

The Tree of Life

Our logo is a green tree, well-shaped, healthy and strong. Trees have a special place in the scriptures. They are symbols of life and fertility and God's abundance. From the garden that God created in the very beginning, filled with trees; *'The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground— trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.'* (Genesis 2:9, NIV) to the tree of life in the New Jerusalem, bearing 12 crops a year. *"And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations."* (Revelation 22:2 NIV) These trees are for the blessing of all people, a source of life and hope.



The trees in the first garden are both a symbol of God's abundant provision, but also of the limits God imposes. Humans are to have this and no more. The tree they were forbidden to eat the fruit of has stood for all the boundaries human beings have crossed against their own wellbeing and better judgment. It always leads to destruction and alienation. When we do what is not ours to do, we get in the way and end up being distant from God. We see it so much in our world today. The pain and the suffering imposed by the crossing of limits that are not meant to be crossed is evident in so many ways.

But thankfully that is not the end of the story. God's mercy and love are the end of the story. And it is these trees at the beginning that give the 'tree' of the cross its meaning. The cross is the source of all life. In the power of God's love to overcome death and the grave was given through the cross and the death it brought. Death and the power of hatred, jealousy, and empire was overcome in the power of the resurrection.

Jeremiah tells us that the person of faith will be sustained, and thus be part of maintaining the nation and its wellbeing. I am convinced that has a lot to tell us about God's purpose for us... as followers of Jesus, as God's church, as how to be the best human beings we can be.

*"But blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence is in God.
They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.
It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit."* (Jeremiah 17:7-8, NIV)

People of faith are a resilient people. We can handle a lot. We are called to be like a tree planted by the water that remains strong through drought and storm. No matter what comes our way in life, we are able to call on the deep well of faith that will see us through it. No matter how much hot water we get ourselves into, we will be refreshed and restored. It is a great comfort to me to trust that no matter what I am going through, I am never alone.

But there are a lot of people in our community that feel alone. There are a lot of people who feel like life has dried them up and there is nothing to refresh them. Our community is filled with people who are afraid of what will happen tomorrow. It is our calling and task to reach out to people outside of the church. It is not enough that we are the church and are of comfort to each other. We exist for the good of the world. We exist for the blessing of the people outside the church.

I envision our church as a big tree providing shade for the weary to rest in, providing sustenance for the depleted to fill themselves, providing a safe place for those who have been tossed around by the storms of life. We are to be the answer to someone's prayer. We are to be the tree of life for those we meet. How we do this is ours to sort out, but it starts with building relationships with our neighbors, getting to know the people in our community, being a blessing to everyone we meet.

Blessings to you,
Pastor Karla

IN AND AROUND OUR COMMUNITY



Congratulations Cyndi Jones!
Photos are from her ordination

TACO NEWS

Excerpts from the July TACO Times:

TACO (Third Avenue Charitable Org.) raised over \$15,000 this year with their "Empty Bowls" events taking place at four (4) locations around the county.

The sad news is that the "Homeless Treasures" rummage sale that brought in \$8K this past year has no team to head it up. TACO is in need of a fundraiser to help cover this shortfall. ANY IDEAS? Contact them at 619-235-9445 or write on their Facebook page. Watch for details of another event to support TACO—"No Show Gala", their "imaginary event of the year." No dressing up or leaving your house, no cost for event space or catering, 100% of your donation will go to TACO services directly helping those they serve. The event is imaginary. The need is real!

September
Happy
Birthday



Maryella Cheek	1st
Jordan Cummings	5th
Sydney Cummings	5th
Riley Wasiluk	10th
Andy Attwood	13th
Linda Trousdale	15th
Maureen Miller	21st
Lee Wolf	23rd
Linda Peters	27th

DID YOU KNOW...

- ◆ We had great volunteers jump in and help with clearing the weeds from the Labyrinth for our prayer walk outreach for "God's Work. Our Hands." Thank you all! Many hands make light work.
- ◆ The ELCA Chaplaincy Scholarship fund is at \$1,195. including the receipt of our \$500. match. You still have time before Veterans Day to contribute to this worthwhile cause. Checks are still being accepted to GLC with a note Chaplain Scholarship. A gift of any amount will be gratefully accepted, every little bit helps; it all adds up. Thank You to those that have already contributed.
- ◆ San Diego Choral Society rehearses right here at GLC and they invite all women who love to sing to join them for a fun and rewarding experience. They rehearse in the Garden Room every Tuesday from 7-8:45 p.m. First rehearsal for the upcoming holiday season was Tuesday, August 27th. All levels of experience are welcome. No audition required. You may still join on Sept. 3rd or Sept. 10th. They sing a variety of music - show tunes, pop, classical and old standards. And of course Christmas music! They perform for residents at assisted living centers all over San Diego. The season concludes with a formal concert for the public on Saturday, December 21st. For more information please see the website www.sdchoralsociety.org or email Sandy at sdchoralsociety@aol.com They are looking forward to singing with you!
- ◆ *MMACC Book Club* - The MMACC Book Club will meet on Wednesday, September 11, 2019 at 7:00 p.m. in the Garden Room. The book they will discuss is **WHERE THE CRAWDADS SING** by **Delia Owens**. If you're a reader GLC is invited to attend. If you have any questions, please contact Bev at 619-322-9342.

A Sanctuary Church Body: What Does this Mean?

From the Bishop, August 13, 2019

The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God. - Leviticus 19:34

Now after they had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod. - Matthew 2:13-15a

At the recent 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, a memorial that was amended to include language naming the ELCA a "sanctuary church body" was passed. What does this mean for our denomination and for the congregations of the Pacifica Synod?

First, let me tell you what it does NOT mean. It does not call for any congregation to do anything illegal. It does not call for congregations that do not wish to do so to house or shelter immigrants.

It does call for our congregations to work for conditions that will enable immigrants to be safe, particularly as they legally apply for entry into the United States. We have seen the effects of family separations on news programs, and have read reports about unsanitary conditions in holding "camps" where immigrants who are legally applying for asylum are housed. Our church is asking us to remember that Jesus was an asylum seeker as a child, emigrating from Israel to Egypt with his parents who feared he would be killed by King Herod. We are asked to remember that, over and over again in the Old Testament, we are called to love the alien, and in the New Testament, Jesus calls us to love God by loving our neighbor. We are called to love immigrants by doing what we can to advocate for their safety and security.

The ELCA is also concerned about the safety of immigrants who are denied asylum. We and our ecumenical partners work in their countries of origin so that those who are deported can find safety and employment opportunities when they are returned. Those in Honduras who have utilized these services have a high (88-95%) rate of staying at home rather than seeking to return to the U.S.

Finally, I urge us all to pray not only for immigrants, but also for Border Patrol Agents, Homeland Security workers, immigration attorneys, and immigration court judges. We are called to love all of our neighbors, and while our country is divided on many issues related to immigration, the just treatment of immigrants that secures their safety is often in the hands of those who work in the system, some of whom are ELCA members. We pray for them, that they may do what is just and provide safety to the most vulnerable in our immigration system.

For your information, I have included links to the following:

- The [amended memorial passed](#) by majority of the Assembly, along with background provided to the Assembly by the Memorials Committee;
- [Talking points](#) about being a Sanctuary Denomination provided in consultation with ELCA's AMMPARO ministry and written by Bishop Paul Erickson of the Milwaukee Synod;
- [A video](#) showing how the work in Honduras is helping those who have been denied asylum a future with hope in their home country.

These links may also be found on the 2019 [ELCA Churchwide Assembly web page](#) on the Pacifica Synod website. As they become available, links will be added to the page along with other information that shares the work of the Assembly as a whole.

May God help us to do as God commands, to love God and love our neighbor. God bless you and your congregation as you consider how to love the alien in your midst.

Yours in Christ, Bishop Andy Taylor, Pacifica Synod, ELCA

(If you have a hard copy of this Witness go to www.pacificasynod.org/news-events/2019-elca-churchwide-assembly and you will see the direct links listed above.)

Thanks from the heart...

Dear Gethsemane,

The Contemplative Outreach of San Diego community sends a heartfelt Thank You for the generous use of the Sacred Space, and the beautiful labyrinth and church grounds for our contemplative retreat for our leadership on August 3.

Please know how much each person enjoyed and was enriched by our gathering together, in a space filled with Love and Spirit. We are ever so grateful and so appreciate your hospitality.

Many thanks and Blessings,

Diane Langworthy

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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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Check out our Website
at
www.gethsemanesd.org

Gethsemane Lutheran Church...
grounded in the gospel, anchored in Word
and Sacrament, traditional yet creative,
seeking to be God's people in this time and
place.



Happy Labor Day,
the **first Monday in September**, is a
creation of the labor movement and is
dedicated to the social and economic
achievements of American workers.

Weekly Opportunities

Worship with us each
Sunday in September
8:00 a.m. Contemplative
Communion Service
9:30 a.m. Classic
Communion Service

September 22nd is Gospel Sunday

Monday

10:30 a.m. Text Study

(Labor Day Text Study is moved to Tuesday September 3rd)

Tuesday

12:30 p.m. Centering Prayer