



## Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

### THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

It's hard to believe that we've already come to the season of Pentecost. In one way, of course, we live in Pentecost, inspired and sustained by the Holy Spirit. But if you're like me, maybe you don't think about the Spirit in particular as often as, say, you think about Jesus.

We've all seen countless depictions of Jesus, and even though all of those pictures are merely artist's conceptions (since we don't really know what he looked like), it's easier to picture him in our minds when we talk to him in prayer because our brains already have some images to work with. The Spirit, on the other hand, is...spirit. We have symbols for the Spirit, but they are just that: symbolic. We know the Spirit is not a dove (or a wild goose if you're Celtic). Those symbols can call the Holy Spirit to mind, but they're not always helpful to hold in our imaginations as we pray. The Spirit is like the wind or breath, but that's kind of hard to picture and personalize when it's prayer time. And that's a bit unfortunate because she's the one who is nudging us to pray in the first place.

Some people don't like it when they hear or see the Holy Spirit referred to as "she." There are good reasons, though, to use the feminine pronoun when referring to the Spirit. Genesis 1:27 tells us that God created humanity in God's own image, male and female. So there is a strong suggestion there of a feminine presence in the Trinity. The Hebrew word for spirit, *ruach*, is a feminine word, so in Genesis when the wind or Spirit hovers over the waters it's that feminine voice bringing order out of Chaos. The Spirit also appears in the Tanakh (Old Testament) as Sophia, Wisdom, a feminine name with feminine pronouns. And we must not forget Shekinah, the powerful, shining presence of God which settles on the prophets and sometime upon the people. Shekinah appears numerous places in the Tanakh. The word Shekinah is feminine, and the presence has always been understood as presenting a feminine aspect of God. So if it helps you to mentally visualize who you're praying to when you pray to the Holy Spirit, maybe you could imagine her as a feminine personage composed of wind and light and the flames of Pentecost.

Or you could learn to experience her presence in other ways, because she comes to us in limitless ways and forms. That's the advantage of being Spirit.

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*Thoughts Along the Way Continues....*

The other day I was struggling to write my sermon for Pentecost. My thoughts were all over the place and I had a serious case of Writer's Block. I had pages of notes but no central idea was pulling them all together. I sat at my computer here in the guest bedroom that has become my home office and stared blankly out the window, not really seeing anything. In frustration, I offered up a little prayer. "Okay, Holy Spirit, how about a little help here?"

At that moment the light shifted outside the window and movement caught my eye. The layer of overcast had parted and bright sunlight was flooding down on the trumpet vines on the fence outside the window. The bright, almost garish vermillion flowers with their yellow throats were suddenly dancing in the breeze, raising their trumpet faces to the sun against the backdrop of deep green leaves, and I could almost hear them singing a song of praise: "Life! Life! Life in all its fullness!"

I felt immersed in the presence of God, Shekinah, as I watched the wind, ruach, playing with the flowers and vines, shaking them to get my attention. And the Sophia of God, Wisdom, spoke to my heart and head, telling me to rest and come back to the writing later.

Pentecost comes to us when we learn to see that the Holy Spirit has been with us all along.

***Pro Gloria Dei,  
Pastor Steve***



## GLORIA DEI—THE LITTLE CHURCH WITH THE BIG HEART

**We invite you to join us for  
IN-PERSON worship  
every Sunday at 10:00 AM in the  
summer...starting JUNE 20!**

**Visit website for online  
viewing and participation.**

**Website: [www.gdlclb.org](http://www.gdlclb.org)**







## Prayers for Hope

- Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly beloved children and walk in the way of love. —Ephesians 5:1-2

*Father, life in all its fullness is Yours alone to give. Open my heart and hands to accept it.*

*Jesus, I praise You for Your light and love. Help me shine for You.*

## Prayers for Courage

- Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. —Ephesians 3:17

*Jesus, thank You for the overwhelmingly good news that the strength needed to withstand life's challenges isn't our own. Help us to grow ever-deeper roots in Your love and our place in Your family.*

*God, please assure me of Your presence when I'm afraid. Help me to remember that You've defeated spiritual darkness through Your death and resurrection.*

## Prayers for Unity

- My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. —Luke 1:46-47

*Gracious God, cleanse my heart and grant me courage to speak for justice and equity for all people.*

*God of creation, please help us to trust You more than our own eyes and hearts. When we speak on hard topics, soften our hearts and words with Your sweet Spirit.*

## Prayer for Joy

- The Lord bless you and keep you. —Numbers 6:24

*God, I give thanks for the many blessings You give me. Help me to notice the ways You bring me joy and peace. You have set me above my companions by anointing me with the oil of joy.*

## Prayer for Children

- And He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them and blessed them. —Mark 10:16

*Beautiful Savior, help me reveal Your love and presence to all people, including children. Make me mindful of ways to ensure that they can always come to You.*

# CONGREGATION UPDATE



## POWER OF PRAYER FOR GOD'S CHILDREN & CREATION

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Grace...

Lord, thank You for keeping kids safe on this journey to be united with their families. I know God anoints us to do hard things....help them each day to be hopeful and comforted by Your loving care.

Thank You for the kindness and the care migrant children have received on their arduous journey. Help me continue to pray each day for these families. In Your Name I Pray, Amen.



**"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."**

Greetings from your church council.

Thank you all for attending our congregational meeting via Zoom. The congregation turnout is appreciated.

As you know, we opted not to open the sanctuary on May 16 for several reasons, one of which is that there would be no speaking or singing. What is worship without God's people responding and making a joyful noise? With new guidelines coming forth from the powers that be, we will hopefully open in June. June 20 is the new target date. Be prepared to make that joyful noise.

Thank you to the council members who are "retiring". Several of us have served our two terms of 3 years and must now take a break. Thank you to those who are willing to serve the next 3 years. At our June meeting, we will elect new officers to carry us forward. The new council members are: Phil Como, Twyla Karkut, Beverly Pandora, Robert Siemer. Please give them your support and counsel as you have to me and the current members of the council. The search for a new financial secretary has been tabled for now.

Our current Bible classes will end this month. So like good students we will take a break but be prepared to return to our studies in the fall.

With limited activities, our committees are still viable. Mission continues to work with Fe Y Esperanza and LSS. Shepherds are getting information for prayers, and the Women's library is still available. Regarding the library, please remember to check copyright dates and offer only those books printed AFTER 2010. Magazines are not a good option, as public libraries do not always take our extras. Don't forget your monetary donation.....this helps ELCW with their projects.

It has been my pleasure to serve as council president for the past 2 years. Thank you for the opportunity to serve our congregation. Please remember each other in prayer, and as it says in Micah, "the Lord requires you to do justice, and love kindness, and walk humbly with your God".

**Blessings to you and have a Glorious Dei,  
Margie Brown, Council President**



# GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS

Monetary donations can continue to be made to the **Long Beach Community Foundation's Migrant Children Support Fund** and information regarding the shelter is available at [longbeach.gov/migrantchildren](http://longbeach.gov/migrantchildren).

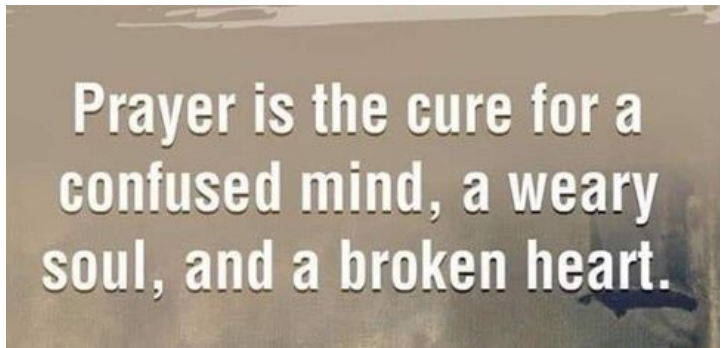


The City's toy and book drive, in partnership with the Long Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau was a tremendous success. Approximately **30,000 books and toys** were collected! The children, both current and future, now have a large library of books to choose from to read at their own leisure and plenty of toys, games and drawing materials to use during a difficult time of trauma, sadness and despair.

Commencing Saturday, May 22, the City of Long Beach collected hundreds of encouraging letters for the children at the shelter. HHS will provide these letters directly to the children as they await reunification or as they are leaving to be reunited, which is currently happening for many of the children. The letters will also be displayed within the shelter for them to read. The hope is that they will provide the children with additional comfort knowing that our Long Beach and Gloria Dei communities pray for them and care about their safety, health, and well-being.

**Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him. - Psalm 37:7**

Dear God,  
Please fuel me with Your perfect truth and love so I can shine and be a light in the world around me. Help me today to be patient and hopeful. Thank You for keeping me safe in Long Beach. Strengthened each day by Your grace...Amen.



Praying that God's loving arms surround you and give you peace...

Dear God,  
Make a way when I can't see one. Open a door when it is closed to me. Be my voice when I am speechless. Nothing can defeat me. You are on my side.  
Amen



## GOD'S LIGHT & LOVE...



Thank you for your continued interest in supporting the migrant children who are staying at the temporary U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) shelter at the Long Beach Convention Center. HHS has a great update and new opportunities to share with you via their website.

## LONG BEACH COMMUNITY OUTREACH...



### Dear Pastor Beckham and Members of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church,

More than words can express, we want to thank you for your continued support of our mission. Your financial contributions, food donations, clothing donations, and volunteering, have enabled us to provide essential services to those who are struggling in our Long Beach & surrounding communities. We are humbled by your generosity and grateful to know that together we can provide help and bring hope to the many people who come to **Lutheran Social Services** facing financial hardships.

Our Emergency services programs have continued to operate safely and provide much needed support to those in need during these unprecedented times. These past few months have been a very busy time for our Long Beach Center.

We are seeing new families and individuals who lost their job due to the pandemic, seeking assistance and support for the first time.

Just last month we provided 2082 clients with **emergency assistance** such as food, clothing, hygiene items and blankets, transportation, utility assistance and outreach events (Covid-19 workshops and education, Covid-19 testing, and the Covid-19 Vaccine clinics). We also assisted homeless families and individuals with program resources to help them on their journey by providing case management, help them develop long-term solutions, and assisted them in getting them off the streets and placing them in shelters.



We were able to house 3 individuals who had been homeless for over 7 years combined and we will continue to provide case management and supportive services to ensure housing and financial stability and empower them to be self-sufficient.

The mission of Lutheran Social Services is ignited by faith we live out God's love by **embracing, equipping, and empowering vulnerable people** in our community. We could not be successful in accomplishing our mission and do what we do, without the help of wonderful people like you. Because of your support, kindness, and care for those in need, we have seen many people improve their quality of life.

On behalf of our staff, volunteers, and those we serve, **THANK YOU** for all you do for the least of these.

In His Love, **Long Beach LSS Staff & Volunteers**

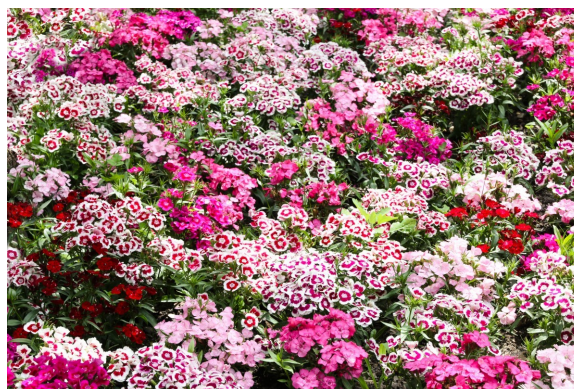
## GROWING IN FAITH, LIFTED BY HOPE, GUIDED BY LOVE



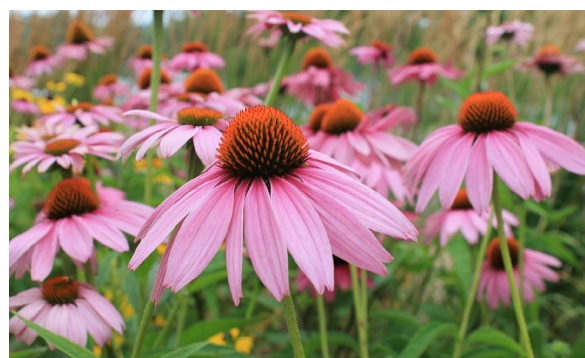
# EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

## HAPPY FATHER'S Day!

**SUNDAY, JUNE 20**



**BASK IN THE BEAUTY OF  
SUMMER'S FULL BLOOM !**



## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 6 — Fernando Chavez
- 14 — Erika Eidam
- 21 — Dee Perretta
- 22 — Lauren Mintie
- 22 — Candy Wood

## ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

- 4 — Vicky & Steve Gammer
- 9 — John & Jean Betz
- 11 — Stuart & Laura Subke
- 14 — Carl & Carrol Irwin
- 22 — Steve & Meri Beckham
- 23 — Bob & Stephanie Siemer



**See YOU in church !  
SUNDAY, JUNE 20**

## MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE

- 11 — Flip Flop Day
- 14 — Flag Day
- 19 — Juneteenth
- 21 — Summer Solstice
- 23 — Let It Go Day

**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 Corinthians 5:17-19)



