

United in Grace Gazette

United in Grace Lutheran Church

1300 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590

www.unitedingracelutheran.org

Reaching out, welcoming in!

June 22, 2022

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In person worship and potluck this Sunday at the Riley's!

1325 Carl Avenue, Vallejo, 707-644-9646

Bring whatever you'd like to eat and share for the potluck!

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Use the link below at to sign onto Sunday Zoom worship at 10 AM!

<https://zoom.us/j/8210496017?pwd=d2p6TG9laWdoc1U2NFRpN3NCK3pLUT09>

Meeting ID: 821 049 6017 | Passcode: Grace

Join by mobile phone: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 821 049 6017 | Passcode: 554709

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Serving
from the
Heart

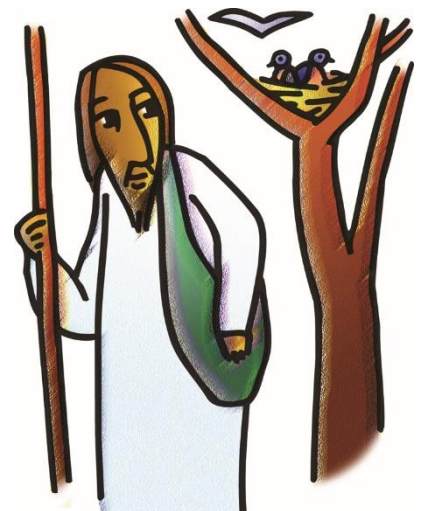
June 26, 2022, the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost

Presiding/Preaching: Rev. Paul Theiss

Assisting Minister: Kim Hervey

Lector: Roger Riley

Musician: Clyde Niesen



Elijah says to Elisha, Follow me and do not continue plowing

Jesus says, Follow me and do not look back



**⁴I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,
never take their names upon my lips.**

⁵O LORD, you are my portion and my cup;
it is you who uphold my lot.

⁶**My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**

⁷I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
my heart teaches me night after night.

⁸**I have set the LORD always before me;
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.**

⁹My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;
my body also shall rest in hope.

¹⁰**For you will not abandon me to the grave,
nor let your holy one see the pit.**

¹¹You will show me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures
forevermore.

Second Reading: Galatians 5:1, 13-25

For Paul, the freedom Christ gives is not permission to do whatever we want. It is the invitation to be what we could not be otherwise. The power and guidance of Christ's Holy Spirit produce a different kind of life, one marked by the fruit of this Holy Spirit.

¹For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

¹³For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. ¹⁴For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ¹⁵If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another.

¹⁶Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. ¹⁸But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law. ¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, ²¹envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things. ²⁴And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Gospel: Luke 9:51-62

Jesus is unwavering in his commitment to his mission in Jerusalem and will not be swayed by pettiness. In a series of striking cases in point, he calls his disciples to a similar single-mindedness.



⁵¹When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵²And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; ⁵³but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” ⁵⁵But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶Then they went on to another village.

⁵⁷As they were going along the road, someone said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go." ⁵⁸And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." ⁵⁹To another he said, "Follow me." But he said, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father." ⁶⁰But Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God." ⁶¹Another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home." ⁶²Jesus said to him, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God."

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About the Readings in the Bible...

In the gospel reading for this coming Sunday, Jesus says once more, “Follow me.” We are glad to have one another accompany us on this path. Come to worship, as together we hear this word and heed his invitation to the life of the Spirit.

1 Kings 19:15-16, 19-21

In the sixth-century religious history that we title 1 Kings, the Deuteronomic editor uses the Elijah cycle to illustrate the strict devotion of those who are faithful to the covenant. This passage begins the transfer of prophetic power from Elijah to Elisha. The hair-shirt mantle was part of the prophets' official dress. Twelve oxen may suggest the twelve tribes of Israel or may indicate Elisha's wealth. Their slaughter symbolizes the end of Elisha's old life of farming. This passage is set parallel to Luke 9 since also Elijah demands of Elisha a total rejection of his previous life as he dons the mantle of the prophet to proclaim the word of God. The parallel makes clear that the evangelists understood Jesus' ministry in light of Israel's prophetic tradition.

Psalm 16

Having heard about Elisha burning up his past in order to proclaim the word of God, we join in Psalm 16. Like Elisha, we acclaim God as our “portion,” that is, the land allotted to us. The service is God now becomes the boundaries of our land. God’s path replaces our walking behind the oxen.

Galatians 5:1, 13-25

Paul's letter to the church in Galatia, written in the early 50s, is his manifesto concerning Christian freedom and its relationship to the Jewish Torah. After an extended allegory of Hagar and Sarah, Paul distinguishes Christian freedom from personal liberty. By "flesh," *sarx*, Paul means the human as an earthly creature focused on the survival of the self. By "spirit" Paul means the power of God made available to the believer through the risen Christ. Paul's catalog of vices (vv. 19-21), several of which upset or destroy the unity of the community, was probably derived from early Christian teaching. The catalog of virtues (vv.22-23) includes both deeds and attitudes. When we don the mantle of our baptism and follow Jesus, our lives are radically changed, from actions that protect and aggrandize the self to attitudes that value and nurture the community. For such a life we are empowered, not by any inherent human inclinations, but rather by the Spirit of the risen Christ. Would that "the works of the flesh" are as obvious as Paul suggests.

Luke 9:51-62

With this passage Luke begins to narrate Jesus' last journey to Jerusalem, where he will be "taken up," that is, arrested, crucified, risen, and ascended. This travel narrative is unique to Luke and important to the gospel's structure and meaning. Luke opens this second-third of his gospel with the rejections of some Samaritans. By Jesus' time, Samaritans were primarily Gentile peoples descended from those who had not been deported, who had replaced the exiled Jews, and thus who had become alienated from full-blooded Jews. Luke's Semitic phrase "set his face" connotes turning towards hostility. In Luke, Jesus refuses to punish the unbelievers with fire. Luke's openness to people in poverty is enhanced by the depiction of Jesus as himself homeless. Indeed, the gospels say nothing about Jesus working for a living. A wide range of interpretations have been offered for Jesus' stark comment "let the dead bury their dead": Luke means spiritual death; "bury my father" meant to live at home until one's father died; not even one's parent's funeral should interfere with the call to proclaim the kingdom. Now it is we who are called both to tolerate nonbelievers and to leave all to follow Christ as we proclaim the kingdom. The challenge is to apply the radicalness of Jesus' words to our lives in the world.



Images in the Readings

All three readings assume that the hearer knows that oxen are **yoked** together to **plow** fields. Elisha is called away from plowing his fields, and he burns up the

Many Christian artists depicted the Tree of Life filled with the **fruits of the Spirit**: on the branches each little fruit was labeled “love,” “joy,” “peace,” etc. In 1845, Nathaniel Currier also drew “The Tree of Death,” on which were fruits corresponding to Paul’s list of vices.

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Theological Reflection

For freedom Christ has set us free (Galatians 5:1). But what is freedom? People today often disagree about that, and the fact that Paul has to explain freedom to the Galatians suggests it wasn't a settled question then either. Perhaps one solution is to examine the results. If the way you exercise your freedom results in the fruits of Spirit, then it is likely to be the freedom that comes from Christ. But if the way you exercise your freedom results in the "works of the flesh," you might be acting out of selfishness, not freedom.



Connections with Creation

Jesus' words in today's gospel from Luke use images from nature to illustrate his teachings. "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head," he says (9:58) to warn potential disciples of the hardships they will face if they choose to follow him. As we watch human activity destroy natural habitats around the planet, we note the sad irony that it is increasingly difficult for even foxes and birds to find and build their dens and nests. Deforestation, pollution, climate change, and "development" of land for human purposes put strain on animal populations and threaten the existence of some species. Yet, more and more Christian biologists, naturalists, and ecologists are connecting their faith with their work. For them, following Jesus means protecting and advocating for God's creatures and their habitats.



Theological Reflection

The hymn "Will you come and follow me" (ELW 798) begins by addressing the listener directly in the voice of Jesus, asking a series of questions. The tasks mentioned are so varied that almost no one will be able to answer yes to every single one. Each person will draw the line in a different place, but there will always be some line. For example, some might be okay with "[kissing] the leper clean" but balk at doing it "unseen." Others may be perfectly happy to act in secret but find "the hostile stare" too much to risk. Or perhaps serving others is not a problem, but "[loving] the you you hide" seems too difficult. The final stanza, the listener's response, addresses this problem by asking Jesus to "let me turn and follow you" rather than simply declaring "yes, I will."



Comments from the Cloud of Witnesses

You, O Christ, are the one who loves me into endless life. You open up the way of risk. You go ahead of me along the way of holiness. Day by day you transfigure the "No" in me into "Yes." You ask me, not for a few scraps, but for the whole of my existence. You kept on saying: live the little bit of the gospel you have grasped. Proclaim my life. You, follow me. . . . Until one day I understood: you were asking me to commit myself to the point of no return.

—Roger Schutz, *Parable of Community*

Hymn for the Hurting

By Amanda Gorman

Everything hurts,
Our hearts shadowed and strange,
Minds made muddied and mute.
We carry tragedy, terrifying and true.
And yet none of it is new;
We knew it as home,
As horror,
As heritage.
Even our children
Cannot be children,
Cannot be.

Everything hurts.
It's a hard time to be alive,
And even harder to stay that way.
We're burdened to live out these days,
While at the same time, blessed to outlive them.

This alarm is how we know
We must be altered —
That we must differ or die,
That we must triumph or try.
Thus while hate cannot be terminated,
It can be transformed
Into a love that lets us live.

May we not just grieve, but give:
May we not just ache, but act;
May our signed right to bear arms
Never blind our sight from shared harm;
May we choose our children over chaos.
May another innocent never be lost.

Maybe everything hurts,
Our hearts shadowed & strange.
But only when everything hurts
May everything change.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Information On What's Happening and Announcements For Our Church Community...

Do you have any announcements or items you would like put in the UIG Gazette? Please email them to me by
Wednesday afternoon at susanraeriley@att.net and I will add them in...

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We received this
invitation and
information from
Beth Caldwell of
All Saints in Novato:

Our event will be on **Saturday, July 9, from 10 - 2:30 at All Saints in Novato.**

The event is part of an effort of the Synod Women of ELCA (SPSW-ELCA) to put life back in the women's organization. Our president, **Sue Herless**, welcomes invitations to congregations to speak about the importance of having a strong Christian voice in addressing the two issues before the women for 2022-23. Those issues are Human Trafficking (mainly sex and labor) and Immigration. She will be speaking at our event, along with a speaker on the Immigration issue.

We will be serving a light lunch and collecting an in-kind gathering to be sent back with the speaker for needs of immigrants.

Responses from those who would like to attend can be sent to me at
caldwellbeth73@yahoo.com or called in to our church at 415-892-1669 by July 1.

Are you interested in attending?

We are planning to car pool to the event so let me know if you would like ride along! Email me at susanraeriley@att.net or text me at 707-315-7410.

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## *From Judy Faye:*

The Obama Portraits Tour brings Kehinde Wiley's portrait of Barrack Obama and Amy Sherald's portrait of former First Lady Michelle Obama to San Francisco. Since their unveiling at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery in 2018, these paintings honoring the nation's first African Americans in these roles, have been viewed by thousands of Americans. They will be at the de Young Museum in San Francisco from **June 18-August 14**. A great way to celebrate Juneteenth.



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Please email me your favorite photos - recent or a favorite from the past - to share in the gazette! I know I'm not the only one that loves to see them!





These photos are  
from Dean Ahlberg  
- thanks for  
sharing, Dean!!

"I took this photo at Russian Gulch  
State Park. Judy and I were  
camping there and hiked to this  
waterfall."



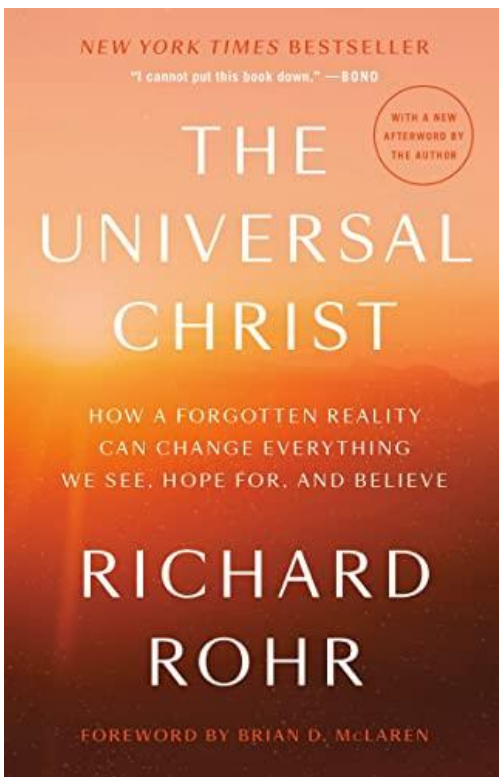
"This photo of a berry was taken at  
Point Reyes National Seashore on  
Friday, June 3rd while Judy and I were  
on our Friday hike."





# Book Study News

By Judy Faye



Our new book study is well underway. The study meets in rotating homes on **Wednesday mornings at 10 AM** and **via Zoom at 7 PM Wednesday evenings**. Refer to the end of this article or the calendar at the end of the Gazette for location of Wednesday morning meetings.

Even if you did not start with us, you **may join** these studies at any time. Just order your personal copy of the book on line and call or text me at (707) 980-9667 and I can let you know where we are at in our reading so you can get quickly on tract.

Our new book selection is ***“The Universal Christ: How a Forgotten Reality Can Change Everything We See, Hope For, and Believe”*** by Richard Rohr. “Most know who Jesus

was, but who was Christ? Is the word simply Jesus’s last name? Too often, Rohr writes, our understandings have been limited by culture, religious debate, and the human tendency to put ourselves at the center. Drawing on scripture, history and spiritual practice, Rohr articulates a transformative view of Jesus Christ as a portrait of God’s constant, unfolding work in the world.”

Please contact **Judy Faye at (707) 980-9667** with any questions or for information. Since the gazette is early this week, please call Judy to get the location for today’s meeting – thanks!

\* \* \* \* \*

## Christ's Care List

*United as one body in Christ, we pray in hope for the church, the world, and all of creation....*



**We pray for the church.**

- For the church and all places of worship.  
For members and friends of **United in Grace Lutheran Church**, that we continue to grow in God’s Living Word, pray for each other and reach out to others in ways we are able.

- We pray for our **renovation project**, for a smooth and safe building experience, for financial stability for the project and for minimal unexpected findings.

### We pray for the earth.

- That humankind will care for our earth, our only home, with love and respect. We pray for those affected by **natural disasters** of all types...tornados, wildfires, floods, earthquakes.

### We pray for the nations.

- We pray for those who govern or are in power in our world, to recognize the urgency of the words from Micah, "...what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"
- We pray for the people of **Ukraine**. Give them strength, resolve to resist, courage and hope for peace. May the nations of the world support them for a swift end to this invasion with no more lives lost.
- Those affected by **gun violence**. We pray for your presence with the families and friends of those murdered in Tulsa, Uvalde, Buffalo...and too many more places to list. May real gun control become a reality.
- Acknowledging and lamenting the **sin of racism** that scars our country. Open the hearts of those who are held captive to the sin of white privilege, granting humility and the willingness to listen and a commitment to seek justice for all.
- We pray for all who are **waiting at our border seeking asylum**. May our response reflect the call of Jesus to care for those in need of food, shelter, and hope.

### We pray for all those in need.

#### Healing of body, mind, and spirit...

- **Don Ockrassa**, mild symptoms with positive COVID test
- **Leslie and Peter Perroti, son Dan and children**, for strength and resilience to get through a very stressful time in their family
- **Kathy Campas-Sutin**, continued healing, hope and strengthening after surgery
- **Phil Schmidt**, continued recovery as he is back in rehab
- **Marla Hanson**, relief of disc pain

#### For those in need of long-term prayer...


- Jan Jackson
- Carmen Harnish
- Carol Hess and her daughter Rhonda
- Doreatha Patton
- John Kroan
- Karen Hansen and daughter Julie
- Karen Spears

- Please email me your prayer requests to be added to Christ's Care List at [susanrailey@att.net](mailto:susanrailey@att.net). Most prayer requests will remain on the list for about one month...please let me know if it is time to update any requests or if you would like to have them removed – thank you!



# HOME COMMUNION

# Women's Bible Study



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# June 2022



| Sun                                                                                                    | Mon | Tue                                        | Wed                                                                                          | Thu                                                           | Fri | Sat |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
|                                                                                                        |     |                                            | 1<br>Book Study<br>10 AM<br>Home of Dean<br>and Judy                                         | 2<br>Sewing<br>Ministry<br>1 PM – 4 PM                        | 3   | 4   |
| 5<br>Day of<br>Pentecost<br>Worship Leader:<br><br>Recorded sermon<br>from synod                       | 6   | 7                                          | 8<br>Book Study<br>10 AM<br>Home of Virginia<br>Ward<br>Food Bank                            | 9                                                             | 10  | 11  |
| 12<br>Holy Trinity<br>Worship Leader<br>and Preaching:<br><br>Council Meeting<br>after worship         | 13  | 14                                         | 15<br>Book Study<br>10 AM<br>Home of Karen<br>Spears<br>+ + +<br>Book Study via<br>Zoom 7 PM | 16<br>Martha Circle<br>12 PM – 2 PM<br>Home of Susan<br>Riley | 17  | 18  |
| 19<br>2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday<br>after Pentecost<br>Worship Leader<br>and Preaching:<br>Matthew Hervey  | 20  | 21                                         | 22<br>Book Study<br>10 AM<br>+ + +<br>Book Study via<br>Zoom 7 PM                            | 23                                                            | 24  | 25  |
| 26<br>3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday<br>after Pentecost<br>Worship Leader<br>and Preaching:<br>Pr. Paul Theiss | 27  | 28<br>Worship Committee<br>Meeting 6:30 PM | 29<br>Book Study<br>10 AM<br>+ + +<br>Book Study via<br>Zoom 7 PM                            | 30                                                            |     |     |

Happy Birthday to those born in June!

7 Cynthia Bettini  
11 Kathy Campas-Sutin  
12 Nicole Hervey  
12 Tony Egbo





# *Upcoming Commemorations*

**Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, died 444**

**Monday, June 27, 2022**

Cyril defended the orthodox teachings about the person of Christ. After a conflict involving all of the major Christian leaders of the time, it was decided that Cyril's interpretation, that Christ's person included both divine and human natures, was correct.

**Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons, died around 202**

**Tuesday, June 28, 2022**

This important early church leader tried very hard to hold to the faith handed down by the apostles. An opponent of the movement known as gnosticism, Irenaeus was one of the first to speak of the church as catholic, or linked together.

**Peter and Paul, Apostles**

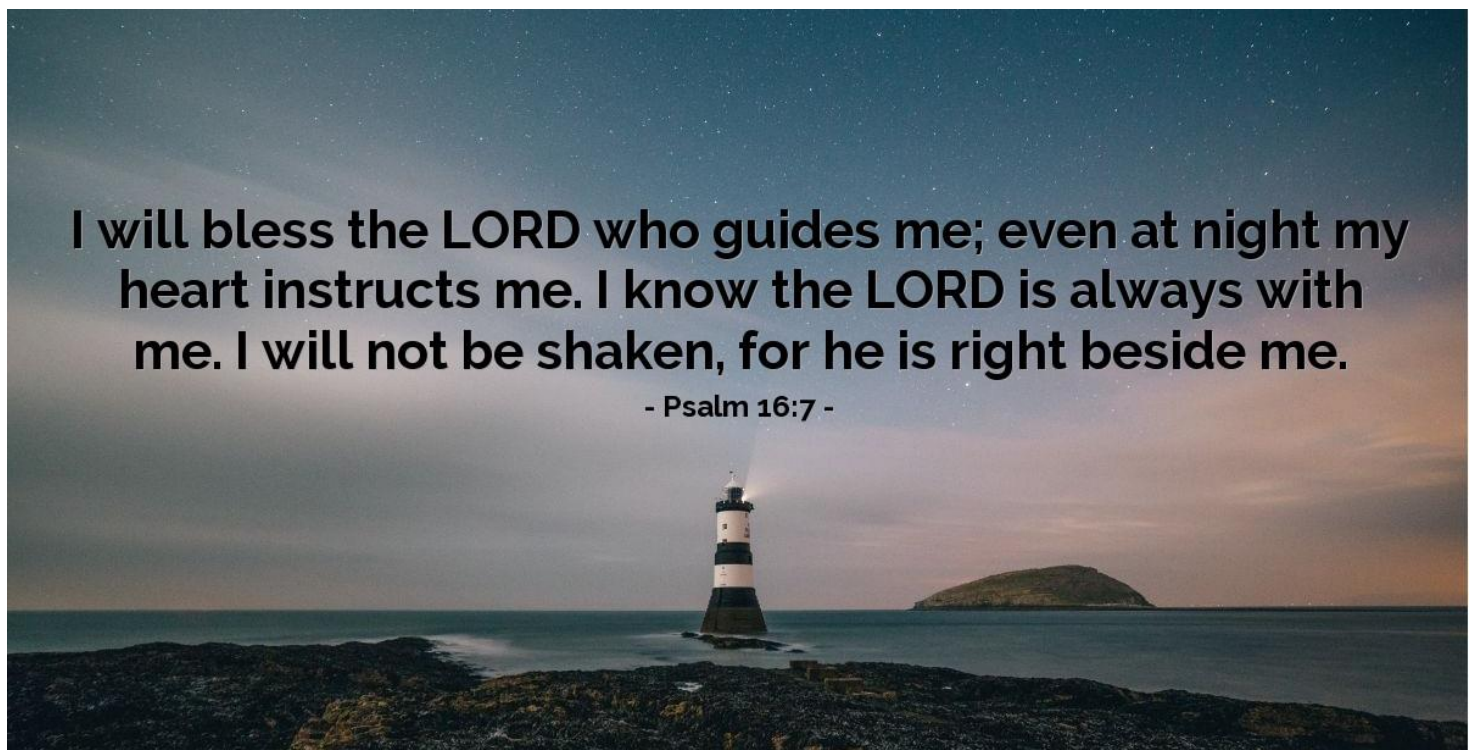
**Wednesday, June 29, 2022**

These two strong-willed apostles are the pillars of the church in the first generation after Christ. Peter was one of the Twelve, one who both offered a glorious confession of faith and later denied knowing Jesus. Paul once led the persecution of Christians, then was converted and helped bring the faith to non-Jewish people.

**Catherine Winkworth, died 1878; John Mason Neale, died 1866; hymn translators**

**Friday, July 1, 2022**

Neale was an English priest who specialized in the translation of Latin and Greek hymns into English. Winkworth lived in Manchester, England, and devoted herself to translating German hymns. Almost all English-speaking hymnals include many of their translations.



**I will bless the LORD who guides me; even at night my heart instructs me. I know the LORD is always with me. I will not be shaken, for he is right beside me.**

**- Psalm 16:7 -**

# Reminders and general info...

## Team UIG at the Food Bank



Join Team UIG and help feed the hungry by sorting produce at the Fairfield Food Bank warehouse on the **2nd Wednesday of each month**. The Fairfield Food Bank warehouse is located at **2370 North Watney Way in Fairfield**.

**All are welcome to join the team.** Just show up on the second Wednesday of the month at 1pm, and we will put you to work. For answers to your questions, please call, text, or email team captain **Dean Ahlberg** at 707.980.9659 or deanahlberg@aol.com.

Thank you, Dean

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*If you would like to have an updated copy of Members and Friends for United in Grace, send me an email ([susanraeriley@att.net](mailto:susanraeriley@att.net)) and I will reply attaching the document. IF you do not have email, call me (707-644-9646) and let me know - I will mail you a paper copy.*

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## Three Ways to Tithe

### By Mail

To tithe by mail, please mail your check (no cash, please) to  
**United in Grace Lutheran Church**  
1300 Tuolumne Street, Vallejo, CA 94590.

### Using Vanco

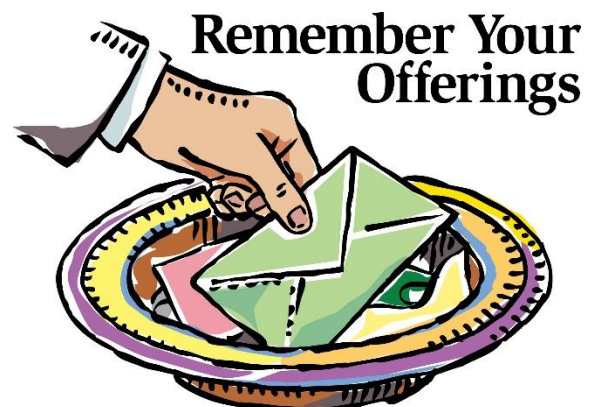
To tithe using Vanco, the ELCA's electronic tithing service, click on the following link:

<https://gp.vancopayments.com/gpo/#/donateNow/723f9e3a-8a35-4573-994d-9485158>.

### Using PayPal

To tithe using PayPal, click on the following link:

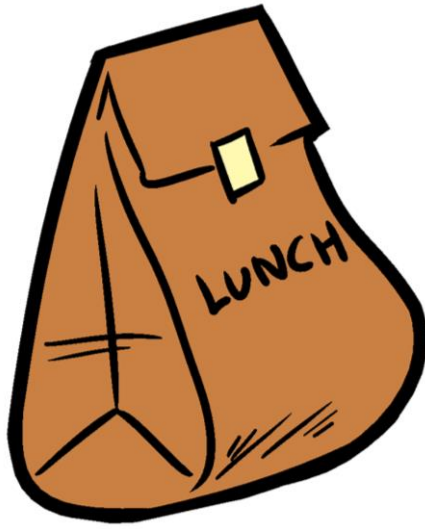
<https://www.paypal.com/biz/fund?id=B9SJ6Z4KNHG5W>.



Thank you, faithful stewards, for your faithful financial support during difficult times.

Yours in Christ, Dean Ahlberg, Financial Secretary, (707) 980-9659

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We are continuing to place our Brown Bags onto the hands of hungry folks we encounter on street corners and parking lots. We encourage those of you who are reluctant to hand them out, to try it. I think you will find it rewarding. Just roll down your window and hold up a bag. Ask if they would like a lunch. Very seldom will someone decline.

We can't get them at church during our renovation but call or email me and I will gladly bring some to your house. It's a small thing we do, but much appreciated.

Our funds are getting low. Each bag costs about \$5.00 to fill. Please consider making a donation. In the memo line of your check, put "Brown Bag Ministry".

Thank you for your generosity, and may God bless our efforts.

Karen Spears | 707-644-2985 | [klspears68@live.com](mailto:klspears68@live.com)

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#### Acknowledgments

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