

The Courier



Volume 86 ~ Number 3 ~ March 2026

As we enter the Lenten season, a number is placed in my spirit. **40**. There are forty days and nights in the season of Lent, Jesus wandered in the wilderness, fasting and being tempted for 40 days and nights, and Moses spent 40 days and nights on the mountain with the LORD getting the original covenant, the Ten Commandments. This made me pause and think **“What significance is forty days, Biblically?”** According to a blog by **The Fathers of Mercy** the number 40 signifies new life, new growth, transformation, a change from one great task to another great task. Per the **Cepher (Hebrew Bible App)** the number 40 more specifically forty days and forty nights signifies a period of testing, trial, probation, or purification, marking significant turning points in the lives of individuals and the nation of Israel. It’s considered a complete,

ordained time for preparation, judgement, or transition before a new divine chapter begins.

It’s not just forty days, the Israelites were forced to wander an additional forty years in the wilderness for doubting that God was going to hand over the promised land after the spies returned from forty days of spying on the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God allowed a whole generation (40 years) to die prior to allowing them to enter the promised land because they

doubted that God would deliver it to them despite sons of Anak (giants), civilizations that seemed militarily advanced, etc.

Noah’s flood, as promised by God was for forty days and forty nights, which points to complete, destructive judgement and purification of the entire earth. Moses fasted forty days and forty nights while on the mountain receiving the Ten

The Glory of These Forty Days

1 The glo - ry of these for - ty days we cel - e -
2 A - lone and fast - ing Mo - ses saw the lov - ing
3 So Dan - iel trained his mys - tic sight, de - liv - ered
4 Then grant, O God, that we may, too, re - turn in

brate with songs of praise; for Christ, through whom all
God who gave the law; and to E - li - jah,
from the li - ons' might; and John, the Bride - groom's
fast and prayer to you. Our spir - its strength-en

things were made, him - self has fast - ed and has prayed.
fast - ing, came the steeds and char - i - ots of flame.
friend, be - came the her - ald of Mes - si - ah's name.
with your grace, and give us joy to see your face.

Text: Latin hymn, 11th cent.; tr. Maurice F. Bell, 1862-1947, alt.
Music: ERHALT UNS, HERR, J. Klug, *Geistliche Lieder*, 1543
Outside USA: Text from *The English Hymnal*, © Oxford University Press 1906, All rights reserved.
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Commandments from the LORD. Moses also previously ran away from Egypt after killing an Egyptian for 40 years only to return when instructed by God to free the Israelites. Elijah traveled being fed and nourished by ravens and angels for forty days and nights while he traveled to Mount Horeb. For Elijah it's a period of testing and rejuvenation as with the sustenance provided he had strength to make it.

Jumping ahead into the new testament almost all the gospels tell of Jesus wandering in the wilderness for forty days and nights, after his baptism, fasting and actively being tempted by the devil. Although Mark makes a distinction that he had angels ministering to him. Preparing him for his public ministry. Post-resurrection Jesus appears to his disciples for forty days and nights before ascending into heaven, preparing them for the beginning of the "church" age. This is also when the "helper" the Holy Spirit is able to descend and rest on all the disciples and apostles.

Lent represents the forty days and nights that Jesus was in the wilderness. In the world the word Quarantine is derived from the Italian word Quaranta (forty), historically referring to the forty day isolation period for ships to ensure they were free of disease.

In Jewish tradition the Gematria of "Mem" has a numerical value of 40 and stands for *Mayim* (water), representing both the womb of creation and the ritual bath (*Mikvah*).

The *Mikvah* was a ritual bath with exactly 40 se'ah (Biblical unit of measure 40 se'ah = 150 gallons of water) emerging from this bath was equivalent to being "reborn" after the flood. The Talmud teaches that an embryo takes forty days to form into a recognizable human shape.

The significance of the number 40 and how God uses it from the beginning to even now can take you on a never ending wild ride. I know I've had so many "oh Wow" moments just doing the research for this article. I encourage you this forty days of Lent to try to change or do something new that will either become a new habit or behavior, or will break a habit or cycle. No matter what, I pray this gets you to crack open your Bible and start looking at God's patterns, lessons, and stories. Amen.

Jaime Doganes

CALL COMMITTEE

A very short report this month. The Call Committee has been working on the Mission Site Profile document – the 12 page description of our congregation, which has been updated and submitted to Church Council for approval. Once approved, it will be forwarded to the synodical office for their review and we will begin the dialog with our two representatives, Pastor Jon Gathje and Lisa Strom.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

We enter the season of Lent knowing 'what happens next' yet Good Friday still hits us hard.

As a committee, we have begun meeting monthly in order to prepare more meaningful worship experiences for you, our members.

Though we do not have mid-week Lenten services, we still have opportunities to be in worship with our Lord. The Soup suppers, detailed elsewhere, offer a time of fellowship and a service activity that will help the 'least of these'.

On March 29th, we will celebrate Preschool **Palm Sunday at 9 am, a single service.** This service will be a blended service including the Praise band, liturgy and hymns. It begins joyfully as we celebrate

Christ's entry into Jerusalem with hosannas and palm branches, but it quickly darkens as we read the Passion of our Lord. After service, we will offer a **picnic in the Preschool yard** with fried chicken provided by the Church Council and opportunities for members to bring either a salad or desert. So bring your lawn chair and/or blanket to enjoy a meal that will allow us to get to know our Preschool families better.

For Holy week, we will offer a church service on **Good Friday at 7 pm** where we will relive the seven last words of Christ from the Cross. Please join us as this is a very powerful message. We return on **Easter with two services to celebrate our Risen Lord.**

CHURCH	MAUNDAY THURSDAY	TIME
ST. TIMOTHY	YES	7 PM
OUR SAVIOR	YES	7 PM
BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN	YES	7 PM
KING OF GLORY-FOUNTAIN VALLEY*	YES	7 PM
*THIS IS A JOINT SERVICE	WITH OTHER CHURCHES	

We will provide a list of churches who will be offering a **Maundy Thursday service** for those interested.

As always, we look to you for input to help make the church service more meaningful. This becomes more important as we have more **single service Sundays** so that we can then have fellowship time afterward. We need to know what is important to you for your worship experience, and that includes how you feel

about a single service versus two services.

Pam Garcia for the committee

What do you do with a termite infested Cross?

According to Pastor

Laurie, old crosses should be burned when they have lived out their life. Our old cross is termite infested and can no longer stand. We want to thank the Preschool for providing us with a beautiful new cross that stands in our sanctuary.

We have decided to cut the cross into pieces and ceremonially burn it during a bonfire at the beach. We will coordinate this activity with the next bonfire that Fellowship offers, and we encourage everyone to come celebrate our 'old rugged cross' as it burns.

We are having a picnic!

- Mark the date: March 29th after our Preschool Sunday/Palm Sunday Service which starts at 9 am.

- Bring your lawn chairs and/or blanket for we will eat on the Preschool grass area.
- Council to provide fried chicken.
- A sign up genius will go out for you to offer to bring your favorite side dishes, or sweet treats to share!
- Paper plates and eating utensils will be provided along with water/juice/soda.

Let's get to know each other!!

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Finally, we will review and discuss how we as a church, can encourage members to serve. This is taken from the original document I found online and is as follows:

How Churches Can Encourage Service

- **Clear Vision:** *Teach how serving is central to the gospel from the pulpit.*
- **** Mentorship & Support:** *** Provide small groups, mentorship, and support systems.*
- **** Training:** *** Offer training to build skills and confidence.*
- **** Personal Invitation:** *** Reach out to members personally to invite them.*
- **** Lead by Example:** *** Leaders and pastors actively serving.*

Clear Vision: Christ came to serve, yet sometimes we lose sight of that. Going to a church service is all the time we allocate to God. Occasionally we offer up a special activity to help, but we are not consistent. I am not sure if it seems overwhelming to us, or we just aren't interested. I do believe St. Luke's offers plenty of opportunities to serve, and

provides details as well. We have a church Council that is always available to answer questions or clarify the request/position. Joining the leadership here will allow us to grow in our service together, while giving outgoing leaders a break to refocus while still helping.

Mentorship: We are here for YOU, but we can't do it alone. Come alongside us and we will help each other in serving TOGETHER. For a small church, we are pretty active in what we do. If you have an idea for service- let us know. This Council has ALWAYS made themselves available to teach and work with any new leaders. You are never left alone in a position.

Training: There is no BOOK or guide on how to be a church leader. Christ is our example; the Holy Spirit is our Guide, and previous leaders work with the newly elected people. Christ clearly tells us we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves. Loving your church is a great incentive to serve in a leadership role.

Personal Invitation: Sometimes people can get offended when we walk up to them and ask if they would take on a position in the church. Maybe they feel like we are intimidating them: I am not sure. The reverse can also be true. You are sitting there thinking, 'why don't they ask me?' I don't know the correct way to ask you about serving in the church, but I know we have to ask. My best advice: **Be ready for the invitation by praying beforehand.** Ask God what to do. Then prepare to act.

Lead by example: Your church Council has tried to follow this guidance. Activities can

become overwhelming, but when you do these things in community with all the leadership, it becomes easier. A common feeling is that we (current leaders) will disappear after leaving the Council or that you will be elected FOR LIFE if you say yes. We want to stay true to our constitution, which says any Committee chair will serve a 2 year term with the opportunity to repeat a SECOND term. That second term is NOT REQUIRED. Our executive team (President, VP, Secretary and Treasurer) serve a ONE year term with the opportunity to serve a second year. This is how we want to operate, but when NOONE steps forward we stay longer.

I truly hope this information has helped you understand leadership and service in the church. Next month, I will begin to speak to each committee that is currently empty, to provide you with more information around the position, and maybe, just maybe, encourage you to say

Here I am Lord, send me. I will serve with the help of God

Pam Garcia for the Nominating committee

MISSIONS

We've put together Easter bags for years now to provide for children who otherwise might not get an Easter basket. The new project is the **"Welcome Home Baskets"** for LSS these are laundry baskets full of home supplies that we might take for granted, that LSS gives to people and families that are placed in new homes. They provide cleaning supplies, towels, toilet paper, etc. Essentials for any new home!! Please see emails for signup geniuses!

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

What's Going On at St Luke's!

Our dear friend Jack McDaniel's "Celebration of Life" was the best example of fellowship at Luke's recently. The church was full of friends and family celebrating Jack's life. There were tears as well as laughter afterwards as everyone shared a Taco Buffet in honor of Jack's favorite food. Fond stories and great food/drinks were had for hours. So many people joined in to provide food, setup and decorations to make the event joyful. Thank you so much to everyone.

Our Walking With a Purpose Group walked at



Oh look - a beehive!

the West San Gabriel River Parkway Nature Trail in Lakewood this past Saturday. Many of us locals didn't even know this was here! What a way Jaime has of finding these hidden gems. And a rejuvenating walk along the

river with great weather and a fun group with a nice brunch at Mama's afterwards. Join us next month at Shoreline Aquatic Park Loop in Long Beach on Saturday March 14 at 9 am. Looking forward to April for our "MS Fundraiser" walk at El Dorado Park East on Saturday April 25. More details to come.

Soup Suppers begin on Tuesday February 24 at 6 pm and will continue each Tuesday evening

during Lent until March 24. See the email announcements and flyers for when we will be doing projects. Come and bring a friend! Enjoy eating and sharing all the wonderful soups and the bread and desserts together. If you'd like to bring something, sign up at the sign up genius link.

When coming to either of our services, remember we have goodies and coffee in between services and also Bible Study. We are about to start a study on Martin Luther, the founder of our synod. These are good ways to mingle with people from the other service who you might not know and learn more about our church at the same time.

Hope to see you at one of our activities or events!



Berit Bode & Erin McCuan

St. Luke's Walking With a Purpose

February 21, 2026 West San Gabriel River Parkway Lakewood 9am	March 14, 2026 Shoreline Aquatic Park Loop Long Beach, 9am
April 25, 2026 ***MS Fundraiser Walk** El Dorado Park East, Long Beach MORE DETAILS TO COME!	May 9, 2026 Heartwell Park Trail Long Beach 9am

Contact Jaime Doganes for Monthly Details 619-451-7425




St. Luke's Walking With a Purpose

June 13, 2026 8:30am El Dorado Park Nature Trail Long Beach -- Parking Fee	July 11, 2026 8:30am Bolsa Chica Ecological Reserve Bolsa Chica
August 8, 2026 8:30am Gum Grove Park Seal Beach	September 12, 2026 8:30am Torrance Beach to Flat Rock Point
October 10, 2026 9am Willow Springs Park Long Beach	November 14, 2026 9am DeForest Park Loop Long Beach

Contact Jaime Doganes for Monthly Details 619-451-7425




St. Luke's Annual Soup Supper and a Project

Tuesdays During Lent 6-8pm

- Feb 24 Bring Donations
- Mar 3 Decorate Easter Bags
- Mar 10 Build Easter Bags
- Mar 17 Build Welcome Home Baskets
- Mar 24 Canned Soup Donations

Use Sign Up Genius for Dinner Sign Up







St. Luke's Christian Preschool March

As we slide into March we are excited to explore all that this month has to offer! It is hard to believe that we are already HALF way through our school year...but with Parent-Teacher conferences coming up, we look forward to reflecting on how far our students have come and collaborating together to ensure a strong and successful finish to the school year!

Dates To Remember:

- 3/3 **TUE.** Soup Supper & Project
- 3/10 **TUE.** Soup Supper & Project
- 3/11 🌸🌸🌸 Spring Pictures
- 3/13 **BINGO NIGHT** @ Tracy's
- 3/17 St. Paddy's Day Shenanigans
- 3/17 **TUE.** Soup Supper & Project
- 3/24 **TUE.** Soup Supper & Project
- 3/29 **PRESCHOOL SUNDAY & Egg hunt**
- 4/3 **Good Friday / School Closed**

Season of Lent @ SLCP

Our students participate in an Ash Wednesday service, spending their time and focusing our eyes on JESUS! This marks the beginning of our Lenten Season and our journey to the cross.

Soup Supper & a Project

6PM Tuesday evenings: March 3rd, 10th, 17th & 24th

Join us for a humble meal while families come together not to "give up" but to focus on "giving" to those in need through service projects.



BOOSTER NEWS...



BINGO NIGHT @ TRACY's bar & grill
Saturday, March 13th beginning at 6PM
 50/50 Raffle, Wine Pull, Fun prizes and a WHOLE LOT of FUN! ... WIN a KEY to the SCHOOL

FAB!

rainbow:

PALM SUNDAY / PRESCHOOL SUNDAY & Egg hunt

Please join us at our 9am service on **March 29th.**

This yearly Preschool tradition is my most FAVORITE of Preschool Sundays. Children & their families will join on the front steps of the Sanctuary waving their crafted Palms. Students will be invited to come up front for Children's time, song and then dismissed to our staff for a Special Sunday School. Parents will meet their child after Service for the anticipated Egg Hunt! Come witness the excitement of what it means to be a beloved CHILD of God!

DON'T FORGET YOUR EASTER BASKETS!!!



PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent / Teacher Conferences: 4/13 – 4/17

Willow/ Ms. Marin	Mon. 4/13
Ceiba/ Ms. Price	Tues. 4/14
Cherries/ Ms. Yax	Wed. 4/15
Maples/ Ms. Moran	Thur. 4/16
Pines/ Ms. McCartney	Fri. 4/17

We view Parent/Teacher conferences as an essential tool to your child's learning & development. Please make arrangements to adhere to the date/time allotted.

What to expect from your Conference:

- To build a positive relationship between Teacher/Parent
- Align expectations
- Gain tips for extended learning @ home
- Increase family involvement
- Improve learning outcomes



**FRIDAY,
APRIL 24th**
SLCP'S 2ND
COLOR / BUBBLE RUN !!!

Week of the Young Child, May 18– 22nd



TEACHING TIPS

... s l o w d o w n ...

I was reading an article on 5 things Preschoolers should learn and "Listening skills" was an obvious answer in my mind however the details to follow made me think... {"My child (or student) doesn't listen." I have heard this from parents and teachers for more than a decade. I usually respond with this advice: the best way to teach a child to listen to you is by listening to them. Additionally, you can make sure to give short multi-step directions, read them stories on topics they are interested in, and teach whole body listening.}

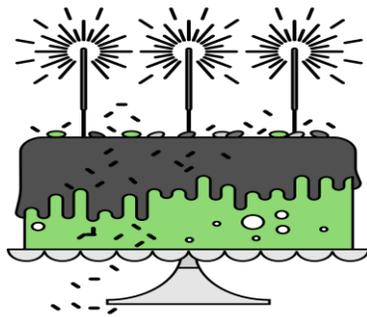
How often as adults are we too busy, distracted, impatient, fixated on our own agenda to truly sit, listen, and explore a child lead conversation.



SATURDAY, MAY 2nd
CAMPUS CLEAN-UP / Playground
(WOODCHIPS, SAND, SHADE SAILS. Maintenance)

SATURDAY, MAY 16th

KIDCHELLA™
& FAMILY PICNIC
11:30 AM – 3:30



MARCH BIRTHDAY'S

- Mar 04 Jaime Doganes
- Mar 09 Patsy Nix
- Mar 11 Lisa Dunn
- Mar 27 Paul Navetta
- Mar 28 Randy Salisbury
- Mar 29 Leslie Andersen



- Mar 26 Carl & Cheryl Coleman
- Mar 27 Paul & Tracy Navetta



Upcoming Events

- Mar 03 Soup Supper & Projects @6pm
- Mar 10 Soup Supper & Projects @6pm
- Mar 11 Spring School Pictures Preschool!
- Mar 12 Boosters Monthly Meeting @6:30pm
- Mar 13 BINGO NIGHT @ Tracy's Bar & Grill @6pm
- Mar 14 Walking with Purpose ~ Shoreline Aquatic Park Loop @9am ~ Yardhouse afterwards for food!
- Mar 15 Skatedogs hosting a birthday party @2pm West Parking Lot ~ Private
- Mar 17 Soup Supper & Projects @6pm
- Mar 24 Soup Supper & Projects @6pm ~ The Last Supper of the Lenten Season
- Mar 29 Palm Sunday / Preschool Sunday!! One single service @9am a combined service of both contemporary and traditional settings. Stick around after for the egg hunt for kids and picnic for ALL! Let's get to know one another!! Council provides fried chicken.
- Mar 30 Start of Holy Week

The Courier is the newsletter of
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church & Preschool

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SUNDAY SCHEDULE

In-Person & Online Services

9AM & 11AM

ONLINE STREAMING LINK

<https://www.youtube.com/@stlukeslongbeach>

Online giving link: sllc90808.churchcenter.com/giving

Come visit us soon! You are welcome here!

**St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church
& Christian Preschool**

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Change Service Requested