



Redeemer Lutheran Church of Leisure World

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“Witness to God’s Love”



May 2023 is a month filled with opportunities to witness to God’s love. From the 2nd Sunday celebrating our Mothers who taught and showed us the meaning of love by caring for us, to the last Sunday remembering our brothers and sisters who sacrificed their lives in service to our country on Memorial day, it is a month of loving remembrances. But in our church and May’s Holy Scriptures, we are also called to remember the love of Christ shared and embraced by those who follow our Lord Jesus Christ’s teachings. We are called to remember and live out our faith by sharing God’s love by being witnesses to Christ and recipients of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lutheran Bishop Dave Nagler shared a copy of his sermon that he will be delivering to our church’s Pacifica Synod Assembly on the 1st Sunday of May, and the concluding portion is particularly relevant to our community. After traveling through the Synod since his installation, he finds:

“From being around the synod with you, there is good news to share!...When I see all of you...bearing witness in our Synod...Alleluia! The Gospel is being proclaimed! Brothers and Sisters, Siblings in Christ, we are alive in God’s Spirit!”

When I met with Bishop Nagler a few months ago to discuss with him how Redeemer Lutheran and St. Theodore’s Episcopal churches were naturally merging together (and we will celebrate that with him and the Episcopal bishop in October when we celebrate 60 years of ministry in Leisure World), he shared with me how he and the Episcopal Presiding Bishop had spent a retreat weekend together and saw firsthand how our denominations are so clearly linked and have been living the proclamation of the Gospel together. He quotes the Presiding Bishop in his sermon this Sunday:

“The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal church Michael Curry refers to the Episcopal church as the Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement. I love that term, so let’s think about ourselves that way. We are the Lutheran branch of the Jesus Movement here in this part of the world, the Pacifica Synod. This beautiful, diverse, complex, wonderful place.

We are a part of this movement going all the way back to Jesus of Nazareth who healed, and raised people to new life, and proclaimed good news in a time when people were talking about bad news. ... So, let’s journey and go together into a new space, trusting that God is with us as he promised to be.”

Bishop Nagler’s Sermon to the Pacifica Synod’s Assembly, 5/7/23

The final Sunday of May 2023 is not just Memorial Day weekend, but one of the holiest days of the year: Pentecost. The day when God's Holy Spirit descends and unites all of God's people into one multi-faceted, Jesus-movement-based church. Let us remember the love of God shared through the life and ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ and do as our Bishops encourage us: trusting in a God who loves us now and forevermore through the moving power of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. May our May 2023 be blessed, holy, and empowered by prayerfully uniting us in God's love.

~ ~ *Pastor Lisa*