

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



Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

The Church calendar and the secular calendar often seem to be at odds with each other. The secular calendar flat-out ignores some rather important Church holidays. You don't see many Epiphany greeting cards in the stores. Nobody's playing All Saints carols for weeks before the big day and I've never seen a Reign of Christ Wreath. Even when the secular calendar does tip its metaphorical hat to Church festivals it does so in a decidedly worldly way. St. Patrick's Day could be a terrific day to explore Celtic Spirituality but it seems to have been detoured by more pungent spirits. All Hallows Eve promised to be meditative but the Church gave up on it almost from the very beginning and consigned that singular dark night back to the immensely popular pagan Fall festival that already occupied the date. And Halloween has never missed a trick or treat since. Christmas and Easter are the most prominent stars of the Church calendar, of course, but between Santa Claus, the Grinch, Rudolph and the Easter Bunny the not-Church culture sometimes seems to have forgotten the origins of these beloved holidays. The Miracle on 34th Street seems sometimes to have displaced the Miracle in Bethlehem. So it goes.

There is one secular festival, however, where things were turned the other way around, a secular festival that has been given the imprint of faith. Thanksgiving. The traditional story of the holiday that we all learned as kids told of grateful, faithful Christian Pilgrims taking a day to share a feast with their Native American friends whose good will and knowledge of this strange new land helped them survive a harsh first year. The story anchors the day in faith, cooperation and good will. Unfortunately, that pious story was, like so many things we learned when we were younger...embellished. A lot. The Pilgrims did hold a 3-day gathering to celebrate a successful harvest in the Fall of 1621, and they did invite a few friendly members of the Wampanoag tribe to join them. In the 1830s the idea for a Fall feast of Thanksgiving became popular throughout New England and they reframed the Pilgrim gathering of 1621 as a precedent. They also borrowed the "Thanksgiving" name from the Celebration of Thanksgiving that was held in 1637 to celebrate the massacre of the Pequot people. Sigh. And as long as we're deconstructing we should also note that the Pilgrims did not come to the New World for religious freedom. They had that in Holland. They came here to establish a theocracy in which there was a lot of religion but not much freedom. They were staunch Calvinist Puritans, after all. Heavy on the staunch.

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WE ARE CHURCH TOGETHER



**What has come
into being in
him was life, and
the life was the
light of all
people.
The light shines
on in the
darkness, and the
darkness
has not
understood it.**

– John 1:4-5

Thoughts Along the Way Continue...

But don't let all this debunking unstuff your turkey. Thanksgiving is a good idea. A GREAT idea. Abraham Lincoln certainly thought so. That's why he declared it a national holiday in 1863. It's a good thing to take a day to remind ourselves about the power of gratitude. It's a good thing to take a day to remember all the ways that God has been good to us. It's a good thing to take a day to simply be thankful that we've survived another year, even if it's been a tough year. God is good and the stories of our own lives remind of God's goodness when we take time to reflect on them.

"Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend," writes Melody Beattie. So by all means let us be thankful. "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name," says the Psalmist (100:4). It's a wonderful way to end the Church year and begin a new one. Because gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.

Pro Gloria Dei, Pastor Steve

LONG BEACH SACRED RESISTANCE

I'm Jan Ford, one of the people who has worked to organize Long Beach Sacred Resistance, an interfaith support network for our immigrant neighbors. We work closely with Long Beach Immigrant Rights Coalition (www.lbirc.org). LBIRC has asked us to publicize the cruel changes proposed to the "public charge" rules. We have only until **December 10th** to make our voices heard.

HELP US Push Back Against the "Public Charge" Attack on Immigrant Families! The current president and administration has issued a list of public programs that will make immigrants ineligible for green cards. This will make those who need assistance afraid to apply, harming families, children, and their communities.

The public can comment on this regulation until early December. Please speak up for immigrant families! We can submit comments on regulations.gov or using the form available on www.protectingimmigrantfamilies.org, where you will find a full discussion and talking points. You're also welcome to contact me.

Questions?

Jan Ford 617 970-6826 text/cell lbsacredresistance@gmail.com

COUNCIL UPDATE

"People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light from within." – Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Your Council met on November 12. The property committee headed by **Galen Anderson and Barbara White** are in the process of making some updates to the upstairs bathrooms. A toilet in the men's bathroom has been replaced as it was leaking. The women's rest room will be configured like the bathroom downstairs. It currently has 3 stalls sized for Sunday school children. The **CROP Walk** had a total of 66 walkers who raised about \$10,000.00. The **LSS Walk** had 20 volunteer walkers and raised \$1,982.00. Thank you to those who organized the event, those who walked and those who made donations.

Gloria Dei is collecting money to pay for gifts and gift cards we will donate to the LSS Children's Party on December 15. See Sandy Nelson if you would like to make a contribution or use a pew envelope and please indicate **LSS Children's Party** on it!

The first Sunday of Advent is December 2nd and we will celebrate with **Stir-Up Sunday**. Again this year, we'll worship together on **Christmas Eve** with a special candlelight service.

Have a Blessed Christmas.
Stephanie Siemer, President
ssiemer@charter.net



**JOIN US FOR A
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE
MONDAY—DECEMBER 24
5:00 PM**



FELLOWSHIP & SERVICE @ GLORIA DEI

We need **Usher teams** to serve once a month! See Danny Bach for details. Mother-son team? Best Buddies? Father-daughter?

Sign up to be a **Greeter** after our worship service...help us welcome members and guests...WOW, what a easy way to contribute to our friendly congregation!



Won't you consider volunteering a few Sundays a year? — a small gesture to enhance our ability to connect and meet others. Contact us to learn more about this opportunity to be part of our **HOSPITALITY Team!**



If there's a superhero of the barnyard, it just might be the goat. Why? **Because goats can go where other animals can't**, surviving in some of the world's harshest environments – rocky terrain, drought-prone areas, small plots of land, you name it. Fresh milk from a goat provides daily nutrition for children and their families. And what's more, offspring can rapidly transform a community when shared with other families in need. <https://community.elca.org/good-gifts>

ELCA
GOOD
GIFTS

Give something
unexpected
this Christmas.

Goat \$50



GIVE THANKS IN ALL THINGS

TURKEYS FOR GUADALUPE

The Gloria Dei ELCA joined forces with Fe Y Esperanza to help make Thanksgiving Meals for the migrant workers in Guadeloupe, which is above Santa Maria, in northern California. The ladies took \$150.00 from their treasury and thanks to Ralph's Market were able to purchase ten turkeys. Pastor Marta and a group from her church delivered them, along with other items they had collected. Rejoice and praise God's abundance and mercy.



Pastor Marta Moscoso & crew, from Fe y Esperanza, delivered turkeys to farm workers at the Field of Guadalupe in Santa Rosa on November 19. Another wonderful opportunity to serve God's people. Special thanks to Gloria Dei's ELCW women's group who worked with our local Christian friends in South Gate.

REJOICE! Our congregation members continue to generously support our mission partners.



THE LORD GIVES STRENGTH TO HIS PEOPLE; THE LORD BLESSES HIS PEOPLE WITH PEACE. ~ PSALM 29:11

Make a JOYFUL noise UNTO the LORD!



For Unto Us a Child is Born...Hallelujah!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS — DECEMBER 2018

1 — Saturday

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

2 — SUNDAY

ADVENT—STIR UP SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

3 — Monday

- MEN'S A.A. MTG.@ 7-8:00 AM
- CHURCH COUNCIL MTG @ 7 PM**
MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME

4 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM
WISDOM LITERATURE

5 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. MTG.@ 7-8:00 AM
- JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM**

6 — Thursday

7 — Friday

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

8 — Saturday

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

9 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

Hunger Envelope & Prayer of Healing

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

10 — Monday

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

11 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM
WISDOM LITERATURE

12 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. MTG.@ 7-8:00 AM
- JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM**

13 — Thursday

14 — Friday

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

15 — Saturday

LSS CHRISTMAS PARTY

16 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30 AM

HOLY COMMUNION

Noisy Offering

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

17 — Monday

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

18 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM
WISDOM LITERATURE

19 — Wednesday

- MEN'S A.A. MTG.@ 7-8:00 AM
- JOIN THE CHOIR... @ 7:15 PM**

20 — Thursday

21 — Friday

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

22 — Saturday

*** Newsletter Deadline**

23 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30, HOLY COMMUNION

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

**'HOPE IS BEING ABLE TO SEE
THAT THERE IS LIGHT DESPITE
ALL THE DARKNESS.'**

**YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE
WORLD...**

**That's our epiphany! That's
our job! That's our joy!**

24 — Monday

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

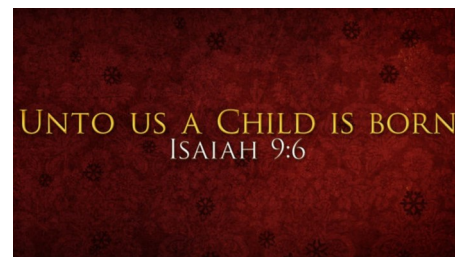
CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

@ 5:00 PM



25 — REJOICE!

CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR IS BORN !



26 — Wednesday

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

27 — Thursday

28 — Friday

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

29 — Saturday

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

30 — SUNDAY

ADULT EDUCATION @ 9 AM

WORSHIP @ 10:30, HOLY COMMUNION

Cookie Sunday

O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

31 — Monday

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



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 Cor. 5:17-19)

