



The Olive Branch

Loving Christ in Worship, Fellowship, Education and Service

May 2025

1700TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NICENE CREED

This coming May 20th, 2025, the Christian world will commemorate the 1700th anniversary of the preeminent creedal confession of Christianity: the Nicene Creed, which was first articulated in the City of Nicaea (43 miles outside of Constantinople) in the year 325 AD. So, as Lutherans, we join the global Church of Jesus Christ in celebrating the 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed as an enduring confession of faith in the Triune God and in the saving work of Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. For Lutherans, the Nicene Creed is a theological anchor and vibrant testimony to God's grace, and its anniversary invites us to remain grounded in the unchanging truth of God's Word and the theological fundamentals reflected in the Nicene Creed. Moreover, this 1700th anniversary also invites us to engage in ecumenical dialogue and cooperation with other branches of Christianity.

Back in 325 AD, the early Church faced a crisis. A teacher named Arius was claiming that Jesus Christ was a created being, not fully divine. So the Ecumenical Church Council of Nicaea gathered to defend the truth of Christ, producing the Nicene Creed (later refined in 381 at Constantinople). This creedal statement of the Christian Faith boldly declares that Jesus is "begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father" — fully God, of One Being with the Father and the Holy Spirit in an Eternal Tri-Unity (see the second article of the Nicene Creed). It's a forthright and unwavering statement of who God is and what he has done to save us through his only begotten Son, Jesus.

When we confess the Nicene Creed, we're not just reciting ancient history; we're proclaiming the Living God who saves us through his Son, "who for us and for our salvation came down from heaven" (second article of the Nicene Creed). In an age of theological ambiguity, the Nicene Creed grounds us in the truth of the Gospel, pointing us to Christ as the sole mediator of God's New Covenant. In a world that often dilutes God's grace and truth, this creedal statement keeps us anchored to the truth of Christ our only Savior.

The 1700th anniversary of the Nicene Creed unites Christians across traditions: Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholics, Lutherans, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, and others. This shared creedal confession creates a basis for meaningful unity, even as we acknowledge and navigate differences. For example, Lutherans may differ with the Roman Catholic maximalist understanding of St. Mary's role within Christian spirituality, or Lutherans may differ with some Protestants concerning the spiritual efficacy of the Sacraments, but our common affirmation of Christ as our Divine Messiah gives us a starting point for increased ecumenical dialogue and cooperation.

True Christian unity is not uniformity, therefore. We're not meant to gloss over theological divides. We're not here to pretend differences don't exist or to compromise our Lutheran confession for a superficial unity. Consequently, we Lutherans can approach inter-church dialogue and cooperation while holding fast to our theological and spiritual distinctives: [1] the Lutheran principle of the preeminence of the Holy Scriptures as the primary source and authority for Christian faith and life; [2] the Lutheran understanding that God's Word within the Holy Scriptures speaks both Law and Gospel, and we must clearly distinguish between Law and Gospel (not confusing them together); and [3] the Lutheran conviction that God's saving grace and truth are primarily transmitted to us through both the Word and Sacraments of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. So we approach Christian ecumenism with clarity and charity, focusing on the Nicene Creed's proclamation of the Triune God and Christ's redemptive work as the basis for Christian unity.

As we celebrate 1700 years of the Nicene Creed, we join Christians throughout the world to proclaim the Triune God with boldness and joy. For in the Everlasting Covenant of Jesus Christ that the Nicene Creed uplifts, the great New Covenant sealed by the blood of Christ, God freely offers salvation. Through "ONE BAPTISM for the forgiveness of sins" (see the third article of the Nicene Creed) God pours out his grace, uniting us to Christ and giving us the gift of faith to trust in him alone for our salvation. So as we confess the Nicene Creed during these Seven Sundays of Eastertime, we stand

shoulder to shoulder with Christians across centuries and traditions, transformed and united by the Good News of Jesus Christ that saves us. This Gospel truth is our anchor, and it's the foundation for our ecumenical relations with all the various branches of the Church of Jesus Christ. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen.

Christ is risen!
Pastor Tim

Pam's Pearls of Prayer

Scripture of the Month: Matthew 19:26

But Jesus looked at them and said, "For mortals it is impossible, but for God all things are possible."

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Thought for the Month

Everything is possible with God. He is everything and much more. No matter what, He can handle anything that comes at us. And because He can, we can, even if we don't always think so. We can do anything with His guidance. Nothing is impossible for our Lord, so keep Him by your side.

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Prayer for the Month

Dear Lord, we often find obstacles in our way as we travel through life. We forget that You are always by our side to see us through these troubles. Thank You for being there whenever we need You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Mt. Olive Preschool Update

April has been such a beautiful month! We kicked off our month learning all about our new season Spring! We planted some flowers in our garden and made beautiful spring art projects. After we learned about our new season we Learned all about bugs and insects and how some can be very beautiful, some are not so cute, but they are all important to our world. We got our caterpillars and watched them turn into Chrysalis, and we have had a couple emerge from their chrysalis and we will release them when their wings are all dry! It is a beautiful thing to watch! After we learned about bugs, we celebrated Easter, we made ester eggs, and Easter bunnies, we read the story of Jesus and how he died just for us so we can go to heaven to be with him someday and we think that is a really cool thing! We ended the week with an easter egg hunt, where our families got to come help us hunt for eggs and did fun easter crafts with us! This week we celebrated Earth Day, and we are learning how to reduce, reuse and recycle to keep our World healthy and happy! Our school year is starting to

wrap up and it is becoming a very busy time of year as we prepare for Mothers day and our Preschool Graduation! We can't believe how fast the year has gone, but we can't wait to celebrate together!

Blessings

Mrs. Ashley, Mrs. Amanda, Mrs. Robyn, Ms. Hannah, Mrs. Emily

Community Luncheons

Our last community luncheon of the season is coming up on May 14th. The Verdugo Hills Women's Chorus will be providing the entertainment. Come and join us for food, fellowship and entertainment!

Poems for Mothers

A Mother's Blessing

God made a mother, a special kind,
A heart of love, a gentle mind.
She guides our steps, with loving hand,
A faithful friend in this promised land.

Her prayers ascend, a sweet, soft sound,
To God above, on hallowed ground.
She teaches us faith, a precious art,
And fills our hearts with love's warm start.

So on this day, we give our thanks,
For mothers dear, with love that ranks
Above all else, a blessed sight,
A beacon shining, ever bright.

Let us praise God, for this gift so grand,
The loving mothers, hand in hand.
May they be blessed, in all their ways,
Throughout the passing of their days.

~Author Unknown

Motherhood

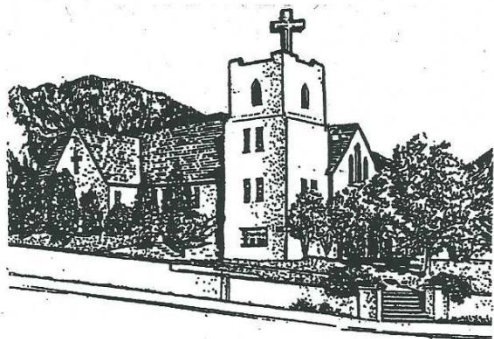
Through the years a mother has been
All that's sweet and good
For there's one bit of God and love,
In all true Motherhood.

~ Helen Steiner Rice



**FROM: MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



TO:

DATED MATERIAL – DO NOT HOLD

BIRTHDAYS

5 – Justin Tagawa	28 – Rebecca Pinchbeck
7 – Larry DeBoer	29 – Matthew Ness
7 – Jennifer Kubela	

ANNIVERSARIES

15 – Pastor & Hilary Singleton	No. 32
17 – Wendy & Kevin Fragosa	No. 12

SOME MEETINGS & EVENTS

1-4 – Via de Cristo Weekend Retreat	
6 – Church Council	7:00 pm
10 – Breakfast Bible Study at Panera	8:30 am
12 – Threads of Hope	9:00 am
14 – Community Luncheon	12 noon
31 – Women’s Silent Auction & Luncheon	12 noon

Silent Auction & Luncheon

Remember to save the Date: May 31, 2025

It’s time for spring cleaning! Our Silent Auction and Luncheon is our way of giving back to the community by donating our gently used items for the auction. All of the proceeds will go to those affected by the Altadena fire. Please bring your donation to the church. Just a reminder, we don’t take clothing. We look forward to seeing you there!



Holy Week & Easter Activities

Following Jesus’ triumphant ride into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, our focus was on His last days on Earth. Our services for Holy Week began on Maundy Thursday celebrating the last supper that Jesus shared with His disciples. On Good Friday, our focus was on His crucifixion. Then Saturday, we celebrated the Easter Vigil, knowing that our Lord had risen.

On Easter Sunday morning we celebrated the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Our Sunday started with a service of Word and Sacrament, song and praise. Next we enjoyed fellowship and food at our Easter Brunch - honey baked ham, three varieties of quiches provided by Larry Hovland and Yuki Tagawa, fruit salad, and desserts made by Vi Reardon and JoAnne Sierks. Finally the children participated in the annual Easter egg hunt. Alleluia, He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

