

## Dignity

Earlier in November Miss Vicki and I attended an event for Christian preschool directors and the pastors who support them. The speaker presented issues in education regarding diversity in the school. One of the very important parts of education is preserving the dignity of the students, and building on their unique qualities while giving them skills for living. Dignity is an important element in the mental and physical health of children. Protecting a child's dignity allows them to preserve their self-respect. It is true of adults too, in all kinds of settings, not just schools. It is especially important in the context of a congregation called to do God's work in the world.



When we welcome people into worship, into fellowship, into partnership in ministry, and celebrate who they are, we honor God's creation in them. The speaker outlined the research done by Professor Donna Hicks of Harvard University that identified ten essential qualities necessary in an environment to preserve the dignity of the people who are part of that community, whether it is a classroom or a congregation, a work place or a family. The ten qualities are:

- Acceptance of Identity
- Recognition
- Acknowledgment
- Inclusion
- Safety
- Fairness
- Independence
- Understanding
- Benefit of the Doubt
- Accountability

Accepting people for who they are, not trying to change them, but simply loving them with the love of Christ in us, validating their talents and recognizing their hard work, intelligence, creativity or helpfulness gives them a gift. When we give them our full attention and listen to their story we acknowledge the building blocks of how they have come to be who they are. Setting up the congregation (or classroom/family/work place) so that all trust that they belong there and that their contribution will be valued helps them feel safe. Psychological safety is as important as physical safety. Being able to trust that your story will be valued and your experience will be validated goes a long way. Treating people with justice and equity so that all have a fair shake at full participation in the life of the community, family or classroom makes a difference too. All this leads us to an environment where people aren't afraid to take some initiative and feel empowered to do what they need to do to build their lives in a way they are proud of and works for them. Finally, the last three, listening to understand where people are coming from and what matters to them, giving them the benefit of the doubt and being accountable to others are all ways of honoring the other by giving them a chance to show they are trustworthy, express their viewpoint and take responsibility for their own actions.

While there is always room for improvement, Gethsemane is a community which is pretty good at protecting the dignity of all who come in our doors. We appreciate and celebrate the uniqueness of every person. We value the journey that has brought us together and trust that God loves us too much to leave us the way we have always been. Keep up the good work, Gethsemane. That's what being the body of Christ is all about.

As we head into the Christmas holidays, expect that there will be some extra people around. Welcome them with the love of Christ. Preserve their dignity. Give them a sense of who we really are as a congregation. Live the gospel.

Blessings to you and Glad Advent Season...

*Pastor Karla*

## GLC ENDOWMENT FUND

### Call for Grant Proposals

The Endowment Committee (Mary Erlenborn, Jerry Albert, Joanne Driskill, Dave Pfizenmeier, Debbie Attwood, and Pastor Karla as advisory) invites members of the congregation to submit grant proposals for consideration at our next meeting on Sunday, December 15th.

Gethsemane's Endowment Fund was established in 1997 and supports our church's mission outreach by providing grant funding to qualified charitable organizations (individuals are not eligible) as well as for specific outreach projects and capital improvements at GLC. Distributions have totaled \$36,700 since inception.

Our Endowment Fund grant recipients in 2018 were Third Avenue Charitable Organization (TACO) at First Lutheran in downtown San Diego; Lutheran-Episcopal Campus Ministry at SDSU (Agape House) designated for "Food Fridays"; Fisher House at Naval Medical Center San Diego; Warrior Foundation Freedom Station; HairToStay (to assist those who have experienced the challenges of chemotherapy-induced hair loss); and Lutheran Disaster Response.

In addition to these external grant recipients, in 2018 the Endowment Fund supported GLC's own mission and ministry, with \$500 designated for community outreach projects and \$1,000 for future capital improvement projects, including replacing the outdoor shade structure over the walkway outside the Garden Room.

Grant proposals must align with one of the following three purposes (which are specified in the Fund's governing documents):

- ◆ Outreach into the community and synod;
- ◆ Missions of the ELCA;
- ◆ GLC capital improvements.

Individual grant amounts have typically been \$500 to \$1,000, but higher and lower amounts have been awarded. Generally, four to six grants have been awarded in each of the past grant cycles.

The grant proposals need not be elaborate or lengthy (a paragraph or two should suffice). In the proposal, please address the following: (a) if the request is for a defined program or project (describe), or for the organization's general operating purposes, and (b) how the organization will use these funds to meet a spiritual and/or economic need.

In considering the proposals, the Endowment Committee will be vetting the organization's charitable status and other factors. This process will include reviewing the organization's web site and Charity Navigator rating, therefore applicants must also provide links to public sources for this information.

Deadline for proposal submissions is **Sunday, December 8**, either by email to [Mary.E.Erlenborn@gmail.com](mailto:Mary.E.Erlenborn@gmail.com) or by collating the required information (including your name and contact information) in an envelope and putting this in the Endowment Fund mailbox in the church office.

## DID YOU KNOW...

- ◆ The Advent Prayer Retreat will be available at both services on Sunday, December 8th.
- ◆ Sunday, December 29th is the last opportunity for 2019 giving.
- ◆ A beautiful stone bench has been added to the center of the Labyrinth (see photo on page 3) - our thanks to this anonymous donor.
- ◆ We welcome Scott Davis and Susan Meier-Davis to our Gethsemane family, transferring their membership from Incarnation Poway. Directory Info: 13552 del Poniente Road, Poway, CA 92064-2230 (h) 858-883-2705, Scott (C) 650-703-6694 (T), Susan (C) 650-631-1217.
- ◆ The total donations to the **ELCA FEDERAL CHAPLAINCY SCHOLARSHIP FUND** was \$2,195. Thank you all for your generous donations to this worthwhile cause.

## LABYRINTH WALKS

We still have several opportunities to walk the Labyrinth together between now and the end of the year.

**Wednesday, Dec 11 & 18 at 6:00 p.m.** - Quiet Christmas Labyrinth Walk (short reflection followed by group candlelight walk)

**Tuesday, December 31 at Noon** — New Year's Resolution Walk (short reflection followed by a group walk)



Group walks are opportunities for silent prayer while simultaneously on the path to the center. It is like life. We are all on the same path but on our own journeys. We all get there at different times, having our own experience on the way. Sometimes people are nearby and sometimes not. But we are never alone. People of all religious traditions or no religious tradition are welcome to participate. (The Quiet Christmas Walks will have a Christian themed reflection.) The labyrinth is fairly well lit, but you are welcome to bring a flashlight to the evening walks if you prefer.

*Merry Christmas*

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*In keeping with our celebration of Christmas, the Altar Guild will again purchase two larger poinsettias this year. If you wish to share in this, a suggested donation of \$10 may be given with a dedication in memory or honor of a loved one. The deadline for dedication acknowledgement is Tuesday, **December 17th**. A list of names will be included in the Christmas bulletins. Watch for the flier in your bulletin, complete the information and return to the office by the above date. Thank You!*



*December*

Ellen Wagner	4th
Rolando Garcia	5th
Rachel Evans	14th
Kristen Nelson	18th
Susan Mendoza	24th
Earline Trinkle	30th

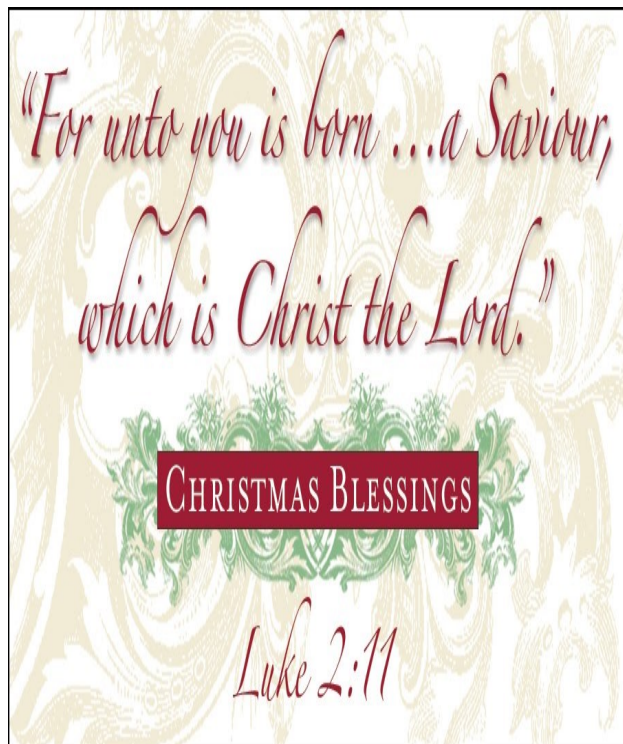
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Check out our Website  
at  
[www.gethsemanesd.org](http://www.gethsemanesd.org)

*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.*



### Weekly Opportunities

Worship with us each Sunday in December  
8:00 a.m. Contemplative Communion Service

9:30 a.m. Classic Communion Service

(December 8th will include our  
Advent Prayer Retreat)

December 22nd Cantata-9:30 a.m.

ONE SERVICE ONLY

#### Monday

10:30 a.m. Text Study December 9, 16, 23, & 30

#### Tuesday

December 3—9:30 a.m.—5:00 p.m. Centering  
Prayer—Advent Day of Silence & Prayers

12:30 p.m. Centering Prayer December 10 & 17

#### Christmas Eve Service

December 24 5:00 p.m.