

GLORIOUS DEI . . .



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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

I came across a meme today on Facebook that really made me stop and think. The heading was Ancestral Mathematics. Here's what it said:

"In order to be born, you needed:
 2 parents
 4 grandparents
 8 great-grandparents
 16 second great grandparents
 32 third great-grandparents
 64 fourth great-grandparents
 128 fifth great-grandparents
 256 sixth great-grandparents
 512 seventh great-grandparents
 1,024 eighth great-grandparents
 2,048 ninth great-grandparents

For you to be born today from 12 previous generations, you needed a total of 4,094 ancestors over the last 400 years. Think for a moment— How many struggles? How many battles? How many difficulties? How much sadness? How much happiness? How many love stories? How many expressions of hope for the future?—did your ancestors have to undergo for you to exist in this present moment..."

Some of my cousins connected me to a website called Family Search. I'm not nearly as involved in exploring our family tree as some of them, but I do find it interesting to trace things back a few generations. I've become curious about the lives of these people to whom I am directly related. I've heard bits and snatches of some of their stories, but I know nothing at all about most of them. I've been surprised by all the surnames that I didn't know even though their DNA is part of me and their story is part of my story. Beckham, I know, of course. But there is also Curtis, Casey, Owen, Whitely, Moody, Maynard, Wayne, Stapleton, Lawrence, Malmgren, Davidson, Larm, Carlson, Andersdotter, Flykt... The names take me on a journey not only back in time but to other parts of the continent and other parts of the world. I have inherited something, however small, from each of them.

As I thought about all of this, I realized two things. First, the universe, and Christ who is in, with, and under everything the universe does, has worked long and hard to bring us here. All the generations before us with all their struggles and all their joys have brought us, you and me, to this place and this time. That's got to mean something. And if it doesn't mean anything existentially in and of itself,

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LITTLE CHURCH WITH THE BIG HEART

A legacy of welcome is woven into our tradition and history as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Many of our Lutheran ancestors faced the pain of having to flee their homes and knew the joy of being welcomed into new communities across the United States. Because this church believes in sustaining a faithful presence in the world, it "holds power accountable, advocates justice, stands with those who are poor and vulnerable, provides sanctuary, and meets human need" (ELCA social statement, *For Peace in God's World*, 1995). Offering refuge to displaced people and people fleeing persecution is a natural extension of that biblical witness. The ELCA's AMMPARO strategy (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) — a **holistic churchwide commitment** to accompanying vulnerable migrant children and families, now and into the future — reflects this calling. Around 199 welcoming and sanctuary congregations, as well as 36 synod AMMPARO or immigration task forces with connections in 53 ELCA synods, have committed to offering accompaniment to migrants in their communities.

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

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY ...Continues

then we can bring meaning to it. We can bring love to it. We can see the moment and we can love the moment. And we can love each other in the moment. We can love God in the moment. That's part of what being the Beloved Community is all about: honoring the moment and honoring everything it took to bring us here.

And that brings me to the second thing I realized. We have inherited our faith, too. Whether you grew up in a home where faith in Christ was part of the atmosphere or whether you came to faith in Christ in some other circumstances in some other context, by some unexpected path, faith was handed down to you by others. It was a gift of grace. It has been passed down to us in a steady succession of believers all the way back to the apostles. "For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received," wrote St. Paul to the saints in Corinth (1Corinthians15:3) and they in turn handed it on to their children and their friends. And so on through the ages.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1-2). But first, let's take a moment to appreciate all those who have given us this moment.

Pro Gloria Dei,

Pastor Steve

MID YEAR BUDGET UPDATE

Revenue in 2021 has averaged \$14,035 per month compared to \$17,780 per month in 2020. This is a decline of \$3,745 per month (21%). Although 2021 expenses are lower by \$885 per month, this is not enough to make up for the reduced revenue.

We may see a revenue increase now that we're back in the church, but expenses will also increase. The expectation is we will continue in the red until the end of 2021 and will need to use our reserves to cover expenses.

Gary Bockman
Church Treasurer



Many, Many Thanks... From Pastor Steve

Fifteen months ago we were all asked to drop everything and retreat to our homes for safety because of the Pandemic. Suddenly we had a lot of problems to solve so that we could continue to do church and be church. A lot of that problem solving and continuity fell on the shoulders of a few faithful and stalwart people who stepped up and have continued to serve in extraordinary ways.

Bob Siemer became our tech guru, making sure we were staying connected well through Zoom and YouTube. I think sometimes this was almost a full-time job, especially as he helped individual members trouble-shoot problems on their computers, tablets and phones.

Phil and Karen Como not only served as regular and reliable members of the Sunday worship team, they also kept our ministries with Fe y Esperanza and LSS moving, delivering food and all the things collected here at church.

Sandy Nelson continued to put in time at the church office, staying on top of all the administrative tasks, keeping an eye on our facilities, and maintaining good relationships with all the outside groups that use our facilities so that they can now resume doing so. Richard Hoover continued to faithfully provide music for all our worship and special services, and attended all the planning meetings necessary for that.

Margie Brown faithfully and diligently served as Council President during a difficult and unprecedented time. She led us with a marvelous combination of clear-headed decisiveness and good listening. Gary Bockman, our congregation treasurer not only did all his usual magic management with the numbers, he also managed to get us a PPP loan and handled all the paperwork.

And Peggy Bockman, despite seriously breaking her ankle so that she had to find innovative ways to scooch upstairs to her computer, continued to put out our excellent monthly newsletter.

To all of you, my deepest thanks.

"I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder." –G.K. Chesterton

CONGREGATION UPDATE

We're back – but did we ever really leave? One of the best lessons I learned throughout these 15 months of our physical separation was that “our” church is wherever “we” are!

With the use of technology and the old-fashioned telephone we stayed connected to each other and even expanded our reach. Liz Asenas joined our bible studies from Italy, Donna Malbon from her summer home in Idaho, Erika and Walt Eidam in Kentucky, Edie Graber's daughter, Pam, in Arizona joined us for worship and my aunt in Sacramento often watched the post of our service on YouTube. Our Tuesday **Staying Connected** calls kept us aware of our members' needs for prayer requests and it just felt good to see each other's faces while we were isolated in our homes.

We are so fortunate to have a real technology “wizard” in our church family! **Bob Siemer** knows how to push all the right buttons and trained so many of us to use our computers to keep us connected. Thank you, Bob, for your expertise and especially your patience!

I'm so thankful to **Pastor Steve** for delivering meaningful and thoughtful messages each week and for his exceptional Wednesday studies on the **Fratelli Tutti and the Franciscan Way**. His Sunday bible study on 'Mark' was amazing and I look forward to continuing this study in September when we resume adult education.

Richard Hoover blessed us with his beautiful music each week and kept us singing and making a joyful noise right from our own homes. Thank you, Richard, for your dedication and for selecting familiar hymns we all love to sing and hear.

In addition to serving as the President of our congregation for the past two years, **Margie Brown** encouraged and regularly coordinated with the Shepherds to keep the communication flowing within our church family and helped us all stay connected. Plus, she made over **225 quilts** (children services) **for the Long Beach Police department!** Thank you for your wonderful service to our church family and to others within the community!

It's so good to see each other and give hugs now that we can resume physical worship in our sanctuary, but let's not forget that “we” are the church and we reflect the love of Christ wherever we are. My love to each of my brothers and sisters in this amazing church family!

Karen Como, Church Council President





The **Reverend Brenda Bos** was elected to serve a six-year term as **Bishop of the Southwest California Synod** of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America on June 5, 2021. The election took place during the 33rd Assembly of the Southwest California Synod, which was held online with live and recorded participation throughout the synod territory.

A native Californian, Pastor Bos was ordained in 2014 in her home congregation of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in North Hollywood, a congregation known for its welcome of LGBTQ people. She attended Claremont School of Theology and Pacific Lutheran Theology Seminary, receiving a Masters of Divinity and Certificate of Theological Studies.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Leadership



Most recently, she has served as the Assistant to the Bishop for Rostered Leadership for Southwest California Synod. She also served Christ Lutheran Church in San Clemente, where the congregation advocated for the rights of unhoused persons, seniors and those living with addiction. She was the first of eight vicars at St Paul's in Santa Monica and served congregations in Canoga Park and Danville, California.

Bishop-elect Bos lives with her wife and adult son. She will be the first openly lesbian bishop to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

**He did this that He might clearly demonstrate through the ages
to come, the immeasurable riches of
His free grace in His kindness and goodness of heart
toward us in Christ Jesus. ~ Ephesians 2:7**

EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Everything is possible for him who believes.

~ Mark 9:23

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.

Acts 4:33-34

God's grace was so powerfully at work in them all that there were no needy persons among them.

July 3 Fireworks @ 9pm

BIG BANG ON THE BAY

Soak up the dancing fabulous fireworks over Alamitos Bay with vintage aircraft flyovers, powered paragliders, & sailing regatta.



Make me ever so grateful for the richness and depth of my life experiences.

Thank you for guiding me to live my best life through Your gifts and blessings.

Happy July 2 Twyla Karkut
Happy July 6 Martie Engle
Happy July 7 Rebecca Brook
Happy July 7 Dave Manley
Happy July 15 Paul Gannoe
Happy July 22 Lark Adams
Happy July 27 Stuart Subke
Happy July 28 Sue Schaar
Happy July 29 Mike Caldwell

Happy Anniversary — July 22
Sandy & Jeffrey Nelson



Thank you God, for all You've given me, including Your grace. Help me to extend Your grace to others. And, may I see bursts of Your glory and experience the fullness of Christ every day!

Live in love, as Christ loved us.

~ Ephesians 5:2

Your beauty and love chase after me every day of my life.

~ Psalm 23:6



JULY 3 Big Bang on the Bay

JULY 4 Independence Day



JULY 14 Mac & Cheese Day

JULY 17 World Emoji Day

JULY 24 Amelia Earhart Day

JULY 25 Wine & Cheese Day

JULY 27 'Love is Kind' Day

JULY 31 Avocado Day

For the Lord God is
A SUN AND SHIELD:
 THE LORD WILL GIVE
GRACE AND GLORY:
 NO GOOD THING WILL HE WITHHOLD
 FROM THEM THAT WALK UPRIGHTLY.

...
Psalms 84:11

SEEK GOD'S FAVOR

Loving God, keep me 'favor-minded' and thankful so I can be my best self. Fuel me with Your perfect truth and love. I sought Your favor with all my heart; be gracious to me according to Your word. Each day You strengthen me with Your grace. Thank You!

Visit website to learn
 how to continue to
 serve our Long Beach
 residents in need!



"God's work. Our hands." Sunday, September 12, 2021 — this day is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America — one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. Service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: that all of life in Jesus Christ — every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life — flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God's grace.

LONG BEACH MIGRANT CHILDREN UPDATE

As you know, the City of Long Beach was asked to assist HHS with their work to temporarily house and quickly reconnect unaccompanied minors who have been arriving at our southern border. While the effort is being fully led and funded by the federal government, the City will focus on assisting HHS in welcoming the children and supporting them during the unification process.

Update as of June 25

Total Census: (611) — the number of children onsite at the shelter. Note that this number will fluctuate depending on intakes and children's unifications with their families and sponsors.

Total Unifications to Date: (850) — this represents the number of children who have been cleared to leave the facility through a thorough vetting process and unified with a family member or sponsor in the United States.

Did You Know...

Do children have access to medical services at the shelter? Yes, a fully-staffed medical facility, run by UCLA Health, is operating with doctors, nurses and other medical providers as needed. Children receive routine pediatric exams, childhood vaccinations as needed, and emergency services.

LEARN MORE....<https://longbeach.gov/Humanitarian-Family-Reunification-Efforts-FAQ>

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday



The ELCA will celebrate **"God's work. Our hands Sunday"** — an opportunity for the ELCA to do what we do best and make a difference. Only on this day, we'll do it together as one body, using our hands to do God's work of restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ's name throughout the world.

Imagine 4 million people from nearly 10,000 congregations out in their communities serving meals, cleaning up neighborhoods, visiting with the homebound, collecting supplies for those experiencing homelessness, poverty or conflict — all in their bright yellow "God's work. Our hands." T-shirts!

You work every day to love your neighbors and make your community a better place. Now let's do it together. A church that rolls up its sleeves ELCA members and congregations have always been active participants in God's work in the world. We already serve our communities and neighbors, and we've done so for many years.

GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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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)

