

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

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February 2021

SPREAD LOVE

The Antidote to Our Current Polarization

"The key to reconstructing civility is for us to learn anew
the virtue of acting with love toward our neighbors."

-Stephen L. Carter

With the unprecedented events of this last month and the storming of our nation's capital by people with intent to do violence and harm to their Fellow Americans, I thought it would be good to share with you an article from an old issue of *AliveNow!* By Eric H. F. Law. Although written almost a decade ago they seem to speak directly to our current situation:

Most of us have heard of "*six degrees of separation*" which refers to the idea that everyone is approximately six relationships away from any other person on earth. This means I can make a chain of "a friend of a friend" statements that connects me with any person in the world in six steps or fewer.

Not so well-known is the theory of "*three degrees of influence*." According to this theory by Nicholas A. Christakis and James H. Fowler in their book, **Connected: The Surprising Power of Our Social Networks and How They Shape Our Lives**, "Everything we do or say tends to ripple through our network, having an impact on our friends (one degree), our friends' friends (two degrees), and even our friends' friends' friends (three degrees). Our influence gradually dissipates and ceases to have a noticeable effect on people beyond the social frontier that lies at three degrees of separation." This means if I am happy, my friends are more likely to be happy and my friends' friends are more likely to be happy and my friends' friends' friends' are also more likely to be happy. If I am suicidal, my friends' friends' friends' are more likely to be suicidal. Whether we know it or not, our network of friendships can spread goodness and blessing, or destructiveness and curse.

An inspiring sermon and worship at a church with 100 participants can have the potential of

reaching (if each person in the network has at least 5 friends) 500 people in the first degree of influence, 2,500 people in the second degrees and 12,500 people in the third degrees. In a small town of under 10,000 people, this means that what happens in worship for a small church can have the potential to influence almost everybody in the community.

We have a great responsibility then, for the networks of which we are a part. We have a choice to use our networks to control or empower, to spread fear or build trust, to propagate hate or share love, to break down community or build it up.

Jesus called his followers friends and invited them to abide in him and his love so that they might bear fruit. The responsibility of Christians, one of the largest faith networks in the world, is to stay connected with Jesus, who in turn stays connected with God's unconditional love for all. Christians are called to spread this love through our networks, bearing fruit that will last."

Your Fellow Pilgrim on the Journey,
Pastor Greg

*The fruit of the Spirit is Love, joy,
peace, patience, kindness, generosity,
faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
There is no law against such things.*

- GALATIANS 5:22-23

Quotes on responding to Violence

Confession

By Jim Melchiorre

God of the universe, who considers every person on earth your child, we confess that we have ignored the ancient scriptural instruction to do justice, love kindness, and especially, to walk humbly. Guide us as we seek a gentler and more respectful path, to retain the passion to right the wrongs we see, as Zechariah tells us, “not by might, nor by power” but by your spirit living in us. Amen.

The Dividing Line

By Alexander Solzhenitsyn
The Gulag Archipelago

If only it were all so simple!
If only there were evil people somewhere
insidiously committing evil deeds
and it were necessary only to separate them
from the rest of us and destroy them.
But the dividing line between good and evil
cuts through the heart of every human being,
and who is willing to destroy a piece of his
[or her] own heart?

The Antidote

By Patrick Allen
Love at its Best: When Church Is a Mess

“When gossip, anger, and hurt feelings swirl, the temptation is to join in the fray and even go on the defensive in an attempt to protect ourselves. Sadly, this only stirs things up even more. The antidote is patience and kindness – offering grace, hoping for the best, and loving all the wounded souls present. After all, we are, all of us, hungry, thirsty, strangers, naked, sick, or in bondage of one kind or another.”

Violence for Violence

By Martin Luther King, Jr.
“Advice for Living”/Ebony, February 1958

“To return violence for violence
does nothing but intensify the existence
of violence and evil in the universe.
Someone must have sense enough
to cut off the chains of violence and hate.”

10 ways to Disagree without Fighting

By Karen M. Leet

1. **Listen first.** Hear the other person’s viewpoint without interrupting or arguing.
2. **Try to see the other point of view.** How would you feel if you were in their shoes?
3. **Be patient as the other person expresses views.**
4. Think before you speak. Then state your view calmly.
5. **Be respectful.** No matter how much you disagree, treat the other person with respect. Remind yourself that God loves that other person the same way God loves you.
6. **Pray!** Before, during, and after any confrontation or disagreement, ask God to guide you and help you to resolve conflicts.
7. **Look for compromise.** Prayerfully try to find a way to settle things that’s fair to both sides.
8. **Keep your faith in God.** In trying to understand and to compromise, don’t give up on the things you know are right.
9. **Forgive.** If someone says something unkind, ask God to help you forgive. Don’t hold a grudge.
10. **Be a peacemaker.** As much as possible, try to get along with others. Even if a conflict doesn’t work out the way you hoped, keep asking for God’s help.

From *Pockets: For Kids Who Love God*, May 2012
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**Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
FEBRUARY 2021
WATCH ONLINE WORSHIP SERVICES
ON SUNDAY MORNINGS**

Sunday worship Service can be viewed via the Gloria Dei Facebook page and the our website.

WEBSITE

www.gloria-dei-elcasm.org

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/gloriadeisantamaria>

CHURCH COUNCIL

Monday, February 8th – 6:30 p.m.
(via Zoom)

CONFIRMATION CLASS

Wednesday, February 3 & 10th – 7:00 p.m.
(via Zoom)

WELCA NEWS

**There will not be a WELCA Board Meeting
or Bible Studies in February.**

ADULT BOOK STUDY

“Everyday Spirituality”

Sunday, February 7th – 7:00 p.m.
(via Zoom)

READERS FOR FEBRUARY

February 7th – Betty Hansen
February 14th – Marilyn Colman
February 21st – Margaret Campbell
February 28th – Jerri Matzke

A Very Special Thank You!

Dear Gloria Dei Family,
Thank you so very much for the special year end gift which was presented to me this last month. Your generosity as a congregation overwhelms me, and Dona and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for taking such great care of us. I feel privileged to be part of such a giving and caring congregation.

God Bless You All,
Pastor Greg Kintzi

ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE FOR IGLESIA LUTERANA



Winter brings a time of little or no work for our agriculture workers who depend on it to feed their families. It is especially crucial this year because school is not in session to provide breakfasts and lunches for students that are hungry. The schools have been handing out pick-up food, but that is a transportation problem for most of our families

Angie, Pastor Salazar's wife, tells me that the pantry is almost empty. Please mail a donation to the church office (marked Iglesia Food Drive), or drop one by the office, and we will see that they get food.

Thank you and God bless you as you help care for the hungry in our community.

Betty Hansen

JOURNEYS WITH ANGELS



Do you believe in angels? The cute little girls in angel costumes we see in the Christmas pageant? The ones that sang brilliantly in the skies near Nazareth and terrified the shepherds? Or biblical angels?

We have a fascinating study on angels in our Gather magazine, and you are urged to read it. In the words of Martin Luther: “If you picture the Bible to be a mighty tree and every word a little branch, I have shaken every one of these branches because I wanted to know what it was and what it meant,” Starting with January there are 4 sessions in which we savor the biblical branches and watch for angels.

Later, when the pandemic permits, we plan to gather and share what we have discovered in these wonderful studies.

Betty Hansen for Welca



FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

2nd	Harry Naugle
6th	Caleb Thompson
7th	Shaelah Grace Jones
8th	Mark Finn
8th	Norman Bihr
10th	Everett James Cordova
14th	Erik Brendan Collier
15th	Eric Jones
16th	Eliza Jane Ellis
17th	Tom Kelly
18th	Ralph Miner
19th	Tony Craig
20th	Evan Ellis
22nd	Norman Rushing
25th	Jessy Rushing
24th	Stephen Kitts
24th	Kelley Persons
27th	Ron Boyd



ANNIVERSARIES

2nd	Ken & Susan Hampton
13th	Jake & Amy (Kai) Campbell
17 th	Quince & Maureen LaGrange

PRAYER REQUEST

Please keep the following people in your thoughts and prayers. Prayers for families mourning the loss of loved ones, Norm Bihr's friend in NB as he begins cancer treatments, the Kai's nephew Adam, Diana's mother Dona, Margaret Campbell's friend Donna whose son has pneumonia due to covid continued prayers for our friends at Atterdag, Renate Sanders, Dr. Vicki, & Chris Frederiksen, for strength and healing for all who are dealing with illness from Covid-19 and other related illnesses, health concerns & undergoing treatments, & all family members and friends not mentioned who are in need of the Lord's healing touch.

To My Gloria Dei Family,

Thank you so much for the thoughtful Christmas gift I received from the congregation. I was surprised and my heart is filled with much gratitude. Thank you so much for your kindness.
I love you all.

Peace & Blessings,
Jeanette Brieske



Our Deepest Sympathy and prayers to Joan Simonsen and family as they grieve the passing of beloved husband, father & grandfather, Lynn Simonsen. Lynn went to his heavenly home on December 28, 2020. A memorial service for family was held at Gloria Dei on January 23. Pastor Greg officiated.

After a brief battle with bile duct cancer, our beloved Lynn entered his heavenly home on December 28th. Donald Lynn Simonsen was born on June 8, 1947 to Donald Abbott Simonsen and Frances M. Simonsen in Glendale, CA. He grew up in La Canada, graduating from La Canada high school in 1965. He attended Biola University, graduating in 1969. While there, he fell in love with Carol Jean Brunner. They married in 1969. They moved to Santa Barbara, where they raised their four children: Andrew, Corie, Stacey, and Robert. They were active members of St. Athanasius Orthodox Church and Lynn formed many dear and lasting friendships there. Sadly, Carol's life on earth ended in 1991.



Lynn was a real estate developer and home builder, and he worked with his father for many years. He moved to Santa Maria in 1993 to manage their Guadalupe project. In 1994 he met Joan Gross at a YMCA aerobics class. They were married in 1996 and Lynn became step dad to Erica and Christoph Gross. Lynn and Joan became active in Gloria Dei Lutheran Church in Orcutt.

Lynn had a great sense of humor and always made me laugh. He was an avid reader and very knowledgeable, but he was quiet and humble. He would rather hear your opinions than share his. He loved playing golf and looked forward to days with his golf buddies. After he retired he became quite a good cook. But more than anything, Lynn loved spending time with his family. The best days were holidays and birthdays spent with his family. As one friend said to me, "If there were more Lynns in the world, the world would be a better place". He was the love of my life, and I will cherish my memories of him forever.

Lynn was preceded in death by his father Donald. He is survived by his mother Frances, his wife Joan, his brother Daniel (Jody), along with his children Andrew Simonsen (Alyssa), Corie Sieck (Brian), Stacey Newman, Robert Simonsen (Leah), Erica Kerrin (Steve), and Christoph Gross. He is also survived by nine grandchildren and one great granddaughter.

FUN FACTS FOR A PANDEMIC

Part Nine

FAUCI EFFECT:

The number of people applying to medical school is up 18 percent compared to last year. Applications at Stanford alone were up 50 percent, with 11,000 applications vying for 90 openings. The spike is reportedly driven by the example of medical workers and public health figures like Anthony Fauci, who are working to address the pandemic. There was a similar though less dramatic spike in medical school applications after 9/11. (NPR, Dec. 7th)

Vaccine Resistance:

A significant number of religious people are skeptical of the Covid-19 vaccines. Pew reported that roughly half of white evangelicals and 59 percent of Black Protestants said they definitely or probably will not be vaccinated. Cardinal Wilton Gregory, the first African American cardinal in the Catholic Church, said that the Black community's skepticism is rooted in disturbing chapters of American medical history in which Black Americans have been experimented on without consent. On December 17, the Vatican issued a statement assuring Catholics it is morally acceptable to receive vaccines created from cell lines from aborted fetuses. The witness of faith leaders being vaccinated could be crucial in increasing the confidence of the other people of faith. (RNS, December 10; Vatican News, December 21)

Chef Larry the Lizard:

Chef Valerie Musser needed a quarantine project after her catering business shut down last year. She was working on a cookbook, and one day she involved her bearded dragon, Lenny. "He actually loves wearing hats and posing for photos," she says, so she found him a tiny chef's hat and made miniature versions of recipes, posting photos on Instagram. The positive response was overwhelming. One hundred and thirty-four pages later, lizard and human published their book, in which Chef Lenny serves up dishes such as chicken pot pie, biscuits and gravy, and blueberry muffins.



Interreligious Cooperation:

A Jewish deli is helping a Catholic Church battle food insecurity on the South Side of Chicago, a predominantly Black community where 20 percent of the people live under the poverty line. It began when a Honda dealer, wanting to support his favorite deli, bought 1000 sandwiches, which he and the activist priest Michael Pfleger handed out at Saint Sabina Church. The deli is also fundraising to give food to first responders and Chicago nonprofit organizations. The effort helps feed people; it also keeps the deli workers employed. (Forward, December 21)

For the Birds:

A new study reveals that human happiness correlates to the number of bird species in a given area. The presence of 14 additional bird species provided as much satisfaction as earning an additional \$150 a month, leading scientist to conclude that conservation is as important for human well-being as financial security. (*EcoWatch*, December 8)

Climbing a Skyscraper in a Wheelchair:

Last week Hong Kong watched breathlessly as Lai Chiwai scaled a skyscraper. The 37 year old champion rock climber became paralyzed from the waist down after a car accident nine years ago. Since then, he has climbed by attaching his wheelchair to a pulley system and using his upper-body strength to haul himself upward. On his 10-hour ascent, Lai reached a height of 820 feet before dangerous winds forced him to stop. “Some people think that we are always weak, [that] we need people’s pity.” He said. “It doesn’t have to be like that. If a disabled person can shine, they can at the same time bring about opportunity, hope, bring about light.”

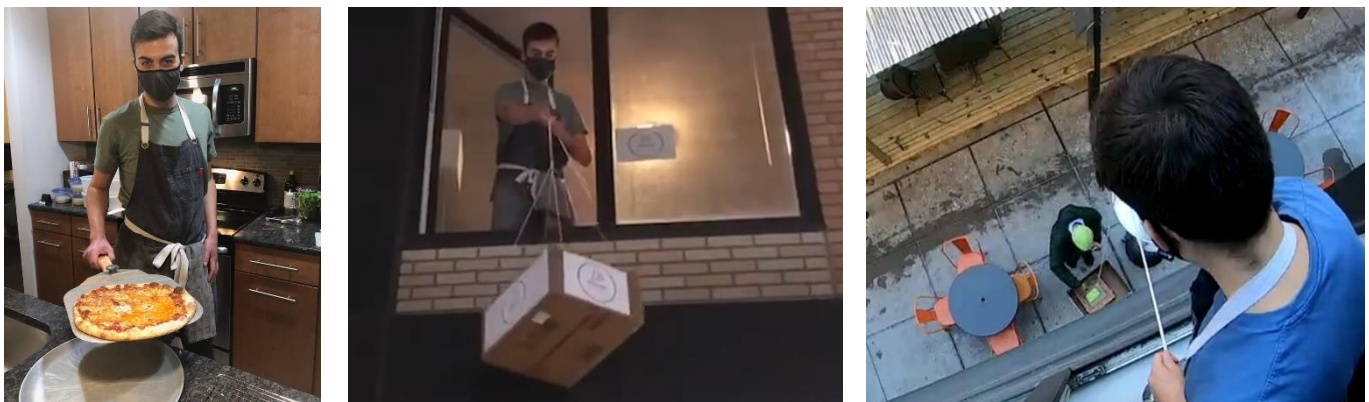


The Power of Human Touch:

One of the most devastating consequences of social distancing is a lack of ‘social touch,’ according to neuroscientists. Social touching, like hugging or patting on the back, triggers a release of oxytocin, which lowers the heart rate and slows cortisone production, both of which help to regulate mood and can also impact the immune system. According to research data, young people are most at risk for touch-starved depression. One work around? Grooming. Research showed that people who groomed themselves more experienced less loneliness. Washing your hair activates the same nerves as a hug. (Guardian, December 19)

Pizza for Charity:

After canceling a pizza party at the beginning of the pandemic, Ben Berman had to decide what to do with the ingredients. “I didn’t think it was a good idea to eat 16 pizzas all by myself,” says the University of Pennsylvania grad student. SO he put the pies in a box attached to a string and lowered them from his second-story window to friends on the street below. Soon, Berman began regularly dropping pizzas to strangers, asking only that they donate to a good cause in return. He’s now raised more than \$32,000 for charity, and plans to continue for years to come.



Attack Squirrels:

A neighborhood in Queens, N.Y., is under siege from a band of savage squirrels. Residents of the Rego Park area say the bushy-tailed rodents leap on people, crawl up their bodies, and bite and scratch them. Some wary residents are now leaving their homes armed with shovels. Micheline Fredrick, 56, tried to fight back against a squirrel who attacked her – a battle that she described as an “MMA cage match.” The squirrel didn’t care,” she said, “it just wanted something – it wanted blood.



Love Themed February DAILY PRAYER CALENDAR FOR KIDS



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Read Romans 5:8 and praise God for His unfailing, unconditional love!	2 Love is patient. When is it hard for you to be patient? Ask God to help you.	3 Love is kind. Ask God to show you someone to be kind to today!	4 Love does not envy. Is there someone or something that make you jealous? Pray about it today.	5 Love does not boast. Ask God to help you in the words that you say.	6 Love is not proud. Ask God to help you be humble in every situation.
7 Love does not dishonor others. Ask God to help you show love and respect to all people.	8 Love is not self-seeking. Ask God to show you ways to serve others today!	9 Love is not easily angered. Ask God to help you control your anger!	10 Love keeps no record of wrongs. Are you holding a grudge? Ask God to help you forgive that person!	11 Love rejoices with the truth. Ask God to help you to always know what the Truth is.	12 Love bears all things. Ask God to help you be the kind of person everyone can count on no matter what!	13 Love believes all things. Ask God to help you believe in Him and trust Him always!
14 Love hopes all things. Ask God to help you be a person to spread hope in the world. Happy Valentine's Day!!!	15 Love endures all things. Ask God to help you be strong and stick with Him — even when things go wrong.	16 Love never fails. Ask God to help you have the kind of love that sticks by others no matter what.	17 Read 1 John 4:19. Spend time today thanking God for His love for you!	18 Read Romans 12:9. Ask God to give you a sincere love and to help you cling to what is good!	19 Read John 15:13. Ask God to give you this kind of love for others!	20 Read Romans 8:38-39. Spend time thanking God that nothing can separate you from His love!
21 Read Mark 12:30. Ask God to help you love Him with every part of you!	22 Read 1 Timothy 4:12. Ask God to help you set an example for others by the way that you love!	23 Read Matthew 5:44. Pray for those people that you have a hard time loving — and those people you might consider enemies.	24 Read 1 John 4:9. Spend time today thanking God for Jesus!	25 Read Ephesians 5:2. Ask God to help you walk in the way of love!	26 Read Hebrews 13:1-2. Ask God to help you share His love with others!	27 Read 1 John 2:15. Ask God to help you not love anything in this world or of this world.
28 Read Psalm 136. Make a list of ways that God has shown His faithful love to you.						

FEBRUARY HUMOR

Humor for the Hard Times

"Email messages from seniors complied by JN consulting editor Angelican Bishop David R. Francoeur of Palm City, FL:

"I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly."

"If you hear me talking to myself, I'm having a staff meeting."

"As I watch this generation try to rewrite history, one thing I'm sure of – it will be misspelled and have no punctuation."

☺

"You drop something when you're younger, you pick it up. You drop something when you're older, you stare at it."

-Rev. Barbara Bartholomew
Grace Lutheran Church, Wadsworth, OH

☺

After the service, the pastor noticed one elderly woman who was sitting in one of the back pews, nearly in tears, rocking back and forth. Concerned, the pastor walked over to her and heard her say, "How long, O Lord? How long?"

Touched, the pastor laid a hand on the gray head, and said, "Ma'am, God is merciful and has heard you. I am sure He will help you." She smiled and thanked him. The pastor turned and was about to walk away when he heard the old woman shout, "Praise the Lord!" He saw the old woman run into the now-vacated women's restroom.

-via Rev. Dr. Karl R. Kraft

Quarantine humor, via Rev. Dr. Karl R. Kraft

"It's been a great blessing to be at home with the wife these past few months. We've caught up on everything I've done wrong in the last 20 years."

"So let me get this straight: there's no cure for a virus that can be *killed* by sanitizer and hand soap?"

"How long is this social distancing supposed to last? My husband keeps trying to come into the house."

"When this virus thing is over with, I still want some of you to stay away from me."

God's Kids Say the Funniest Things

"Letter to God from a 6-year-old girl:

"Dear God,

Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones, why don't you just keep the ones you got now?"

☺

A five year old decided to run away. His neighbor lady saw him go as she worked in her garden. He trudged down the sidewalk, past her house, hauling a little suitcase in his red wagon. He disappeared around the block. A little bit later, he reappeared and went past her again. By the third time, she finally asked, "Watchca doing?" He answered, "I'm running away from home!"

She said, "So why do you keep circling around the block?" He answered softly, "cuz I'm not allowed to cross the street!"



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FEBRUARY 2021



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
			Confirmation Class 7:00 pm			Film Service 10 am
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Online Service 9:00 am Fellowship 11 am Book Study 7 pm 5 Epiphany	Church Council 6:30 pm (via Zoom)		Confirmation Class 7:00 pm	Central Coast Conf. Clergy (ZOOM)		Film Service 10 am
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Online service 9:00 am Fellowship 11 am <i>Happy Valentine's Day!</i> Transfiguration						Film Service 10 am
21	18	19	20	21	22	23
Online service 9:00 am Fellowship 11 am 1 Lent						Film Service 10 am
28						
Online service 9:00 am Fellowship 11 am Drive through Communion 2:00 p.m. 2 Lent						

Our Mission Statement: To Know God, Love God, Serve God

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

4380 Orcutt Road

Santa Maria, CA 93455

(805) 937-3905

Pastor: Greg J. Kintzi

Email: gloria.dei@verizon.net

Website: gloria-dei-elcasam.org

<https://www.facebook.com/gloriadeisantamaria>

Sunday worship Service can be viewed via the Gloria Dei Facebook page and on our website.

WEBSITE

www.gloria-dei-elcasam.org

FACEBOOK

<https://www.facebook.com/gloriadeisantamaria>

FEBRUARY 2021

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