

Reverend Ruth Sievert, Pastor  
5872 Naples Plaza Long Beach, California 90803-5044  
Website: [www.gdlclb.org](http://www.gdlclb.org) Telephone: 562.438.0929



## Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

### BE OF GOOD COURAGE...

I am feeling a great deal of gratitude these days. First, I want to thank you for my paid vacation time, with the absolute certainty that nothing would happen that you all couldn't take care of. This is not always the case for a pastor. I love my work, and I truly love preaching. No matter what else goes on in my week, an appreciable amount of time goes into preparing and writing a sermon. While some weeks are slower than others, this task is ALWAYS there, and I think getting the break from that for three weeks, and getting to hear other preachers, is among the most renewing part of vacation. Oh, and yes, and finally getting to Hawaii after having to cancel it three times was pretty fabulous.

I am incredibly grateful to Phil Como and David Kahakauwila for painting my office. It had been a very long time since it had been painted, and I love being in it now. Once I get it all put back together, I will have a little "Open House" on a Sunday morning so you can see the beautiful job they did. Both perfectionists, they didn't miss a single thing. You might be surprised to discover that it is lavender, with periwinkle shelves, but it goes beautifully with the carpet and it's kind of the office of my dreams now. Thank you, Phil and David, for your generous hearts, and your many, many hours over three weeks' time. By the way, I have heard that this is the first and last time that our talented duo will be performing this task, so I wouldn't ask if I were you.

I am grateful to have come back to our *Little Church With the Big Heart*, where all of you are so kind, loving, and appreciative. I think a perfect vacation includes having lots of fun and being refreshed and ready to come back to work. I was reminded how much I enjoy and appreciate working with Sandy and Richard and felt their absence tremendously the first two weeks I was home. Glad you are both back in the saddle with me. What a great team we make.

I am grateful that there are only a few more "Sundays after Pentecost", and Advent is coming! This "season of the Church", this "green season" is long and the readings get more challenging each week. This year this season is fully half the year, with it being 26 Sundays this year (the number of Sundays vary each year, depending on when Easter is). But with Advent, we begin the Season of the Life of Christ, during which we walk the events of the birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, and Pentecost, when the Church was born.

I love the change of seasons that are rich in liturgy, hymns, and of course the readings. Gloria Dei already has some gorgeous ways of dressing up the sanctuary to reflect the seasons and festivals (weren't the red banners on Reformation luscious? And I've never seen anything like the Cala Lily cross at Easter!). I would like to do more of dressing it for the season. I am gathering some ideas, and if any of you enjoy designing and decorating and would like to work with me on this, I would love your help! I've seen how some of you decorate your houses for holidays, so I know you understand the concept! You know that even simple things can reflect the season we are in. You will hear more from me later on this. Let us be grateful together for all that we have, including each other, and may our gratitude stir our generosity. Our unity is in Christ, Pastor Ruth

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## “Kindness is a universal language.”

~ Father Gregory Boyle, founder of Homeboy Industries, the largest gang intervention and rehab program in the world



“The first secret to loving others is to immerse yourself in a love relationship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and abide there.”

~ Anne Graham Lotz, preacher, author & daughter of Billy Graham



O GIVE thanks unto the LORD, for he is good: for his mercy endures forever! ~ Psalm 107

**Dear Beloveds,** As the election season is here, I have been doing some reflecting on what it means to vote as a Lutheran Christian. Please know that I am not telling you who to vote for in this election. It is not for me to tell you who to vote for. I mean, after all, God is neither Republican or Democrat, or even American. But in saying that, I am not abdicating the responsibility that we have as Lutheran Christians who live in a country where voting matters. As children of God, we are called to vote beyond our own self-interest or individuality. As people who follow Jesus, we are called towards God’s vision of a just and mercy-filled world. As people who have received grace upon grace, we are called to stand against injustice, and to remind everyone that, in God’s eyes, every single person is loved and beloved.

### So, here are a few thoughts and questions:

1. Jesus is all about loving one’s neighbor. Even when it’s hard. When he’s asked, “Who is my neighbor,” Jesus expands his answer. In Jesus’ stories and actions he constantly goes to those who are on the outside, those marginalized, those without status, and shows how they are loved by God – how they are, in fact, his neighbor.

#### As you vote: Who is your neighbor?

2. Throughout scripture, hospitality to the stranger is embraced. In the Old Testament, the command to welcome strangers is repeated 37 times. In Matthew, Jesus says, “I was a stranger and you welcomed me.”

#### As you vote: Who is the stranger?

3. God’s will and God’s calling is towards equity and justice for those who have been silenced, oppressed, or harmed. As we hear in Isaiah, “Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, and plead for the widow.”

#### As you vote: Who are the silenced, the oppressed, the harmed?

4. The eighth commandment declares that we are called to not bear false witness against our neighbor. This, of course, means not lying about another but seeking the truth. This means no name-calling or false accusations. But it goes beyond this. As Martin Luther tells us in his Small Catechism, we are to defend our neighbor, speak well of our neighbor, and explain everything in the kindest way.

#### As you vote: Who is speaking truth?

5. God created this beautiful earth and declared that we are both part of the creation and are also called to be stewards of it. As we read in the ELCA social statement called “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice,” we affirm that it is God’s intention for us to join in the healing and wholeness of creation.

#### As you vote: Who is caring for creation?

There is so much more that could be written about the state of our country and what voting means. We could make this all complicated and intricate and difficult. But truly, it comes down to this: God’s love is unconditional and unending. Jesus came to this earth to show, to embody, to be God’s love for us and for all people. And so, knowing this, trusting this, believing this, we are called. We are called, as children of God, to show this love to the world. We are called to vote against hate. We are called to vote for God’s love. As we hear in 1 John, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear ... We love because God first loved us.”

**Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee, [bishop@lutheransnw.org](mailto:bishop@lutheransnw.org), NW Washington Synod**

# GLORIA DEI COUNCIL UPDATE

Thankfulness! We have so much to be thankful for at Gloria Dei, and our members and friends demonstrate their thankfulness through generous giving throughout the year. As we approach the holidays, we are invited to participate in community outreach events. Please prayerfully consider supporting the holiday events and activities listed by our outreach partners.

Lutheran Social Services: In just a few short weeks, it will be time for the LSS Annual Family Thanksgiving celebration. Please consider making a special gift to LSS in support of this event, where families will be provided groceries and a turkey.

LSS is in need of **'Welcome Home Baskets'** for individuals and families transitioning off the streets and into their own homes. See the list of items in the Fellowship Hall.

***Faith is a full life, liberated for a living,  
daring confidence in God's grace.***

As cool weather approaches, LSS is always in need of gently used warm blankets, jackets and new socks. Men's business clothing is always welcomed in support of their job finders' program. We continue to make nearly weekly deliveries because of the generous givers within our church family and friends.

Fe y Esperanza: It's time to talk 'Turkey'! Pastor Marta and her team will be delivering turkeys and preparing a Thanksgiving Feast this month on Saturday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> for the farm workers in the town Guadalupe (near San Luis Obispo). The feast is prepared for the many farm workers and their families who ensure that fruits and vegetables are picked and delivered for our holidays. It's a wonderful way to say 'Thank you' to these essential workers. Please consider making a donation to Fe y Esperanza for purchasing turkeys. They need 150 turkeys for this event. Also, we continue our nearly weekly deliveries of food, bags and gently used household items.

Please continue to keep Pastor Marta's son Hector in your prayers as he continues to suffer with serious health issues.

ELCW: The October meeting was dedicated to bagging rice and beans for the LSS Food Pantry and Fe y Esperanza. During our next meeting, on November 14<sup>th</sup>, we will be assembling the Maritime Ministry shoeboxes. This small but mighty group of women does so much outreach! All women are invited to attend. Invite your friends and neighbors for good fellowship and service to our community. Bring a sandwich to share. Salad and dessert will be provided.

***God is using faithful people to love their neighbor and proclaim the gospel.***

Maritime Ministry: Supplies are beginning to be donated for the Maritime Ministry boxes that we traditionally prepare every year. If you would like to donate \$25, a 'personal shopper' will be happy to purchase the items needed for each shoebox. These boxes are provided to the seafarers who work on the ships that serve our community and the whole country. Maritime Ministry serves seafarers of many backgrounds, faiths (or no faiths) with the love of Jesus. The seafarers are away from home for many months and the boxes of supplies that we and other churches provide reminds them that they are appreciated. Warm jackets, gloves and knitted hats are also needed. These items will be delivered before Thanksgiving and distributed in time for Christmas.

South Coast Interfaith Council: Marilyn Bittle participated in the South Coast Interfaith Council Crop-Walk and raised \$540 from Gloria Dei members and friends! In total, the walkers raised over \$10,000. The proceeds are shared among several organizations including LSS, the Food Bank and Church World Services.

Adult Education: On Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall, we are reading **'Short Stories by Jesus' by Amy** -Jill Levine. Every week is a new and engaging discussion! On Wednesdays, at 10:00, via Zoom, we are reading **'American Heresy, The Roots and Reach of White Christian Nationalism' by John Fanestil**. This is a thought-provoking book and we welcome your perspective. You are encouraged to jump in any time!



# SERVANT LEADERS



## Congregation Update Continues...

### Upcoming Events:

- November 5 — Please VOTE! Election Day
- November 6 — Church Council at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom.
- November 14 — ELCW meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- November 17 — Noisy Offering and Birthday Cake Sunday
- November 28 — Thanksgiving
- November 30 — Decorate the sanctuary for Advent from 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon

We have been so thankful to have Nancy Sansum as part of our church family for many decades. Nancy is relocating to Virginia to be closer to her daughter and granddaughter. Her new address is: Brightview Woodburn Assisted Living, 3450 Gallows Road., Annandale, VA 22003, Apt. 119. Please send her a card and keep her in your prayers.



**Servant leaders — joyfully answering God’s call and through God’s grace, supporting our pastor and congregation in so many ways.**



November is the month dedicated to reminding us of how much we have to be thankful for each and every day throughout the year! We are so blessed to have each other in our church family as we begin our season of holidays. We are a church family that loves to celebrate each Sunday together as we worship and then celebrate the many ways we reach out to the needs of others. Everyone is welcome to join us – spread the news!

Council President, Karen Como

## THE UP SIDE



To live in gratitude for both existence and awareness of existence is to live a life that is both holy and healed.

~ Deepak Chopra, author

It can be easy for us to get discouraged with a no, but if we trust that God is directing our **path, then we won't receive it as a rejection** but as a redirection.

~ Simply Pray, by Deb Hopper

We tend to misunderstand the link between joy and gratefulness. We notice that joyful people are grateful and suppose that they are grateful for their joy. But the reverse is true: **'Their joy springs from gratefulness'**.

~ Brother David Steindl-Rast, monk, author and speaker

Life on earth, one may say, is a testing **ground, day to day, to keep one's** conscious faith and unconscious tendencies aligned with the will of God. As we do this, God is drawing us forth, with boundless light, compassion and acceptance whether we know it or not.

~ Mark Aronoff, writer and counselor

**"Forgive yourself" seems so indulgent. My giving myself a pass isn't that compelling to me.** But my telling the truth and remembering that God loves me and forgives—that's how I get to forgive myself. Sometimes I am not ready to love that person, but I know that you, God, are calling me to love that person.

~ Conversation with TODAY co-anchor Savannah Guthrie

Source: GUIDEPOSTS magazine

## INVESTMENT REPORT



Over the years Gloria Dei has created reserves to provide funds for potential losses from emergencies such as earthquakes or floods, for major property repairs at the church and parsonage, as well as other unexpected large expenses not budgeted for.

These funds have historically been invested at **America's Christian Credit Union (ACCU)** and the Mission Investment Fund (MIF), a Financial Ministry of the ELCA. Both companies provide financing to Christian churches and the MIF provides loans for construction projects at ELCA churches around the country.

During the recent transition between pastors at Gloria Dei some of these reserves invested in Certificates of Deposit were allowed to mature in the event additional capital might be needed during this period. Fortunately, Gloria Dei's finances ran smoothly during the transition to Pastor Ruth and there was no need to tap them.

This past spring and summer the church council approved that the funds would be reinvested into three Certificates of Deposit with varying maturity dates, one at ACCU and two at the MIF. This action will enable our reserves to grow and, through the MIF, provide funds for other ELCA church projects around the USA.

More information on these two companies can be found at:

[Mif.elca.org](http://Mif.elca.org) and [americaschristiancu.com](http://americaschristiancu.com)



# GOOD GIFTS GIVING

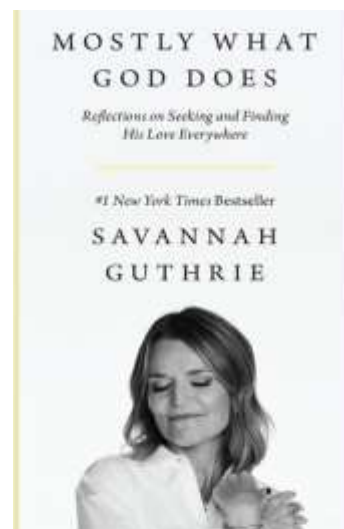
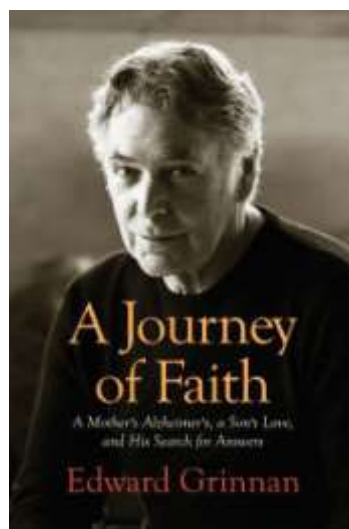
ELCA Good Gifts is your opportunity to generate a smile and appreciation for this unique program that directly helps communities in need! Visit the ELCA website!



## GIVE THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

### Go 'Tail-it' on the mountain!

See our ELCA Good Gifts tree in the Fellowship Hall and consider purchasing pigs, goats, cows, chickens and/or honeybees. Choose an ornament, write your name on the back, enclose a check **made payable to 'Gloria Dei'** and place the check for the animal(s) of your choice in the box next to **the tree. Write 'Good Gifts' on the memo line.**



## FAITH AND GIVING



With less than a week before the U.S. Presidential Election, Christians for Social Action is eager to share a variety of resources to help you engage in our political process.

We want to live into the gospel's promise of reconciliation, wholeness, and restoration—not just this year, but as an ongoing commitment. To help foster that commitment, these resources go beyond just this election season. They can help us advocate for others in the public square and develop a healthy relationship between our faith and politics over the long term.

We invite you to: Read. Listen. Share. Pray. And please Vote!



# ANNOUNCEMENTS, EVENTS & RESOURCES



## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**MAY GOD'S  
ABUNDANCE  
SURROUND YOU...**



- 4 — Pastor Schaar
- 5 — Laura Subke
- 16 — Marilyn Bittle
- 17 — Liam Wacker
- 20 — Lisa Mellow
- 26 — Judi Mellow

...My brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable, if it be of any praise, think on these things.

~ Philippians 4:7

LORD, MAKE US GOOD GUESTS AND HOSTS OF YOUR KINGDOM WHO REFLECT THE HUMILITY AND GENEROSITY OF OUR SAVIOR.

## THANKSGIVING

NOVEMBER 28

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything in prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your request to God, and the peace of God, which passes all understand, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus...

~ Philippians 4:6

## VETERANS DAY

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, NOVEMBER 11



## GLORIOUS DEI NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

NOVEMBER 25

SUBMIT COMMENTS, STORY IDEAS, RESOURCES & SUGGESTIONS via email: pbockman@fullerton.edu



## A SEASON OF REFLECTION

REJOICING IN HIM DAILY RELIEVES US OF COVETING, LEAVING US CONTENTED.

MAY JESUS REDEEM OUR HEART'S DESIRES, MAKING US RICH TOWARD GOD!

## MARY'S PATH

*Changing Lives Two at a Time*

<https://maryspath.org/>

Your support & donations will make a difference.

## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3



**"The best prayer I can imagine is simple: God, help me see things as they really are."**

~ Kate Bowler, writer and professor at Duke Divinity School



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)

**MAY YOU OBSERVE the WORLD with LOVING CONSIDERATION.....**



