

# The Gloria Dei-ly News

May 2021

1333 Beltline Road, Garland, Texas 75040

(972) 530-8555

Pastor Tom Schwolert

## A Word from our Minister:

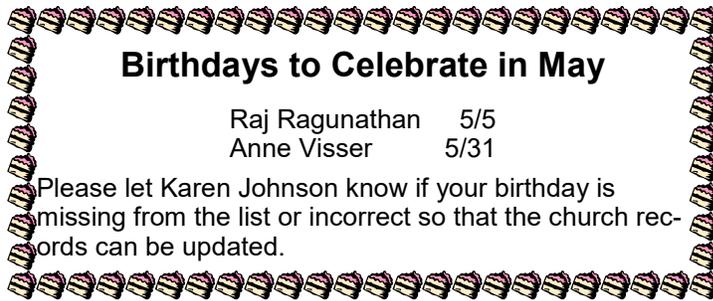
### DON'T CANCEL VBS!

This past week I heard someone say, "don't cancel VBS just because you don't have very many kids in your church." It got me thinking. There are kids and families in our neighborhoods. It's not like one day "poof!" and people stopped having kids. It's no secret that Gloria Dei has changed over the years. There was a day when lots of young families entered its doors. This is true for many congregations of various denominations. Maybe sometimes you yearn for those days. For some of you that have been here a long time, you remember those days well and some of those kids were your kids. Perhaps there is some grief that you have as you look back to those years. I heard in a grief workshop that there is a difference between yearning and nostalgia. When we yearn, it is almost as if we want to go back to former times when things were different. When we have nostalgia, we look back with fondness and smile but accept that we need to move forward into a new future.

I don't know where you are on the spectrum but my hope for you is that you will join me in wondering about God's future for Gloria Dei. While this past year has forced us to do things differently due to the pandemic, our God has been faithful and will be faithful with us into the future. Does this mean we need to resurrect VBS? I don't know about that. But it does mean we will need to be willing to create different ways to meet our neighbors where they are. It does mean that we'll need to discover what the needs are in our community. It does mean that we will need to be open to new ideas and ways to "be church." Many congregations are asking these same questions. We are not alone.

Here's my invitation.

- If you are still grieving something in the past whether it is about Gloria Dei or any other loss, set up a time with me to talk. I'd love to be a listening ear and walk through it with you.
- If you are ready to embrace the future, set up a time with me to share your ideas and what gifts God has



## Birthdays to Celebrate in May

Raj Ragunathan 5/5  
Anne Visser 5/31

Please let Karen Johnson know if your birthday is missing from the list or incorrect so that the church records can be updated.

given you to share. I'd love to hear about your passions.

- Dig deep into your creativity. God has created us to be, well, creative beings. Creative thinking, creative visioning, creative ministries, creative spaces are just a few ways that we can open up the creativity God has given us. Set up a time with me to share your creative ideas.
- Resurrect VBS – Ok, hear me out. I'm not thinking of doing VBS like it used to be done. I'm simply asking the question – what would be a way to connect with families in our neighborhoods and communities? Set up a time if you have an idea.

I am trusting that the Holy Spirit will inspire us to move into the future with a big vision and a vital congregation. My prayer is that we will unite together and embrace God's future for Gloria Dei. Are you in?

Grace and Peace,  
Pastor Tom

## NEW BEGINNINGS FOR GLORIA DEI

There are already some new great things coming our way. Last Sunday, Gloria Dei voted to bring on an intern for Word & Service. JJ Godwin (they/them) will be joining us soon to do the congregational experience portion of their internship. JJ will be preaching and participating in the life of our congregation. JJ brings wonderful gifts and energy to us and I truly believe God has led them here.

Our facilities will soon be remodeled. Due to a water pipe breaking in the office area during the winter (continued on pg. 2, col. 1)

## SPECIAL DATES IN MAY!

- ◆ National Day of Prayer, May 6, 2021
- ◆ Mother's Day, May 9, 2021
- ◆ Ascension Day, May 13, 2021
- ◆ Armed Forces Day, May 15, 2021
- ◆ Pentecost, May 23, 2021
- ◆ Woman's Dinners Restart, May 27, 2021
- ◆ Trinity Sunday, May 30, 2021
- ◆ Memorial Day, May 31, 2021



**The Gloria Dei-ly News**  
May 2021

The Gloria Dei-ly News is a monthly newsletter distributed to members and friends of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 1333 Beltline Road, Garland, Texas 75040 (972) 530-8555. Worship begins at 10:15 a.m. The staff currently consists of Karen Johnson, Editor and Pastor Tom Schwolert. Articles may be submitted to the next month's edition of the newsletter by the third Sunday of the month and may be e-mailed to [newsletter@gloriadeigarland.org](mailto:newsletter@gloriadeigarland.org).

[www.gloriadeigarland.org](http://www.gloriadeigarland.org)

Glory to God

**NEW BEGINNINGS (cont from pg. 1)**

storm in February, we have sustained quite a bit of damage. While there have been delays due to shortage of materials and labor, we believe construction will start soon. This gives us an opportunity to update our space and possibly upgrade some things to be more functional for our ministry and more welcoming to new people. Along with our property chair Kelly McDermott and myself, we have put together a small task force to create a plan for the remodel. If you have any ideas for upgrades that are needed, please contact myself or Kelly. —*Pastor Tom*

**A Word from the Council:**

**RECAP OF SPRING SEMIANNUAL MEETING**

On April 25, Gloria Dei held its Spring Semiannual Congregational Meeting via Zoom. The 2020 Annual Report was sent out to members along with the Zoom instructions. A quorum of 32 members was present either online or by telephone.

In addition to a review of the year end and first quarter financial status, the primary business discussed was the condition of the main church building and its delay on plans to return to in-person worship, plans to give Johnson Hall a thorough cleaning so we can use it for group activities before the main building is ready, and the proposal to support the internship of JJ Godwin.

Linda Gonzalez made a resolution to accept the internship proposal, which was seconded by Clay McDonald. A vote was taken per Zoom connections; 24 votes were in favor, with 2 abstentions. The vote numbers differed from the quorum due to some connections having more than one member present.

—*Karen Johnson, Secretary*

**A LETTER OF THANKS FROM OUR BISHOP**

We received a letter to Gloria Dei in March from the Bishop of NT-NL thanking us for our financial support in 2020. He says, "Thank you for your financial support of \$9168.60 to our shared mission. For your sharing of God's abundance that has been shared with you, I give thanks. Your sharing in our mission enabled us in 2020 to...

- Convene our first ever online Synod Assembly.
- Provide resources and guidance to congregations for gathering.
- Ordain seven candidates for Word and Sacrament.
- Walk with congregations through holy closure and faithful stewardship of assets.
- Grow our Parish Lay Ministry Academy and Secondary

School of Theological Education

- Support 5 NT-NL congregations on the LEAD Journey and 4 more as part of our Leadership for Faithful Innovation cohort.
- Support congregations and leaders through weekly check-ins, online visitations, sermon recordings and pastoral care.
- Bring Santa Maria de Guadalupe, Irving back into relationship with the ELCA.

#InMissionTogether,  
**Bishop Erik KJ Gronberg, PhD"**

**WHITE SUPREMACY & RACISM: FACING REALITY, TAKING RESPONSIBILITY**

**A Seminar every other Tuesday, May 11 – October 19, 7-8:30pm**

American forms of racism shape our life together in ELCA congregations. White supremacy distorts our proclamation of the Gospel, limiting the possibilities of evangelism. Lay and rostered congregational leaders interested in facing these realities are invited to join this study group co-organized by Briarwood Leadership Center and the Public Witness Team of NT-NL.

With an eye toward taking meaningful action, we will work through some of the most incisive analytical studies of racism. We will focus on structural realities rather than individual attitudes or personal experience. Equipped by this intensive study, the group will decide what actions they will take in their own congregations and which actions will be recommended to the NT-NL Synod as a whole.

Led by Emma Rodgers (our friend from St. John, Dallas) and Robert Smith (Briarwood Leadership Center), the course will feature several outside guest speakers with expertise in the topics and particular authors. The proposed agenda can be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/bwtxracism>. All readings will be provided in electronic format, with encouragement toward additional resources.

*Sessions are on Tuesday evenings, biweekly, 7-8:30pm. Pre-registration is required in order to receive the Zoom link. All participants are strongly encouraged to complete the assigned reading prior to participating in a session.*

**Register here:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/register/tZMldeqsrDwqGtFW1iI2hlwTrdcxku5B-zn0>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

MAY BIBLE READINGS				
May	First Lesson	Psalm	Second Lesson	Gospel
2	Acts 8:26-40	22:25-31	1 John 4:7-21	John 15:1-8
9	Acts 10:44-48	98	1 John 5:1-6	John 15:9-17
16	Acts 1:15-17, 21-26	1	1 John 5:9-13	John 17:6-19
23	Acts 2:1-21	104:24-34, 35b	Romans 8:22-27	John 15:26-27; 16:4b-15
30	Isaiah 6:1-8	29	Romans 8:12-17	John 3:1-17

## MEET OUR NEW INTERN, JJ GODWIN



Living in Fort Worth, Texas, JJ is a genderqueer individual (pronouns: they/them), attending Luther Seminary and in their final year of M.Div. coursework with an internship. JJ is seeking ordination in the [ELCA word and service roster](#) and walking in formation with the [Deaconess Community of the ELCA](#). JJ is called to board certified

mental health chaplaincy in the [Northern Texas-Northern Louisiana Synod of the ELCA](#), and currently leads the mental health ministry work of the [Public Witness team for peace and justice at the NTNL Synod](#). JJ is also a peer support specialist on [DBSAlliance.org](#) and on [HeyPeers.com](#) where JJ will be spending part of their internship year developing a new space for ministry leaders to discuss in peer support groups challenges with their own mental health while empowering leaders to learn new mental health awareness skills and feel more supported as front line responders during this pandemic and beyond. JJ is excited to be called by Gloria Dei Lutheran Church as their diaconal intern through May 2022 and is currently completing their fourth and final unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at Terrell State Hospital.

JJ lives with their spouse Michelle who has a virtual professional counseling practice, along with their dog Radar, who aspires to be a therapy dog and their cat, Summitt, who enjoys avoiding Radar, the dog. JJ rides their bike to their day job as a peer support specialist for MHMR Tarrant County and enjoys riding bikes with Michelle at local Texas State Parks, while Radar hangs out on JJ, in his backpack. Michelle and JJ recently chose to downsize to one Blue Nissan Frontier 4X4 named Buckbeak and they all hope to learn how to do some mudding in the future. If you would like to connect with JJ, use [@heypeersjj](#) on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and by email: [heypeersjj@gmail.com](mailto:heypeersjj@gmail.com)

### MAY FINANCIAL FOCUS\*

	General Fund	Damage Fund
Income (March)	\$ 9,030	\$ 12,816
Expenses (March)	\$ 11,616	\$ 5,850
Monthly Net	\$ (2,586)	\$ 6,966
Year to Date Income through 3/31/21	\$ 29,035	
Year to Date Expenses through 3/31/21	\$ 33,818	
Yearly Net	\$ (4,783)	
Mortgage Balance as of 4/6/21	\$ 111,804	

\*prepared for the April Council Meeting

## May Anniversary Celebrations

Paul and Ruth Chambers 5/6  
 Sue and Doug McMahill 5/12  
 Raj and Lissymole Ragunathan 5/13

Please let Karen Johnson know if your anniversary is missing from the list so that the church records can be updated.—*Karen Johnson*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have a prayer request, use the link below to submit your request. Pastor Tom compiles the list and sends it out to the congregation on Mondays so we can pray all week. He can then send prayers that he has collected to those putting together the worship service to list during the service.—*Pastor Tom*

Use this link to send your prayer request:  
<https://gdlc.churchtrac.com/card/4>

***Prayer is not about changing God, but being willing to let God change us. ~ Richard Rohr***

**Holy Trinity, in your mysterious three-in-one dance you call us to live in rhythm with your music and in harmony with one another. Help me do so in joy!**



—*Newsletter Newsletter*

## WOMEN RESTART MONTHLY DINNERS



The Women of Gloria Dei **WILL MEET** for dinner May 27th, the fourth Thursday of May, at Longhorn Steakhouse at 3421 N. Central Expressway on the southbound access road between Springcreek Parkway and Parker Road. For reservation purposes, please call Julie Pancake 972- 633-9967 if you plan to attend. All women are invited to join in this evening of fun. *And let someone else do the dishes!*



**FIRST MONDAY BREAKFAST CANCELLED IN MAY**

The Men of Gloria Dei **WILL NOT MEET** for breakfast the first Monday of May, but maybe June 7.

## ALL ARE WELCOME AT GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH!

As Lutherans, we believe that God's grace is given to all, regardless of color, age, marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, economic status, mental or physical health status, culture, or faith tradition. We strive to live up to the example of unconditional love and acceptance that Jesus has taught, and welcome all to join us.

We are a congregation that is active in care of God's creation, taking part in various ministries, including serving the differently abled, pet therapy providers, animal rescue, social justice, and music.

In the Book of Romans, Paul writes that we "are one body," and that "we all have gifts that differ, according to the grace given to us." We invite ALL to share with us the gifts and grace that we are given, as we are:



**"Called and sent to share Christ 's love."**

## WORDS TO PONDER

"If you find it in your heart to care for somebody else, you will have succeeded."

—Maya Angelou

\* \* \*

"There is no way to be a perfect mother, and a million ways to be a good one." —Jill Churchill

\* \* \*

"The point is not to pay back kindness but to pass it on." —Julia Alvarez

\* \* \*

"Dripping water hollows out stone, not through force but through persistence." —Ovid

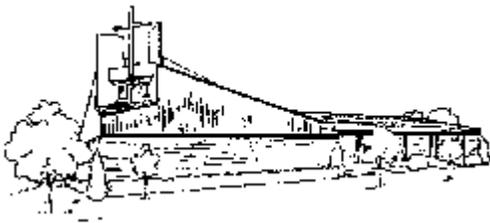
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"If at first you don't succeed, try doing it the way mom told you to in the beginning."

—Unknown

—*The Newsletter Newsletter*

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