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Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

the little church with a big heart!

THOUGHTS ALONG THE WAY...

"The good life is a process, not a state of being. It is a direction, not a destination."

—Carl Rogers

When I first entered seminary as a 39-year-old second-career student I was not always open to the process. Many of the requirements seemed arbitrary. And honestly, though I'm not proud to admit it now, I was arrogant enough to think I should be exempted from some of them. I grumbled when our Old Testament professor told us on our first day of our first class that the New Oxford Annotated NRSV Bible was not only a required text but also that it was the only English translation we were allowed to use not only in his class but in all classes at our seminary and in the entire Graduate Theological Union. What the heck! I already had a perfectly good NIV with lots of notes in it thank you very much. Plus I had spent months as part of the team that recorded and produced the audio version of the NIV. I had lived with that Bible day and night for nearly a year and now I was being told I couldn't use it?

Teaching Parish was another requirement. I would be required to give up one weekday evening a week and Sunday mornings, and maybe other occasional bits of time to teach Adult Education or Sunday School or lead music or even preach on occasion—sort of Internship Life. But what about my weekends? When was I supposed to see my family? I had been planning to drive back to Long Beach from Berkeley at least every other week to see Meri and the kids! When was I supposed to see them? And why wasn't I told about this sooner? And besides, did my years of involvement and leadership at the Very Large Congregation in Southern California count for nothing? Been there, done that, bought the shirt. Several shirts. Can't I get some credit for that?

Then there was the Cross Cultural requirement—six weeks living and ministering in a cultural context very different from your own. I thought I might be given credit and a pass for that summer I spent in the Amazon jungle vaccinating native people. Can't find a culture much more different than that. And it was a church affiliated organization. Can that maybe count? No? Sigh.

"The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity. The fears are paper tigers. You can do anything you decide to do. You can act to change and control your life; and the procedure, the process is its own reward."—Amelia Earhart

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Thoughts Along the Way Continues...

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God does not demand that we prove ourselves worthy of His love, but asks only that we receive it in faith. In so doing, we are truly "born of the Spirit."

~ John 3:6



FEEDBACK

Are you receiving this monthly newsletter? Tell us what you think...Send comments and suggestions to pbockman@fullerton.edu

It took me a while to see the value in all these things I was resisting. It took me a while to make peace with the idea that these weren't just hoops for me to jump through, to see that there was wisdom in the process and very wise persons were guiding it. When we decide to do something, we don't always want to be obedient to the process. Well I don't, anyway. But I've found over and over and over again that if I'll get my ego out of the way, let go of my impulse to rebel, give myself over to the process, and open myself to what those ahead of me on the journey and in the process itself have to teach me, I gain far more than I could have imagined.

"Excellence is a continuous process and not an accident."
—A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

As I began to learn more about biblical languages and began to do my own translations, I began to see for myself why most mainline seminaries prefer the NRSV, but also how every translation is to some degree an interpretation. I began to see fascinating new depths of history, politics, and literary development in the texts of the Bible, but I also began to understand that the Holy Spirit had moved in far more subtle ways than I had previously assumed to bring these texts to our hands in this form.

My teaching parish, St. Mark's in San Francisco, was so utterly different from any parish I'd ever been part of before that I would have had to be a stone not to learn from it. It was the most diverse congregation I've ever been part of. Rich people and homeless street people. LGBTQ and straight. Persons of color, white people, people from different continents and countries, people from different regions of this country—it really was a foretaste of the feast to come. And talk about humbling. Several of the faculty from our seminary, PLTS, were members there, so when I preached, they were in the pews listening. When I taught an Adult Education class on the parables, my Greek reading prof, an eminent New Testament scholar, decided to sit in to cheer me on. White knuckles much? I learned so much there...and most of it simply from being there. I learned things I never would have learned if I had been allowed to complete that requirement at my home congregation.

For Cross Cultural rotation I was assigned to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Inglewood, an African American congregation led by a dynamic and powerful pastor, James Lobdell. Even though Inglewood was just a jaunt down the freeway from home, part of the deal was that I had to live in their community for that six weeks. I was lodged in two different homes. My hours at the church were filled with warmth and grace and welcome. I wrote a piece of music for their choir. I was made to feel like one of the family. The love was palpable. But going "home" at the end of the day was different.

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MANY OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE...

- ◆ **AMONG US—** offer immediate assistance to families of Gloria Dei; take a member to lunch or dinner
- ◆ **Memorial Fund —** help support special needs at Gloria Dei
- ◆ **Bake Cookies—**Share veges & fruit from your garden
- ◆ **Volunteer—**devote time & talents to weekly needs: ushers, counters, fellowship hosting & clean up duty
- ◆ **Lutheran Maritime Ministry—** help purchase bibles and supplies
- ◆ **LSS Food Pantry —** make donations to feed Long Beach residents and the hungry in our community
- ◆ **LSS—** assist in the cost of capital improvements on Pine Avenue in Long Beach
- ◆ **Donate books for the military**
- ◆ **Sponsor Altar Flowers \$18/vase**



PRAYER
changes things



Thoughts Along the Way Continues....

Mine was the only white face in the neighborhood and people would look at me with frank wariness and suspicion. I had my first real experience of what it is like to be the “other,” to be automatically suspect. I learned something troubling and powerful about life here in our own neighborhoods that I never would have experienced if I had been given a pass on that requirement.

Jesus calls us to follow him. In the Gospel of John he gets even more graphic. He tells us to eat him, swallow him, absorb him, because you are what you eat. He wants us to be like him, to be, as Luther put it, “little Christs” in this world. That takes transformation. Transformation is a process. And in one way or another, to one degree or another, most of us resist the process. Some want or expect an instant conversion. But transformation very rarely works like that. Some want full credit for the goodness that’s already in them and the knowledge they’ve already acquired. But part of the great gift of God’s grace just might require you to unlearn or relearn a few things, and it always requires you to leave any ideas about your own goodness at the side of the road...otherwise your eyes will be focused on yourself and your stuff. You may not see the others on the road who have so much to teach you, and your arms and heart will be too full to pick up the goodness that’s waiting for you on the journey.

Pro Gloria Dei Pastor Steve



IRVINE & NELSON WEDDING CELEBRATION



CONGREGATION UPDATE

Greetings -

Your church council met August 6. We received the usual reports.

We have some funds remaining in the kitchen account. A fold-down counter will be installed on the social hall side of the pass through window. This will make it easier for us to get our beverages, and snacks after service.



The Church picnic is coming up on Sept 16. Marti Engle has agreed to be our fearless leader. She may be calling on you for help. Please do so.

Please consider serving as a volunteer. The worship committee is asking for people to volunteer to read the lessons during the Sunday service. The counting committee also needs volunteers. This involves two people checking the offerings after church and entering the data into a computer. It is not hard, it just takes 2 people to complete this ½ hour task. Please contact the church office to volunteer...thanks!

We had a very informative evening when our missionary in China came to give an update on her important ministry and God's work. We enjoyed dinner and then appreciated learning about the impact her work has on Christian lay leaders. Want to learn more? Seek out information on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall. We encourage you to help fund our dedicated servant – see Pastor Steve for details!

Please remember to pray for our nation, our church family, the people listed on our beautiful outside Prayer Wall and our own families and friends.

Have a Glorious Dei. Margie Brown, Council Vice-president

**JOIN US FOR A UNIQUE
FOOD EXPERIENCE !**

SHRIMP BOIL

**RSVP BY SEPTEMBER 10
SEND AN EMAIL TO MARTIE ENGLE
<MARTIE1@VERIZON.NET>**

**GRAB A BIB FOR OUR
ANNUAL GLORIA DEI
GATHERING
(AKA SUNDAY PICNIC)**

SEPTEMBER 16 @ NOON

**MARINE STADIUM PARK
(FREE WILL OFFERING \$10 PER PERSON)**



SPREADING JOY & CHANGING LIVES

“Love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor.” ~ Roman 12 :10



THIS IS CHRIST'S CHURCH.

THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU HERE.

FAITH.HOPE.LOVE

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person--questions, complexities and all.

Join us as we do God's work in Christ's name for the life of the world.

On Sunday, August 26, we bade a tearful Godspeed and farewell to **Liz Asenas-Alt**, who has been faithfully providing child care and Sunday School for us at Gloria Dei for the past four years. Liz is leaving us to pursue her Master's degree studies at John Cabot University in Rome, Italy where she will be immersing herself in the study of medieval art, especially medieval Roman monuments. Her husband, Tyler, will also be continuing his studies in theology in Rome while teaching ESL classes, and will have access to some of the finest theological and ancient text libraries in the world. Keep them in your prayers.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS — SEPTEMBER 2018

1 — Saturday

2 — SUNDAY

WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
PRAYERS OF HEALING

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

3 — Monday

LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

4 — Tuesday

5 — Wednesday

6 — Thursday

7 — Friday

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

8 — Saturday

9 — SUNDAY

WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION

"GOD'S WORK. OUR HANDS."
DAY OF SERVICE SUNDAY

... 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.

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

Happy Birthday Pastor Ted Conter

10 — Monday

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

CHURCH COUNCIL MTG
@ 7:00PM

11 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM

12 — Wednesday

Happy Birthday
Barbara White
David Kahakauwila



13 — Thursday

14 — Friday

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

15 — Saturday

LSS WORK PARTY 10AM — NOON

16 — SUNDAY

WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION/NOISY OFFERING

ANNUAL GATHERING:
SHRIMP BOIL

@ MARINE STADIUM PARK
[after service]

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

17 — Monday

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

18 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM

Happy Birthday
Margie Brown
Kalani Caldwell



19 — Wednesday

20 — Thursday

ELCW LUNCH @ 11:00 AM

Happy Birthday Meri Beckman

21 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday Howard Davis

22 — Saturday

Happy Birthday Tiana Kahakauwila

23 — SUNDAY

SUNDAY SCHOOL — 8:30 AM
WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM
HOLY COMMUNION
FELLOWSHIP/
COOKIE SUNDAY

- O.A. MTG. @ 7:00 PM

Happy Anniversary
Gary & Cathy Schneider

24 — Monday

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

Happy Anniversary
Jim & Lauren Minte

25 — Tuesday

ADULT EDUCATION @ 10AM & 7 PM

26 — Wednesday

27 — Thursday

28 — Friday

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

Happy Birthday Craig McCarty

29 — Saturday

30 — SUNDAY

WORSHIP @ 10:00 AM

Happy Anniversary
Dave & Cyndy Manley



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)

