We call it the Word of God but we often mean very different things when we say that. We all have different hermeneutics—the lenses through which we read and interpret the Bible. We read a text through the filter of our own life experience and a host of presumptions about the Bible on the whole and the text itself. The same thing happens when we use a biblical text “for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness” or, far too often, to bolster our position in some dispute. We often fall into the habit of eisegesis, interpreting and using a text according to our own agenda, bias, or presuppositions instead of using it in a way faithful to its context and faithful to our faith. When that happens, we are abusing one of the great gifts God has given us—and that the Church historically gave itself.

...Continues on Page 3

FRIENDS & FELLOWSHIP

Plan to Join Us for Our Annual Summer Gathering in Naples

SATURDAY, JULY 21 — Fun & Fellowship Begins @ 5:30 PM

Appetizers at the Mintie Home & Desserts at Bittle Homestead !

Be sure to sign up to bring a appetizer or a dessert.



PROGRESSIVE DINNER

GROWING IN FAITH TOGETHER, LIFTED BY HOPE TOGETHER, GUIDED BY LOVE TOGETHER

As a church energized by lively engagement in our faith and life, the ELCA offers opportunities for youth to grow and explore their faith. One of the most powerful experiences, the ELCA Youth Gathering, immerses 30,000 youth and adult leaders in learning, worship, Bible study, service and fellowship, inspiring and quipping young people to live their faith and baptismal calling throughout life. Interested in learning more? Want to impact the future? Donate to the amazing gathering that occurs every 3 years—this year thousands of young people participated June 26-July 1 and will go out into our communities and make a difference! Visit ELCA.org/Gathering

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY CONTINUES...

Recently, for example, Romans 13:1-7 was cited by our US Attorney General as a way to counter some of the significant opposition he and the administration are facing in their current policy that separates immigrant children from their families. "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God." That seems pretty clear and straight forward. Except, like so many things in the Bible, it's simply not as cut and dried as it looks on first glance.

Remember, this was written by St. Paul, a man who had spent significant time in jail for disturbing the peace and for civil disobedience, so clearly he believed that conscience trumped the legal system. He was also a man who frequently relied on the "get out of jail free" card of his Roman citizenship. He could afford to encourage obedience to the law because, as a Roman citizen, he could appeal to have his case heard and re-heard all the way up to the Emperor if necessary. Not everyone who read his letter had that option—nor do they today. Remember, too, that he's writing to people who had been involved in tumultuous riots not too many years before (c.49), riots so disruptive that Emperor Claudius expelled all Christians and Jews from Rome for a time. So he's basically telling them to keep calm and stay under the radar because "the governing authorities" are still looking for an excuse to nail us. Don't give it to them.

But ignoring all that, even if you take Romans 13:1-7 strictly at face value, when it's pulled out of its context and used as a blanket instruction to always obey all authority then you're missing the point of the chapter and, indeed, of the entire letter to the Romans. "Owe no one anything except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law...Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Clearly Paul has a higher ethic in mind than simple blind obedience to human law. Love can do no wrong to a neighbor. If you find yourself stuck between Law and Love, go with love. It might break human law, but it's the heart of the law and ethic of Christ.

This is not the only problematic verse in the Bible that can have powerful and dangerous consequences when misused, but it is one that has been abused most frequently. In our own history it has been used in numerous unsavory ways, most notably in the subjugation of native peoples and in perpetuating slavery. The Anchor/Yale Bible Dictionary has this to say about this passage:

"The Apostle Paul's admonition to "be subject to the governing authorities" on the grounds that "those authorities that exist have been instituted by God" has caused much needless suffering and much misery even in the 20th century. This passage seems to lend support to any existing government, regardless of how tyrannical or how corrupt, and any governmental policy, however repressive or unjust. This passage has been invoked by Christians to put down revolt, support war, and justify genocide. In fact, many Christians in Hitler's Germany appealed to this text as the decisive biblical warrant for obedience to the Nazi regime. And it has been regret over the Church's alignment with the Nazi regime that has forced a reconsideration of these verses, particularly by German biblical scholars.

"Again, a careful reading of the text along with an awareness of the historical context is essential for understanding this problem passage. It must be noted that Paul does not say "obey" or "disobey" governing authorities. He instead speaks of "being subject", which can include disobedience."

We all may mean something different when we say that the Bible is the Word of God, but what we mean when we say it will determine how we use these sacred texts—for good or for evil. We should remember that the Bible, itself, says that Jesus is the Word of God who became flesh and dwelt among us. (John 1) Jesus should be our hermeneutic, our lens for reading, interpreting and understanding the words of scripture.

Pro Gloria Dei, Pastor Steve

CONGREGATION UPDATE



Blessings to you and may every day be a glorious day!
Stephanie Siemer,
Council President, Ssiemercharter.net

Council met on June 4th in the fellowship hall.

- The Glorious Dei Newsletter will be taking a summer break and will not be published in August and October.
- Church Council will also be on vacation in July, returning to work in August.
- Our partner in China will be visiting the Long Beach area August 1st.
- Please review the clipboards next to the flower chart and volunteer to be an usher, bring cookies, or clean up after coffee hour. The flower chart also has some vacancies so take another look and sponsor flowers!
- Mark your calendar and invite a friend or neighbor to attend our annual Church Picnic. Plan to join us for summer fun on Sunday, September 16th.
- Reminder.....July 21st is the Progressive Dinner. Appetizers will be at Lauren & Jim Mintie's home and dessert will be hosted by Marilyn Bittle. Both homes are walking distance from the church in our Naples neighborhood. Please sign up on the clipboard in the fellowship hall to bring an appetizer or a dessert — thank YOU. The summer fun begins at 5:30 PM — RSVP will help us plan a lovely event.
- Pastor Steve, Sandy Irvine, Stephanie Siemer, Bev Pandora and Laura Subke all participated in the rally June 14th in downtown Long Beach to protest the separation of children from their parents or guardians at the U.S. border.



Jeffrey Allan Nelson and Sandra May Irvine

invite you to witness their exchange of wedding vows during the worship service

SUNDAY, JULY 22 at 10:00 am

Please join us for a lunch reception that follows the ceremony as we celebrate the marriage of our dear SANDY and her beloved pastor husband whom we gladly embrace as our own.

GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

SAVE THE DATE

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.

GLORIA DEI WILL HOST THE BAND AGAIN IN NOVEMBER



SAVE THE DATE

Our China missionary will visit Long Beach on **AUGUST 1** to share how our Gloria Dei funds are making a difference in the lives of so many Christian women, men and children. Every year our mission partner teaches leadership courses to local Chinese pastors. We ask you to continue to provide faithful support in both prayers and finances. Pray for China, the Church in China and our missionary!

Grace is a foundational and distinctive piece of the Lutheran faith. This gift, undeserved and freely given, changes lives and perspectives as people realize they are enough because of what Christ has done and are called into the world to serve their neighbor and share the good news.

~ Seeds for the Parish, Summer 2018 publication



Join the Gloria Dei team for our monthly

LSS Work Party

10am-noon on Saturday, July 21

Carpool from church leaves at 9:30am

<http://www.lsssc.org/volunteer/>

SAVE THE DATE

ANNUAL PICNIC

Sunday @ NOON — September 16



ELCA presiding bishop, faith leaders issue statement on family separation

We affirm the family as a foundational societal structure to support human community and understand the household as an estate blessed by God.

Read more at <http://elca.org/News-and-Events/7935>

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN

Join NCJW Long Beach for Resistance , Organizing, Action, & Resilience (ROAR) Training

Sunday, July 8
9:30-5:00 pm

Alpert Jewish Community Center, 3801 E. Willow St., LB

MULTI-FAITH COMMUNITY TRAINING SESSION

July 19 — 10am—noon
Join us in a training with Freedom for Immigrants to learn to support people in immigration detention.

Temple Israel
268 Loma Avenue, LB
Info: [Info @cluejustice.org](mailto:Info@cluejustice.org)



CALENDAR OF EVENTS — JULY 2018

**Live in love,
as Christ loved us.**
~ Ephesians 5:2

1 — SUNDAY

**SUMMER WORSHIP
@ 10:00 AM ******

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM
Mike & Georgie Lynch Anniversary

2 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM
- Happy Birthday Twyla Karkut**

3 — Tuesday

4 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

5 — Thursday

6 — Friday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM
- A.A. MTG.@ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

Happy Birthday Martie Engle

7 — Saturday

**Happy Birthday Rebecca Brook
Happy Birthday Dave Manley**

8 — SUNDAY

**SUMMER WORSHIP
@ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
HUNGER ENVELOPE**

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

9 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

10 — Tuesday

11 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

12 — Thursday

13 — Friday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM
- A.A. MTG.@ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

14 — Saturday

15 — SUNDAY

**SUMMER WORSHIP
@ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
NOISY OFFERING**

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

16 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

17 — Tuesday

18 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

19 — Thursday

20 — Friday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM
- A.A. MTG.@ 1:00 PM
- D.A. MTG @ 6:00 PM

21 — Saturday

**LSS WORK PARTY @ PINE
10AM—NOON**

Happy Birthday Nancy Brown

22 — SUNDAY

**SUMMER WORSHIP
@ 10:00 AM ****
SANDY IRVINE WEDDING
RECEPTION FOLLOWS**

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

**Happy Birthday Lark Adams
Happy Birthday Gary Schneider**

23 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

24 — Tuesday

25 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

26 — Thursday

27 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday Stuart Subke

28 — Saturday

Happy Birthday Sue Schaar

29 — SUNDAY

**SUMMER WORSHIP
@ 10:00 AM ****
HOLY COMMUNION
COOKIE SUNDAY**

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

Happy Birthday Mike Caldwell

30 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. @ 7-8:00 AM

31 — Tuesday



GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage paid
Long Beach, California
Permit No. 2190



Return Service Requested



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 Cor. 5:17-19)

