



He has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, NRSV

# The Reporter

## June 2021

The Reporter

Volume 19, Issue 05

**In this Issue:**

From the Council	3
Council Minutes	4
Outreach News	5
June Birthdays	5
Notes & News	6
Reporters & Meetings	7
Christian Liberty	7
Devotion: "Jesus Speaks to Sinners"	8

### "A Blessed Day"

by Pastor Proeber

Six days a week I ride my bicycle. There are a few exceptions for heavy winds and rain, but I am usually out the door by 6:30 am. My route takes me along the bike path to UCSB. After a quick run through the campus, I start my return trip. When I reach Goleta Beach, I usually take a few moments to enjoy a cup of coffee and snack on the pier. The time is usually spent watching for wildlife, or just thinking about things. Sometimes a Bible passage comes to mind and I meditate on that. There are even a few occasions when I strike up a conversation with someone who is fishing or just enjoying a morning walk.

This past week I had a first. I was alone on the pier except for one gentleman who was at the very end. As I was sipping my coffee he started back to the parking lot. Once he reached the bench where I was sitting, he remarked to me that it was a beautiful day. I concurred. It was a glorious day with the sun rising and no marine layer or wind. He then said, "I don't know why more people aren't out here taking advantage of this beauty." I really couldn't give him any reason or explanation, but I did say, "The Lord certainly outdid himself this morning." The man's eyes lighted up and he smiled as he walked away. He also said in parting, "Have a blessed day!"

Honestly, I can't remember the last time a complete stranger said this to me. Although our conversation was brief and the meeting short, he offered me a greeting which stayed with me throughout the day.

Have a blessed day. As a general rule more people will say, have a nice day, or enjoy the day, or something similar. But, have a blessed day, those words are rarely ever spoken or heard. I think people may not use for them for a couple of reasons. First, and probably the real reason, is people don't want to acknowledge the Lord and his control over everything. Have a blessed day invites the Lord to be at work in one's life. For whatever reason, people are not interested in wanting this. In addition, people generally don't believe God can do anything about their lives. Their evidence sounds something like this, "I tried praying once, and God never answered me."

There is a sadness connected to both of these responses. Saying "have a nice day, or I hope you have a good one," may be cordial, but it is meaningless. In contrast, have a blessed day is powerful and awe inspiring.

The greeting requires trust in the Lord to say it. It requires just as much trust to know the Lord will actually bless us throughout the day. And let's be honest, even though we may feel our lives might be devoid of blessing, nothing could be more removed from the truth. If we have any doubts, just read Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Apostles Creed concerning God's creation and preservation of life.

*Continued on page 2*

*Blessed Day, from page 1*

Whether we recognize or acknowledge it, God does bless us daily and richly. Now, to have someone tell you, have a blessed day, it really doesn't get any better than that!

By the way, it was truly a blessed day. I couldn't stop thinking about all the good things God had done and the blessings he poured into my life. Was my day devoid of conflict, disagreements, or some stress? Not hardly. Yet, those simple words always brought me back to the most important reality—my day, as well as my life, was truly blessed.

Maybe this is something each of us can practice on a more regular basis. In our commission as witnesses and disciples of our Savior, we have been given the directive to seize opportunities to share the good news of Jesus. This might be one way we can engage others in a conversation. It could open a door and set the foundation for a relationship to build upon. If anything, it will catch people before they put up their defenses, and possibly give us a second chance to say something.

Have a blessed day! It reminds me of a gentleman I knew twenty years ago when I was in the Bay Area. Every time you saw him and asked him, how he was doing, he would respond, "I'm blessed!" This simple response offered him countless opportunities to tell people why he considered himself blessed. The chief reason was that he had a Savior who had forgiven his sins and made him an heir of life in heaven. Maybe, just maybe, this response may accomplish the same opportunity for us. It is worth giving it a try.

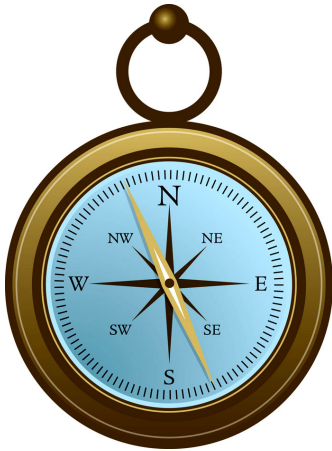
Although my conversation with this gentleman was short, and most likely I will never see him again, I continue to appreciate his wish for my day. Have a blessed day! It is a greeting, a farewell, and a prayer rolled up into a few short words. But, what words they are! Live by them. Speak them often. Share them regularly.

## BLESSINGS FROM GOD

I believe that God created me and all that exists, and that he gave me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my members, my mind and all my abilities.

And I believe that God still preserves me by richly and daily providing clothing and shoes, food and drink, property and home, spouse and children, land, cattle, and all I own, and all I need to keep my body and life. God also preserves me by defending me against all danger, guarding and protecting me from all evil. All this God does only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven, and not because I have earned or deserved it. For all this I ought to thank and praise, to serve and obey him. This is most certainly true!

## Update from the Council



This past Tuesday, the Church Council met. In addition to the regular business of the congregation, there was a discussion about the ever-changing and often confusing protocols established by the State government for COVID. Currently, as a county, we are in the “yellow tier.” Infection rates are down. Deaths are few and far in between. Restrictions are loosening up. Next week the tier system will no longer apply. So, what does that mean for us?

The Council has been evaluating the situation carefully, and has always opted for a conservative approach. So far, this approach has been blessed by the Lord. Most, if not all of our people, have remained healthy. But now, we have reached a plateau where we need to decide what we are going to do next. We still want to exercise caution and due concern for people’s well-being. At the same time, we also want to adapt our procedure to allow for more freedom during our worship service.

The Council’s resolution hopefully reflects both. We will continue to keep the air circulating in the building—ceiling fans, open windows, and doors. We will continue to disinfect surfaces, and provide hand sanitizer, masks, and wipes. We will continue to encourage people, if they are ill, to please stay home. The one significant change we will employ is to make masks optional. Simply put, if you feel the need to continue wearing a mask, please do so. If you are comfortable not wearing a mask, you may have the freedom not to wear it. When it comes to the distribution of the Lord’s Supper, the pastor will continue to wear gloves and a mask.

God willing, the worse is behind us. In time we will add additional opportunities for study and fellowship. Possibly, some time through the summer we will add refreshments to the coffee after the worship service.

This return to a structured and complete ministry is certainly welcome. For too long we have had too much on the back burner. Through the summer months and looking to the Fall, the plan is to restore everything that was put on hold.

In the meantime, continue to pray that the Lord resolves this situation, that he keep us—and all people—in his loving care, and that he gives us countless opportunities to share the Gospel, and build each other up with the Gospel.

---

### Remember

---

#### **Beginning June 20th masks will be optional.**

You may wear one if you need to, or you may go without one while you are inside the church

The same applies to all Bible Studies, meetings and fellowship activities.

## Minutes from Council Meeting

The Council meeting was called to order by the chairman, and begun with a devotion on 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 14-17. The last days will usher in terrible times, as Paul writes, “people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemous, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, not able to reconcile with others, slanderous, without self-control, savage, haters of what is good, treacherous, reckless, puffed up with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to an outward form of godliness but denying its power.” These people we are to turn away from. Also, because we have to live in such terrible times, we need the encouragement Paul further provides, “continue in the things you have learned and about which you have become convinced.” These are the “Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” . . . and are “useful for teaching for rebuking, for correcting, and for training in righteousness.”

Monthly reports and updates were presented by the Committee Chairmen.

- **Outreach**

While there was no written “outreach report,” it was noted the video streaming continues with a consistent number of viewers—both members and non-members. Advertising will be investigated to direct people to the streaming site and the website. Consideration will be given to connecting with the non-members who are following the Sunday stream in order to get them into “in person worship.”

- **Pastoral**

We continue to see God’s grace in many ways, particularly in the return to more open and active ministry. There were two specific reasons to rejoice. Henley Leighton Schroeder was received into the Kingdom of God through Baptism. Also, Jan and Larry Scheffler were received into Communicant Membership through the Profession of their faith. The status report indicated worship is slowly moving in the right direction, and other areas of ministry—Bible Study and Sunday School—are also being scheduled. Thanks was also given for the dedicated service of the handbell choir. There was finally an update on the projects the pastor will oversee and undertake throughout the summer.

- **Property**

The property is in good repair. We thank Saxon for his efforts to weed, mulch, and do whatever is needed to keep the planting areas looking good. Mowing has also been done on an “as needed” basis. A work day will be scheduled for the summer to catch up with some much needed spring cleaning. Also, bids will be received from three contractors for the resurfacing of the parking lot.

- **Financial Secretary**

For the month of May the following offerings were received —

Cleaning / mowing	140.00
General Fund	9,344.00
<u>Pass thru</u>	<u>271.52</u>
Total Offerings	\$9,755.52

- **Treasurer**

Income and Expenses for May were —

Beginning Balance	34,723.00
Income	9,344.00
<u>Expenses</u>	<u>10,774.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$33,293.00

*Continued on page 5*

Meeting, from page 4

- **New Business**

There was discussion regarding the ease of restrictions for indoor worship in compliance with new State guidelines. These will be included in the June newsletter, as well as in the service folder. After June 20th, masks will not be mandatory. It was also noted the Membership Directory needs to be updated. Pastor will put the information out so corrections and additions can be made.

The meeting Adjourned with the Doxology

SDG

## Outreach & Fellowship Opportunities

For the last several years, the Outreach & Fellowship Committee sponsored events which provided opportunities for members to invite friends and relatives to Our Redeemer. Some events were conducted outside the formal worship service. There were also special worship services with food and fellowship afterwards.

Through the course of the summer, and particularly in the Fall, these events will again be scheduled. Watch for more information as it becomes available. Also, plan to invite people to come and learn more about our congregation and our Savior.



## Upcoming Events

In June and July, we have held an Ice Cream Social and Fourth of July festivities. These will not take place this year (again). However, the Committee is meeting this Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm to begin planning for the late summer, fall, and end of the year activities.

If you would like to participate in the planning of any activity, please come and share your suggestions.

The first activity which will be planned is the Beach, Bike, Barbeque. Unfortunately, the County is not accepting reservations for group picnic sites at Goleta Beach, so we are going to move to "plan B." This will be on the church property—under the oaks and on the paving stone patio. We will still have the barbeque, games, and plenty of time for fellowship. The date needs to be determined, but it will be in August. Watch for more information.



## June Birthdays

We rejoice in the many blessings God has given the members of our family of faith. May the Lord continue to bless them richly.

- 8<sup>th</sup> - Henley S.
- 9<sup>th</sup> - Sue P.
- 10<sup>th</sup> - Jaden S.
- 18<sup>th</sup> - Julie S.
- 24<sup>th</sup> - Christina F.
- 29<sup>th</sup> - Landon S.
- 30<sup>th</sup> - Hilary S.

## Notes & News

You shall  
**LOVE**  
 THE LORD, YOUR  
**GOD**  
 with all your heart  
 and with all your soul  
 and with all your mind.  
 Deut. 6:5

### Handbell Choir

After nine months of regular practices and performances during the festival part of the “church year,” the hand bell choir has earned some well-deserved time off.

We are grateful for the dedicated service of our ringers, as well as Debbie Aitkins for directing the choir and preparing the music.

In September the bells will begin again. If you are interested in ringing, please speak to Debbie, and watch for the practices to begin. It is a rewarding way to serve, and beautifies our worship.



### Choir

Unlike its instrumental counterpart, the mixed voice choir did not practice or sing throughout the past year. Their service to the congregation was missed.

Practices will start again in the Fall, and we are always looking for new voices to sing. If you are interested, please speak with Pastor Proeber regarding time and schedule.

### Wednesday Evening Bible Class

Bible Class will continue through the summer months with the study of the “End Times.” It is an interesting book which brings to light many of the events prior to, during, and after the Last Day.

In the coming months, we will direct our attention to some of the false teachings concerning the last day. If you are interested in learning more, it is not too late to come.

The Wednesday evening class begins at 7:00 pm.

### Sunday Morning Bible Class

Something exciting is about to happen. Sunday morning Bible Class will return on Sunday, June 27th following the worship service. It has been far too long that the class has been on hold.

For the summer months, the classes will follow the Scripture lessons for the day, focusing on one of the non-sermon lessons. Each lesson will form its own class for the day. This will provide the opportunity to still catch Bible Class in the summer without missing numerous lessons if you are away on Sunday morning.

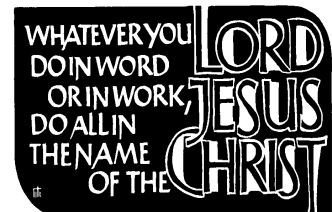
### Sunday School

Although we did not have a complete year to offer Sunday School, lessons were mailed, and eventually classes were offered in May and June. We thank Sonja Todd and Sue Proeber for their efforts to keep things going.

In the Fall, the new quarter will start. Please watch for a possible schedule change.

If you have any questions, please speak with Sue Proeber, or Pastor

Also, if you are interested in becoming involved in teaching next Fall, please speak with Sue or Sonja regarding what is necessary,



### Other Opportunities

We are always looking for new opportunities for service, outreach, study and encouragement. Please share your ideas with a Council member—Greg Grunewald, Jim Brown, Josh Schueler, or Pastor Proeber. If you have an idea for a fellowship activity, please speak with Al Todd. Thank you for your help!

## Reporters Wanted

Book review? Personal Story of Faith?  
Event report? Potluck—gathering? Party? Field Trip?

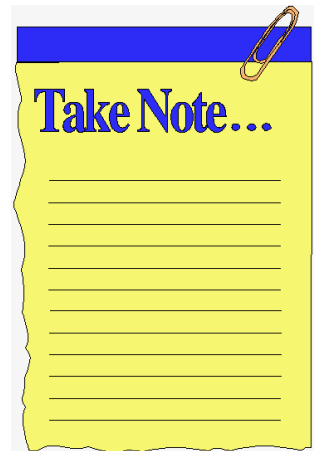
Half-page to three pages  
Reviewed for scriptural consistency  
Due by 25th of month to appear in next issue

Hard-copy or email to Pastor Proeber  
pastor.orlcsb@gmail.com

***A simple and rewarding way to serve!***

There is always a standing invitation to provide material for the *Reporter*. Throughout the past volumes—already 19—articles authored by members have really made every issue more interesting.

We pray that every member will provide an article for 2021. If you have an idea, and you are not sure whether to act on it, please don't hesitate to speak to Pastor Proeber for advice. Thanks!



### Meetings for June

Church Council	Tuesday, June 8th at 7:00 pm
Committees	Tuesday, June 8th at 8:00 pm
Outreach Committee	Tuesday, June 12th at 7:00 pm

*If you have a question regarding a specific area of ministry, please contact a member of the appropriate Board. He will be happy to help.*

**Congregational Meeting is July 18th following the worship service.**

## Christian Liberty

We are not dealing with political liberty but with a different one — one which the devil intensely hates and opposes.

It is “the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free,” not from some human servitude or captivity but from eternal wrath. Where? In the conscience. There our liberty stays. It does not go any farther; for Christ did not free us in the political and in the carnal sense, but in the theological or spiritual sense, that is, He has so freed us that our conscience is free and glad because it does not fear the wrath that is to come. This is real and inestimable liberty, in comparison with the greatness and majesty of which the others (political and carnal) scarcely are one drop or speck. For who can tell how great a matter it is for anyone to be sure that God is not angry or will never be angry, but that to eternity He will be a gracious and kind Father for Christ's sake? The fact that we enjoy the favor, protection, and help of the Supreme Majesty, and that He will finally so free us also corporeally that our body, which is sowed in corruption, in shame and in weakness, will rise again in incorruption, in glory and power — this fact is certainly a great and incomprehensible liberty.

*(Luther's Works, vol. 2, para. 2410)*

## Devotional Corner

### Jesus Speaks to Sinners

Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." *Luke 7:50*

Two people desperately needed to hear what Jesus had to say to them. One would reluctantly listen. The other would relish every word Jesus spoke. As I consider both of these responses I need to ask myself, "How will I respond when Jesus speaks to me a sinner?"

From Scripture it is clear Jesus came to "seek and to save what was lost" (Luke 19:10). The message he speaks to sinners is truly precious. It gives hope to the hopeless. It offers comfort to the despairing. It provides compassion to the broken-hearted. At the same time, Jesus also justly judges the stubborn and self-righteous heart.

Jesus spoke to just such a person, namely, Simon the Pharisee who had invited him to dinner. Simon was arrogant, judgmental, and a horrible host. Now, Jesus doesn't take him to task for his lack of hospitality. He accuses Simon of having little love for him and the precious gift he wanted to offer him.

In contrast, Jesus also spoke to the woman who was accused of being openly sinful. Unlike Simon, she was loving, worshipful, and completely humble. Jesus commended her for her great love, because it revealed her complete trust in him and his precious gift.

Jesus continues to speak to sinners of every generation in the same way. Either he will condemn them for their rejection, or he will commend them for their love. Which should I expect to hear?

If I try to rely on my own merits, my efforts and my accomplishments to secure favor with God, I and all my self-righteous works will be rejected. In contrast, if I rely on the merits, efforts, and accomplishments of Jesus, I will be declared not guilty and accepted by God.

As I live my life in view of God's just and uncompromising will, I come to know where I stand and what I deserve to hear. This is why I must rely on the merits of Jesus Christ alone. Through faith in him I know where I will stand and what I will hear. They will be the same words Jesus spoke to the sinful woman—the same words he speaks to every sinner. Your sins are forgiven. Faith has saved you. Go in peace.

#### Prayer

O gracious Lord, let me cling to you and your precious work alone. If I try to rely on my works, correct and restore me. Bless me with the gift of faith which rejoices in your blessed assurance that my sins are forgiven.

Daily devotions can be accessed through [www.whataboutjesus.com](http://www.whataboutjesus.com) or [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net). Please follow the instructions to view daily devotions and to subscribe to them. They are also available as "podcasts."