

# LUTHERAN CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

& The Vineyard Christian Preschool

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Website address: [goodshepherdgilroy.org](http://goodshepherdgilroy.org)

## The Prayer of St. Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury let me sow pardon. Where there is doubt let me sow faith. Where there is despair let me sow hope. Where there is darkness let me sow light. Where there is sadness let me sow joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, in pardoning that we are pardoned, and in dying that we are born to eternal life.

The Prayer of St. Francis has long been a favorite among Christians because it summarizes so well the attitudes and behaviors we seek to cultivate as Christian people. It is an ideal. It is almost too good to be true, and maybe we even cross our fingers a bit when we pray it, because we want to give ourselves some room and rationale to act in a different manner than what we pray for. We pray that prayer, but perhaps we pray it knowing that it's not really possible for us to live what it says. When someone hates us, often we want to get even and hate back. When someone injures us, often we want to injure back. When someone doubts us, often we are persistent in proving that we were right. Enough of this being an instrument of peace!

How do we deal with the hypocritical in others who profess to be Christians, yet conduct themselves in very unchristian ways toward us? According to St. Francis' prayer, we "sow love... sow pardon." This is very hard to do on our own. We need prayer to strengthen us for this difficult work. We need to be reformed; that is, we need to form our response against our instinct to retaliate. Spiritual formation is what our life in community is about, at least in part. In the community of the faithful, we can learn Christian attitudes and behaviors. In the community of the faithful, we can be corrected in a loving manner when we behave in ways that are not in keeping with the way of Jesus.

How do we deal with the hypocritical in ourselves? We profess to be Christians yet we often conduct ourselves in unchristian ways toward others. Often we rationalize our behavior "because they deserve it" or because we have been "disrespected" and have the right to stand up for ourselves. Our culture advises us to get even, or better, to get ahead by going overboard in our response to a perceived injury. These kinds of assertions really separate us from others and give us the sense that we are superior to them. Certainly there are very hurtful things that happen to us, and there are very difficult people we have to deal with. But responding in kind only puts us into the same category as those who have wronged us. Again, in the community of the faithful we learn these things from Jesus himself. He did not curse those who cursed him. He did not demean those who put him down. What Jesus did was to tell stories that showed the listeners the gracious love of God that extended to some surprising people. He also touched those whom his society said were unclean, and healed those his culture said deserved their disease for some unknown offence against God. We gather to hear these stories and allow ourselves to be formed by them into people in love with God and with our sisters and brothers in all of humanity. We gather to remember the life that Jesus lived, and the death that Jesus died. It is the story of a death that was for others, even his enemies; it is the story that proclaims the love of God for all people. And it is the story that declares that love is stronger than death. Jesus wants to give you and form in you that kind of life.

Your Pastor & Friend, *Ronald E. Koch* *P.S.* *Sunday School resumes September 2<sup>nd</sup> for the formation of your children in the life of Jesus*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<h1>September, 2012</h1>						<b>1</b> N.A. 9:30 am N.A. 8 pm Flowers: Patti Johansen
<b>2</b> Pentecost 14 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Handbells 7 pm N.A. 7 & 8:30 p	<b>6</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>7</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>8</b> N.A. 9:30 am N.A. 8 pm Flowers Herm Weyland
<b>9</b> Pentecost 15 9:30 am Worship N. A. 4 pm	<b>10</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>11</b> N.A. 6 pm Congregation Council 7:30	<b>12</b> Handbells 7 pm N.A. 7 & 8:30 p	<b>13</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>14</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>15</b> N.A. 9:30a Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>16</b> Pentecost 16 9:30 am Worship <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday</i> <i>Brunch Team 4</i> N. A. 4 pm	<b>17</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>18</b> N.A. 6 pm	<b>19</b> Handbells 7 pm N.A. 7 & 8:30 p	<b>20</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>21</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>22</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>23</b> Pentecost 17 9:30 am Worship NA 4 pm	<b>24</b> N.A. 6 & 8 pm	<b>25</b> N. A. 6 pm	<b>26</b> Handbells 7 pm N.A. 7 & 8:30 p	<b>27</b> N. A. 8 pm	<b>28</b> N.A. 8 pm	<b>29</b> N.A. 9:30 am Flowers: Patti Johansen N.A. 8 pm
<b>30</b> Pentecost 18 9:30 am Worship NA 4 pm		<i>Sunday School resumes</i>	<i>September 2<sup>nd</sup> for the formation of your</i>	<i>children in the life of Jesus</i>		

#### September Birthdays

11 Zita Weyland

#### September Anniversaries

None

#### September Assisting Ministers

Date	Coffee Time		Acolytes	Lectors	Ushers
	<u>Set up</u>	<u>Clean up</u>			
2	Sally Hammelev	Mariah Garcia	Ben Anderson	Rozanne Koch	Mariah Garcia & Kyra Guerra
9	Weylands	Michelle Anderson	Elena Finucane	Patti Johanson	Karen & Sabrina Spence
16	3 <sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY BRUNCH – TEAM 4		Abigail Finucane	Jo Brooks	NEEDED
	[TEAM 4 – Ruth Compton, Patti Johansen, Norma Rymers & Duane Brown]				
23	Karen Spence	Weylands	Will Anderson	Carolyn Carver	Mariah Garcia & James Guerra
30	Volunteer	Spence	Ben Anderson	Rozanne Koch	Karen and Nicci Spence

FLOWERS: September 2 P. Johansen September 9 Herm Weyland September 16 P. Johansen  
September 23 P. Johansen September 30 P. Johansen

If you have a birthday or anniversary that you would like included in the monthly list, please let us know, and we'll add it. Thanks.

## Vineyard Christian Preschool News

The new school year is off to a wonderful beginning. Open house for the MWF families was held on August 27<sup>th</sup> and classes for the 4 year olds began last Wednesday. Open house for the TTH families was held on August 28<sup>th</sup>, and classes began for the 3 year olds on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Our new staff of teachers had a massive task to move into the classroom building and make it their own, but all was accomplished and ready for the open house days. We welcomed 35 MWF students into 3 classes of 11, 12, and 12 students. These are the 4 year olds who will learn what they need to know during this school year so that they will be better prepared for kindergarten next fall. We also welcomed 14 brand new students into the 2 day program for 3 year olds. These children will begin to learn the basics of classroom readiness as they look to advance to the 3 day program next year. Our Director, Denise Higuera, our two new teachers, Dawna Marie Meyers, and Marylynn Tollison, and our new aide, Christy Souza are happy to be working at the Vineyard and are looking forward to Vineyard Christian Preschool Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup>. [Read the next article for more info.]

**Special thanks to Patti Johansen and Zita Weyland for hosting cookies and punch for the Open House days.**



### Vineyard Christian Preschool Sunday set for October 7

On Sunday, October 7, we will welcome to our faith community and install our newly hired staff. As part of the day's celebration, we will have a congregational potluck picnic after worship. We are inviting the entire student body of the Vineyard as well as their families to come to the installation service and join in the picnic feasting. This is an opportunity to show our hospitality and welcome any families looking for a church home. We are asking that you bring a picnic potluck dish to share.

#### ***We've had a water leak! Oh no!***

The water heater in the Preschool classroom building began leaking over the summer and we had water damage to the floor in the classroom. We needed to get this fixed for the start of the school year. Our insurance will cover the cost after we pay the **\$1,000 deductible**. We need your special offerings over and above your usual donations to cover our cost. Please note on your check: water heater.

#### **STEWARDSHIP UPDATES**

Offering expectation \$85,860  
(based on last year's offerings)  
Divided by 53 weeks: \$1,620 / week.

#### **Stewardship Update through August, 2012**

Average attendance for 35 Weeks: 27  
Expected to date at \$1,620 for 35 weeks: \$56,700  
Actual Offering: \$49,444  
Shortfall: \$7,256  
Average shortfall per week: \$ 207

Pastor Koch's [July Newsletter Article](#) on Stewardship was noticed by Rev. Don Larson at the parish he is serving in Eureka, CA, as an interim pastor. Pastor Don and Ginny are on our email list. The congregation adopted the ideas set forth and made it work for their congregation's stewardship program. If you would like to take a second look at the article, and revisit the issue of your stewardship, here it is. Sometimes recognition by someone else makes us pay renewed attention.

## HOW DO WE GET FROM HERE TO THERE

Last month this page focused on Giving as an example of how we practice our faith. *GIVING AS A FAITH PRACTICE* was the title of the article. The point was that actually practicing our faith in real life means that we learn to share from our abundance so that others have enough. We are all in this together.

The Biblical standard for giving is 10% of our income! In fact, the tithe, or tenth (that is, 10%) is treated as a minimum obligation, the very least we can do. Actually, "giving" begins after we have met our minimum 10%. In reality, probably few people actually reached that level of giving even in Bible times; even among the faithful. That standard is set there as a way for us to get a sense of what God expects from us as God's people. We are to be as generous to those in need as God has been generous to us.

If we look at how we allocate our wealth, however, we can see that it is rare, indeed, for us to be so generous. We don't give things away in our culture, except in contests. And even if we do, it usually comes with strings attached: Ford wants to advertise its cars, General Electric want to advertise its stoves, Casinos want you to come and gamble when they give anything away. People are not stupid; they are onto these gimmicks. Those big companies write off all of that as advertising costs.

Many loving and caring people do give away their time and money to good causes like finding a cure for cancer, or helping a needy family fix up their house. Service groups take on projects like supplying glasses for the visually impaired, or collecting clothing for the homeless in the winter, or providing meals for the hungry for free. Some groups fight to save endangered animals, or provide medical care in dangerous, war-torn places. Other groups buy up land to preserve Open Space for the future. Some groups need money to stand up for the rights of the under-represented; and others for those falsely imprisoned by authoritarian regimes. There is great generosity in the world that doesn't make the news.

Is there a difference in the giving between those who do good things in a purely secular and altruistic manner, and those who are Christians who give out of love and in response to God's love? Maybe not to the receiver of the gift: they will be fed or clothed or buy up open spaces or help endangered species and care not what motivation was behind the gift. However, the giver of the gift is changed by the giving. The Christian Giver is cultivating a glad and generous heart! And the motivation of the Christian is especially susceptible to being changed by giving. We are to *bless others* with our gifts, and that means that we center on God when we give and bless.

How do we get from here [our rather miserly sharing] to there [giving with glad and generous hearts]? I propose to you that it is by intentionally setting aside a specific percentage of your income to give away. We desire to cultivate a glad and generous heart, so we do that by actually *giving* ourselves into becoming generous people. Specifics: What do you give right now for your church offering? Next, what percentage of your income is that amount? Next, intentionally aim higher, for example, from 2% to 3%. Next, make a commitment to keep that promise in a regular fashion on a weekly or monthly basis. Next, commit to raising the percentage each year by 1%, or 2%, until you reach 10%, the Biblical standard. Know that you are being shaped and formed by this plan into a person with a glad and generous heart toward God for all that God has given you. Your Pastor & Friend, *Ronald E. Koch*

**Important reminder:** *Sunday School resumes on September 2<sup>nd</sup> for the formation of your children in the life of Jesus. Thanks, Mariah Garcia and Sharon Kammelev-Paula.*