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## Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

### THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

In Acts 17:6, Paul and Silas are brought before the city authorities of Thessalonica with this accusation: "These are the men who are turning the world upside down... They are all acting contrary to the decrees of the emperor, saying that there is another king named Jesus."

Turning the world upside down. Getting into "good trouble." Acting contrary to custom and law. Claiming that they answer to a higher authority named Jesus.

For a very long time this was a portrait of the Church: faithful people turning the world upside down, banding together in beloved community to worship and to take care of each other as a sign that God's love was at work in them in the name of Jesus. When the empire was cruel, they protested with prayer and patience and, often, by being its victims so that the empire's cruelty would be on display. When the empire showed no compassion, they provided the missing safety nets, feeding the hungry, sheltering the homeless, binding up wounds, caring for the sick even in times of plague.

In a world that lionized strength, they were led by the Spirit who had said through the Apostle Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." (1 Corinthians 12:9) In a era driven by wealth, they bowed to the one who had said, "Blessed are you who are poor for yours is the kingdom of God." (Luke 6:20) In a world where their faith and fellowship was declared illegal and their ideas branded as subversive, they quietly grew in numbers and strength.

And then something happened. After three centuries of being illegal, being three centuries of subverting the dominant paradigm, three hundred years of quiet protest as the alternative realm within the empire's domain, three hundred years of living and practicing their faith sometimes quite literally underground, they did, indeed, turn the world upside down.

The emperor became one of them. Constantine Augustus became a Christian.

And suddenly priorities changed. Suddenly it became vitally important to clarify what they believed to make sure that all these churches in all these cities in this vast empire were seeing things the same way, were talking about God the same way, were teaching the same things. Because now it was the empire's church.

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**Our name means  
The Glory of God, so we  
try to live accordingly.  
Our life together as a  
family of faith is built on  
worship, service,  
education and friendship.**



**SMILE MORE  
LOVE MORE  
SEEK TO  
UNDERSTAND  
SEEK PEACE  
& HARMONY**

*Thoughts Along the Way Continues....*

The emperor called for a great council to meet. Bishops came from all corners of the empire. After intense debate the first Doctrine was established. A Creed was written.

In a blink of history's eye, the focus of the Church shifted. Now the emphasis was more on what people believed and less on what they were doing. Now the weight was more on what the faithful thought about Jesus and not as much on how they followed him.

Almost overnight the world had turned the Church upside down. And while the empire adopted some of the values of the Church, much more did the Church fall in line with the empire.

And so it has been, more or less, for seventeen centuries.

Now we live in a time of crisis. As I write this 200,000 persons in our country and more than 980,000 world-wide have died from the Corona virus. Economic tensions are high. Political tensions are higher, and sociological tensions are higher still. Empire is unstable within and without. And the Church...

If you were to judge by what you see in the media, it would look like the Church has faded into invisibility and irrelevance except for a few noisy, high-profile individuals who get all the wrong kinds of attention. It's true that membership numbers are shrinking. It's true that there are fewer congregations of all denominations. It might look like the world has turned the Church upside down to such an extent that it's all spilled out and become empty.

But it would be a mistake to believe that. I think, if you look closely and in the right places, you'll see something else happening. I think what you'll see is that the Church is being quietly reformed, reshaped and repositioned so it can get back to the business of following Jesus more than just intellectually believing in Jesus. I think, if you can learn to see it, you'll see that the Church is being reshaped to proclaim the kin-dom of heaven by showing examples of that kin-dom at work on earth as it is in heaven.

I think, if you look closely, you'll find followers of Jesus standing firm in the protests against racism. You'll find followers of Jesus working to protect voting rights. You'll find followers of Jesus feeding the hungry and trying to stop evictions during a time of quarantine. You'll find followers of Jesus in the courts trying to overturn wrongful convictions.

If you look, you'll find followers of Jesus like Mitch Teemley making movies like Healing River that show us how to heal relationships without getting preachy. If you listen you'll find music from followers of Jesus like Carrie Newcomer and poetry and prose from people like Parker Palmer and Ann Lamott who show us how to reach deep into our souls and touch the hearts of others without off-putting piety. If you look, you'll find followers of Jesus in every walk of life bringing light into the shadows and healing into the brokenness of the world.

If you look, I think you'll find that the followers of Jesus are being repositioned so we can get back to doing what we did in the beginning...turning the world upside down.

**Pro Gloria Dei, Pastor Steve**

**ESA is now Christians for Social Action. <https://christiansforsocialaction.org/>**



We envision a new generation of the church committed to a holistic expression of the Christian faith, motivated by a desire to fully live into the hope of reconciliation, wholeness, and restoration promised by the whole gospel. We gather people who are seeking healing from the trauma of a violent world, ministering to others as they journey together in  
**a brave space for dialogue, questioning, creating, and exploration, and seeking to be faithful followers of Jesus.**



**Equipping those we serve with self-empowering tools and solution-based resources, we patiently walk alongside our clients on the road to independence.**

### **Canned Goods**

\*\*Pop Tops please  
 Chili; Ravioli Spaghetti-O's  
 Tuna; Soup  
 Chef Boyardee pasta meals

### **Hygienic Supplies**

Wet Ones (travel or singles)  
 Disinfectant Cleaner  
 Deodorant (Men's/Women's)

### **WHAT LSS NEEDS**

#### **Anything Warm\***

Coats / Jackets  
 Rain boots  
 \*Please only new or lightly used

**Client Brandon Johnson and Case Manager Maria Molina LSS Video:**  
<https://youtu.be/RP72XV7ZSIM>

#### **Anything Dry**

Umbrellas  
 Sleeping bags  
 Blankets & Comforters  
 Tarps, tents, and other shelter materials  
 Paper Goods/Bowls/Napkins  
 Paper towels/ Toilet paper  
 Plastic forks /Plastic spoons

# DON MELIN — DISCIPLE & SERVANT OF JESUS



*Jesus said to his disciples, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. And you know the way to the place where I am going." John 14:1*

Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Don Melin has finally gone home to his Father's house, finally gone ahead to find his dwelling place, the place his heart has been longing for for years now. Jesus has come and taken him to himself at long last.

Don was born in 1925. He was the baby of the family, the only boy with 3 older sisters. His mother had prayed for a boy and promised God that if she were given a son she would raise him to be a minister. Well, Don never became ordained as a pastor, but there's no denying that he was a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ in the priesthood of all believers.

Until Don was 11, their family of 6—Don, his 3 sisters, and his mom and dad—lived in a two-room house on his grandparents farm in Minnesota with no indoor plumbing or electricity. Don left home as a teenager to make his own way in the world but he wasn't out on his own for too long when World War II erupted. To avoid being drafted into the army, he enlisted in the Navy and was sent to boot camp in Farragut, Idaho. He was trained as a torpedo man in San Diego and Keyport, Washington, then assigned to the USS Fulton, a submarine tender. His rating and rank also allowed him to serve as the ship's helmsman. After he was discharged in 1946, Don worked a variety of odd jobs—bulldozer operator, truck driver, underground iron miner, and carpenter before establishing his own printing business. He married Dorothy in 1948 and they had two children, Connie and David, four grandchildren and one great grandchild.

The family joined Gloria Dei in 1960 and Don became involved in the church's various ministries almost immediately. He served on the Congregation Council, he served as chairman of the survey committee for expansion of the Educational Facilities. He served as Financial Secretary, was in charge of Stewardship, and also took care of Publicity and edited the Newsletter. For 17 years Don and Dorothy printed, folded and delivered the Sunday bulletins until the church bought a photocopier. On top of that, Don continued to print and mail the Gloria Dei newsletter for a total of 37 years. Don said once that joining Gloria Dei was the highlight of his life.

Don was generous. His company, Color by Design, was the largest printing company in Long Beach, at one point employing 98 people. He built a reputation for quality and integrity. His business prospered and he shared that prosperity with the congregation. But he was also generous and supportive in spirit. He would frequently write letters of encouragement to people who were on his prayer list or who the Spirit had simply placed on his heart. He had a special concern for shut-ins, often sharing with them one of his favorite verses, a verse that he had memorized to brighten his own mood when he was feeling challenged: **2 Corinthians 12:9** **"My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.** That was Don through and through. Loving, encouraging, applauding even when he couldn't fully participate in the enjoyment. That letter is still posted on the choir room bulletin board, still bringing encouragement and reminding the choir that their work, too, is a ministry, a prayer of intercession led by the Holy Spirit.

Don walked all his days in integrity and stood firm in the redemption of his faith in Jesus. His feet are on level ground and he stands now in the great congregation of the Communion of Saints.

There is a poem by Samuel Britten that Don loved. He modified it slightly to make it personal and had copies printed which he used to hand it out to visitors. **Is anybody happier because I passed this way?** Well, brother Don, I think it's safe to say that many of us are happier because you passed this way. And yes, you did leave a trail of kindness. As for one more tomorrow, dear friend and brother, you are now in your Father's house, living in the eternal love of Christ. Forever is yours. In Jesus' name. **Eulogy: September 4, 2020 Pastor Steven Beckham**



# PUT A BOW ON MY VERY BLESSED LIFE

November 21, 1928 - September 13, 2020

**Marion Randall Beckman**, a lifelong Long Beach resident, died gently and with grace at her Naples home on September 13, 2020. After a brief hospitalization due to complications from ovarian cancer, she returned home to say goodbye to her family and dear friends. Or as she said, "To put a bow on my very blessed life." She spent her final days peacefully and without pain. Marion was born on November 21, 1928, in Long Beach, CA, the only child of Vayne Bishop and Eleanor Hildina (n,e Johnson) Randall. She attended Jordan High School during WWII, shadowed by blackout curtains, air raids, rationing, and barrage balloons over the harbor. Marion spent hours identifying airplanes from a YMCA observation tower. In 1946, she enrolled in Long Beach City College, where she met a dashing and "bold" GI, Donald Beckman, who wanted to "borrow" her Bunsen burner during chemistry lab, and she never looked back. After graduating from UC Santa Barbara with a degree in elementary education, Marion taught fourth grade in Compton while Don finished USC Dental School. Don and Marion were married on August 19, 1950, and their joy in each other sparkled as an inspiration for 63 years. While Don was practicing dentistry in Bellflower, the young couple had an opportunity to purchase a waterfront lot in developing Naples. In 1955, they built a home on Naples Canal, where their three children, Kristin, Tom, and John, had an idyllic childhood. For 60 years, their home was filled with warmth and laughter thanks to their open-door policy. The Beckman grandchildren will always cherish the magic of Naples Canal. Marion spent most of her life as an active and tireless volunteer, supporting her husband, children, and community with her talents and love. She served as president of the Dental Auxiliary of Long Beach as well as president of the Naples Elementary School PTA. Her true passion was education: for over 25 years Marion was a docent for the California Museum of Science and Industry, sharing her insatiable passion for California history with touring elementary classes. **Marion was a member of Gloria Dei Lutheran church for over 60 years.** She was honored to be a member of both PEO (for over 50 years) and the Naples Island Garden Club, where she felt blessed to meet some of the finest women she had ever known. Marion's favorite things were traveling the world (often with her and Don's dear friends the Orrs and Pillings), eating black licorice, reading (often the end first, so she could relax), entertaining (she set magnificent tables every day), enjoying anything Swedish (both she and Don had Swedish parents), and sewing (intricate cross-stitch Christmas stockings for all grandkids). She was an avid but fretful sports fan, particularly of the Dodgers and USC. And she loved loved scotch and the color red. And her cat, Lucky. But most of all, she loved her family. She loved spending time with them at dinners, during holidays, over lively card games, and on trips to Gull Lake in the eastern Sierra, where they vacationed for over 50 years. Don and Marion's ashes will be scattered there together. Marion was preceded in death by Don in 2013. She is survived by her daughter Kristin (Don) DeVincenzi of Napa, CA; her son Thomas (Jeri) Beckman of Portland, OR; her son John (Narda) Beckman of Sacramento, CA; her seven grandchildren Randall (MeghanRose), Erik (Sonia), Mark, Camille (Eric), Caroline (Manuel), Irene, and Ella John (Jonathan); and her great grandsons Maddox and August. Marion also leaves behind her niece, Candace Ward, and her two "extra" Naples sons, Kevin (Pam) Brief and Jeff Fellenzer. If you wish to give in Marion's memory, please consider a donation to either the Naples Island Garden Club or Seal Beach Animal Care Center. According to Marion's wishes, a memorial service will be held in the future at Gloria Dei Lutheran, when we can gather in person as a community and sing her favorite hymn, **"Children of the Heavenly Father,"** as a final goodbye.



Source: Long Beach Press Telegram



# CONGREGATION UPDATE



Greetings to church family and friends:

Our Council continues to meet and serve via Zoom. Adult education has begun with a study on the Creeds that we use in our services. Unfortunately, United Lutheran Church in Tacoma WA burned to the ground. Onerous activities are suspected.

We are still working on getting bids for the refurbishment on the plaster and paint around the church building.

The biggest project for now will be completed by the time you read this. We are participating in a 24 hour telethon called **Long Beach Gives**. We are sponsoring **Lutheran Social Services** and **South Coast Interfaith Council**. We continue to support **FE Y Esperanza** in South Gate with food donations, gift cards and prayers. The latest

project is homeless kits for LSS. These include hygiene things, some food, water bottles, etc.

For a congregation that is not meeting in our House, we continue to be busy for **God's Work with Our Hands**.

Some good news: Pastor Steve has been approved for his cochlear implant surgery—date is Tuesday, September 29.

Thank you for continuing to support our **Little Church with the Big Heart**. You all are living proof of that title.

Keep our church family and the people on our community wall in prayer.

Glorious Dei to you.

In His Name...

**Margie E. Brown, Council President**

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## THE GIFT OF PEACE — PEACE BE WITH YOU

### A Prayer for Peace of Mind

Almighty God, We bless you for our lives, we give you praise for your abundant mercy and grace we receive. We thank you for your faithfulness even though we are not that faithful to you. Lord Jesus, we ask you to give us all around peace in our mind, body, soul, and spirit. We want you to heal and remove everything that is causing stress, grief, and sorrow in our lives. Please guide our path through life and make our enemies be at peace with us. Let your peace reign in our family, at our place of work, businesses and everything we lay our hands on. Let your angels of peace go ahead of us when we go out and stay by our side when we return. In Jesus' name, Amen.

### Lord, We Need Your Peace

Dear God, We're in need of your peace and truth to soothe our hearts and spirits right now. When we find ourselves awake in the middle of the night, our pressing needs and worries can feel overwhelming. We need to be reminded of your constant love, healing, and grace. We ask for your Mighty Power to surround us. Thank you that you have set us free and that you are bigger than anything we face in this life. We lay our burdens before you, every single one, for we know they're much safer in your hands than our own.

### A Short Prayer for Peace

Lord, I come before you ready to pour out my worries, anxieties, and fears at Your feet. I am claiming and declaring Your promises for blessings of peace and strength over my life. Bring peace into my soul that passes all worldly understanding and make me a light for others to see Your strength.

Source: CROSSWALK.COM ~ Debbie McDaniel; Rebecca Barlow Jordan

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS — OCTOBER 2020



## NATIONAL I CARE ABOUT YOU DAY

**OCTOBER 25**

**"Give thanks to the Lord,  
for He is good; His love  
endures forever."**

~ 1 Chronicles 16:34

## GOD'S WORK OUR HANDS



**MONDAY, OCTOBER 5 —  
VIRTUAL CHURCH  
COUNCIL MEETING @ 7PM**

## CELEBRATIONS

**10 — Happy Birthday John Blizer**

**20 —  
Happy Birthday  
Ellen Rhoda**



**24 —  
Happy Birthday  
Ian Adams**

**27 —  
Happy Birthday  
Gary Bockman**



**28 —  
Happy Birthday Phil Como**

**"You are a child of God,  
you are wonderfully made,  
dearly loved and precious  
in His sight."**

~ Psalm 139

### —Update from our Mission Partner—

With thanksgiving and gladness, I share with you a good news: My application for a 5-year stay in China has been approved recently. How grateful I am! I am sure that you will be happy for me. Thank you for your faithful prayers! I trust HE WHO has given me this special gift for being here under the current circumstances, will continue to lead me step by step for the future.

I am sure that I have mentioned before, people need more encouragement, comfort, compassion, listening, care, and counseling in times like now. I am grateful being here for this time. I know I cannot help everyone, but I am a vessel of HIS for use. If we are willing to be used, HE does use us.

Again, thanks for your partnership with me in this work! Thanks for your understanding and being with me in spirit!



**OCTOBER 1** *Nat'l Coffee Day*  
**OCTOBER 5** *Nat'l Child Health Day*  
**OCTOBER 15** *Nat'l I LOVE LUCY Day*  
**OCTOBER 22** *Int'l Stuttering Awareness Day*  
**OCTOBER 24** *United Nations Day*  
**OCTOBER 26** *Nat'l Pumpkin Day*  
**OCTOBER 28** *Nat'l Immigrants Day*  
**OCTOBER 31** *Halloween*

**Never underestimate the  
importance of having a person  
in your life who can always  
make you smile!**

via @thegoodquote on Instagram



**OCTOBER 23 —**

## GLORIOUS DEI NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

**SUBMIT STORY IDEAS,  
RESOURCES & SUGGESTIONS  
to editor... Email:  
PBOCKMAN@FULLERTON.EDU**

**GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

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



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## **SEEK TO UNDERSTAND**

**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)**



