

Grace Lutheran Church

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From the Pastor

Greetings Sisters and Brothers!

We continue to begin worship with the Easter proclamation until the day of Pentecost, which is May 19. The season lasts 50 days, coinciding with the time Jesus was thought to have spent on this side of heaven after His resurrection.



There is very little written about what Jesus was doing during that time, just a handful of stories in the Gospels, and I've often thought it would be really cool if we had more stories about that time. Alas, you and I will be left in the dark, but I can imagine that after so many days Jesus' disciples might have started to think, "This is the time when Jesus will establish His reign and bring to fullness the Kingdom of God!"

Imagine their surprise when Jesus suddenly ascended, defying gravity and returning to resume His place at the right hand of God.

I can't help but chuckle when I read the account of that moment in the book of Acts. As the disciples stood, mouths agape I imagine, looking up, an angel of the Lord basically said to them, "What are you doing standing here looking up to the sky? Jesus is gone, get to work!" What a moment that must have been. I can also imagine the disciples wanting to spend some time processing and discussing not just what they witnessed, but all they had experienced in the prior three plus years. There was a lot to process. But, Jesus was generally more a doer than a talker and it was time for the team to take the reins.

Newsletter May, 2024

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From the Pastor (cont.)

Much like last month's sports related article, I spent some time watching the recent NFL draft and my brain started to think about the very early days of the Church and those men and women who were the first to believe and come to faith and how it might relate to the draft. I know it may sound a bit crazy, but indulge my craziness for just a few more paragraphs.

The NFL draft represents the best of the best taking their unique skill sets to the professional level for the betterment of the organization that drafted them. I can imagine them being a bit overwhelmed by being drafted, but also by the prospect of competing against the best of the best at the highest level of their craft. Those who are drafted do get a little time to process, but much like the sense of urgency the angel expressed to the disciples, the teams in the NFL afford their draftees very little time to process. It's time to get to work rookie! You've got a lot to learn. The good news for them is, again like the disciples, they had spent the previous few years (in college) preparing to take things to the next level.

NFL rookies will have to rely on and trust their instincts. The disciples will have to rely on and trust their faith and, most importantly, the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were much better equipped than even Caleb Williams, the first pick in the most recent draft. In some ways, admittedly very minimally, those original disciples were also chosen (drafted, if you will) by One who had done His research (or because Jesus was God, knew everything about each of the ones he'd choose) to use their gifts for the betterment of the team otherwise known as humanity.

This is where the similarities, if there were any similarities, vanish. In the Kingdom of Heaven the draft never ends and there is only one team. Jesus has continued to choose His disciples, equipping them with the very same Spirit He breathed into those first believers. .

Each of us is a first round draft choice, and in fact, are the very first pick in the draft

In God's eyes no one disciple is more valuable than another and no one disciple is better equipped than any other. How cool is that? There is no Mr. Irrelevant in Jesus draft.

Who, you may be asking, is Mr. Irrelevant? That is the title given to the last pick in each year's draft by a man named Paul Salata. Salata played football for USC and had a short marginal career in the NFL who approached the NFL Commissioner some 50 years ago to ask if he could create a special event celebrating the final draft pick. He believed that no matter where someone was chosen, the fact that they had been chosen was reason to celebrate just as much as the first person chosen. The title Mr. Irrelevant can be a bit misleading. Salata didn't think the last player chosen was irrelevant, but that it was irrelevant where they were chosen.

Hearing that is what sent my crazy brain down this rabbit hole. We tend to base our value or worth in comparison to others, but God doesn't. We are each His treasure of immeasurable worth simply because of who He is. And He wouldn't or couldn't choose any one of us over another. And in the Kingdom, we each have an equally important part to play as witnesses. Our problem is often that we don't think we have what it takes to make a difference or that others can do it better. The truth is we are all 'in the game' and have a part to play, working together with the rest of the team as Jesus roots us on from the sideline. You were chosen for a reason. God sees you as the best of the best! Now all we need to do is act like it.

Yours in Christ
Pastor Steve

April, 2024 Council Report

From the Council Meeting of April 9, 2023

- Council approved, at a cost of \$1000, trimming the humongous tree in the backyard and the tree just to the west of the driveway in the front. This will be done by Jesse's Tree Service.
- The alarm in the Pre-School building has been going off intermittently in the late-night hours. Council approved, at a cost of no more than \$700, to have the motion sensor replaced. Replacement of alarm parts to all buildings is going to become a more frequent occurrence due to the age of the equipment.
- If anyone is interested in attending, the Synod Assembly will be held on May 31st and June 1st at the synod offices in Glendale. Please talk to Pastor or Brenda.
- Grace's special benevolence for the first quarter of 2024, in the amount of \$1000, focuses on global ministry. "Soar Africa" is an organization that provides education and care to children in Kenya. This organization was brought to our attention by Diana Alley, whose cousin, Bob Casper and his wife, Helen, are leaders in the organization. To find out more, go to <https://soarfranca.org/home>
- The AFP served 169 families the last week of March, the highest weekly number ever! Please watch your grocery ads for sales on canned and dry goods. "Stamp Out Hunger" is coming up mid-May, which is the drive sponsored by USPS, collecting food from residents and businesses and donating it to local food banks. This year, the AFP has two post offices, La Puente and Temple City, that they will receive collected items from.

In His Service,

Brenda Noriega. Council President



Saturday, May 11 is the nationwide Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive! Letter carriers in more than 10,000 cities and towns across America

will be collecting non-perishable food in the largest one-day food drive in the nation. Here's how to participate!

When and where do I put out the food?

On Saturday May 11, just set out your non-perishable food well before your letter carrier's normal pick-up time. The earlier the better! Note that they will be delivering and collecting mail as usual, on top of collecting food donations, so that pickup time could be slightly later than usual. Your letter carrier might also have helpers. A good rule of thumb is to have the bags by your mailbox by 9 a.m.

What items are needed?

The top requested non-perishable food items are: cereal, pasta, pasta sauce or spaghetti sauce, rice, canned fruits and vegetables, canned meals (such as soups, chili and pasta), 100% juice, peanut butter, macaroni & cheese, canned protein (tuna, chicken and turkey), beans (canned or dry), oatmeal and other whole grains, and canola or olive oil.

Please do not donate frozen food, homemade food or home-canned items. Please do not donate items that have expired or are in glass containers. In keeping with good food-handling and food-safety procedures, food that is opened, damaged, out of code or does not have the official ingredients included will be discarded by the food bank in the sorting process.

Are my donations tax-deductible?

All donations to the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive are tax-deductible because all of the food collected on Food Drive Day is given directly to non-profit charity food agencies in the community the food was collected.

Prayer Requests

The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry – Psalm 34:15

Please pray for those with medical needs, including: Lenny LaVache, Sue Henderson, Logan Oravetz, Lauren Alvarez, Art James, Jaxon Turner, Bill Wengel, Mariesha Ross-Richard, Gen Alley, Sandy Streeter, Debby Gonzales, Myrna Ott, Pastor Ed McGee, Patty VanRaalte, Ryder, Morgan, Tim Phillips, Audry and Leo Fuller, Linda Dalton, Bernie Schantz, Nance R., Melody Reich, Chris Saltonstall, Elva Maldonado, Emma Reardon, Marie O'Malley, Michelle Heyne, Stuart Merkel, Trina Clay, Billy Thompson, Connie Brown, Elena Navarette, George Fuller, Jim Oravetz, Joan and Lee Juneau, Joan Pelleren, Joyce Gower, Kari Watson, Martha Olson, Pam Elparin, Ray, Rose Marie Quesada, Sarah Encabo, Spencer, and victims of COVID-19.

Please pray for others in need of prayer, including: Joy Mangan and family, the family of Carol Moomaw, the friends and family of Rhonda Troup, the family of Kelly Florentine, the family of Dakota Garske, the family of Shelly Ruiz, the family of Jerome Elparin, Ryder's family, Christopher Oravetz, Jeffrey Saltonstall, family and friends of Marie Dabbs, and our Grace neighbors.

Please pray for the men and women currently serving in the armed forces, who are bravely protecting us and our country, including: Richard Larini (Navy).

Please pray for all victims of natural disasters.

Please pray for those who are being faced with grief, and all who know violence and hate.

Please pray for our Grace Lutheran Church Congregation and partners in ministry.

Please pray for the teachers and children of our preschool and infant care program, and for the teachers and students of Ben Lomond Elementary School, our school districts, and all schools, that they and their families will be safe.

Please pray for hospital staff, all medical personnel and first responders, those in essential services, and the leaders of our world, state, country, and local governments.

Please pray for the ACTION Food Pantry, the clients that they serve, and all those in need.

Prayer requests can be sent to us through the link on the Grace-Covina website at www.gracecovina.org. You can also include your prayer request on your attendance card at Sunday Worship, or email blarini@hotmail.com.

May 2024

We continue to meet in-person for Sanctuary Worship Sundays at 9:30 a.m. We are streaming Sunday Worship on our Facebook page. If you have any of the symptoms of COVID-19, or have had contact recently with anyone with COVID-19, we ask that you worship safely with us online. Livestreamed services are available on our YouTube page.

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
28 9:30 am: Sunday Worship	29	30	1 9:00 am: Preschool Chapel 11:00 am: In-person Bible Study 7:00 pm: Online Bible Study	2 12:00 pm: Action Food Pantry Thursday Distribution 5:30 pm: TLC Quilt Guild	3 6:00 pm: Evangelio Eterno Friday Worship	4
5 9:30 am: Sunday Worship	6	7 10:00 am: Prayer Team (1st Tuesday)	8 9:00 am: Preschool Chapel 11:00 am: In-person Bible Study 7:00 pm: Online Bible Study	9 9:30 am: Gather - Women's Bible Study 12:00 pm: Action Food Pantry Thursday Distribution	10 6:00 pm: Evangelio Eterno Friday Worship	11
12 9:30 am: Sunday Worship	13	14 7:00 pm: Church Council	15 9:00 am: Preschool Chapel 11:00 am: In-person Bible Study 7:00 pm: Online Bible Study	16 12:00 pm: Action Food Pantry Thursday Distribution	17 6:00 pm: Evangelio Eterno Friday Worship	18
19 9:30 am: Sunday Worship 10:30 am: Worship Committee	20	21 10:00 am: Prayer Team (3rd Tuesday)	22 9:00 am: Preschool Chapel 11:00 am: In-person Bible Study 7:00 pm: Online Bible Study	23 12:00 pm: Action Food Pantry Thursday Distribution	24 6:00 pm: Evangelio Eterno Friday Worship	25
26 9:30 am: Sunday Worship	27 Memorial Day - Campuses Closed	28	29 9:00 am: Preschool Chapel 11:00 am: In-person Bible Study 7:00 pm: Online Bible Study	30 12:00 pm: Action Food Pantry Thursday Distribution	31 6:00 pm: Evangelio Eterno Friday Worship	1

● ACTION Food Pantry
 ● Bible Study
 ● Committee
 ● Grace Preschool
 ● Grace-Covina Worship
 ● Holiday
 ● Meeting
 ● Off-Campus
 ● Outside Worship
 ● Special
 ● Wedding
 All Categories

May Birthdays

Kayla Wood | May 1
Christy Arreguin | May 3
Katie Encabo | May 13
Barbara Bryner | May 14
Diana Alley | May 14
Carolyn Wengel | May 15
Madison Jacobs | May 16
Erin Noriega | May 21
Keegan Yarber | May 22

Joyce Gower | May 25
Candyce Jacobs | May 25
Nathan Smith | May 27

May Anniversaries

Anthony & Mary Encabo
May 11
Ryan & Sandy Roset
May 27



- From Miss Christy at the Preschool: Thank you to all Grace members for your continued support of our preschool. As you are aware we had to cancel our annual Easter Egg Hunt, due to rain. We were all set to go but, God had other plans.

Thank you to Vicki Jacobs, Lisa Entrikin and crew, Pastor Steve, June Evinger, Wendy Snyder, Brenda Noriega and to everyone whom offered to help with food, donate cookies etc. It takes many hands to make our events successful. We were able to donate all the food that had been purchased to a food pantry that serves food daily. The preschool children had a huge egg hunt the Tuesday after Easter and were absolutely delighted. We also donated the remaining candy to a local elementary school.

- Bernie Schantz would like to thank the Grace-Covina family for your prayers, cards, and care after her fall, hospitalization, surgery, and recovery.

Isaiah 6:1-8
Psalm 29
Romans 8:12-17
John 3:1-17



Sunday, May 26, 2024
The Holy Trinity

Acts 2:1-21
Psalm 104:24-34, 35b
Romans 8:22-27
John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15



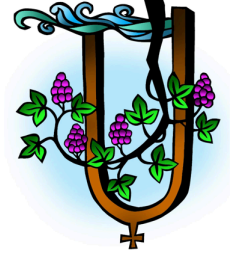
Sunday, May 19, 2024
Day of Pentecost

Acts 1:15-17, 21-26
Psalm 1
1 John 5:9-13
John 17:6-19



Sunday May 12, 2024
7th Sunday of Easter

Acts 10:44-48
1 John 5:1-6
Psalm 98
John 15:9-17



Sunday May 5, 2024
6th Sunday of Easter

May Scripture Readings



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You are welcome here
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