



GENEVA NEWS

Worshipping | Learning | Connecting | Giving | Serving

Pastor's Lenten Study

Sundays, March 6 & 13, 9am
in Simpson Hall

Join Pastor Steve for two consecutive Sundays as he leads a study focusing on **The Lord's Prayer** (Matthew 6:9-13). As we are in the middle of Lent, now is the perfect time to take a closer look at confession, forgiveness, and obedience. All regular adult classes meeting at 9am Sunday mornings (*Bible in Our Hands*, *The Network* and *The Bible Project*) will be suspended so we can explore together this enlightening and motivating study for the journey of embracing Geneva's future.

Congregational Meeting

March 20 @ 11:30am

The purpose of which is to elect Elders for the Class of 2025 and the 2023 Nominating Committee. See page 3.



Creating An Inclusive Culture

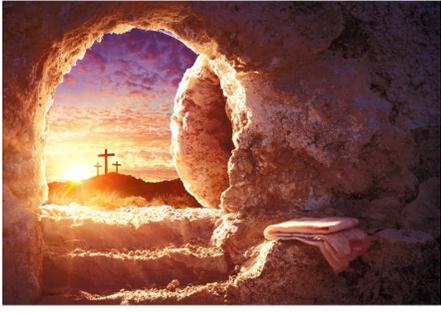
A message from Pastor Steve

What is Geneva's future? Our Vision is "... Geneva aspires to be an inclusive congregation worshipping, learning, connecting, giving, and serving together." To be inclusive is not only a cognitive acknowledgement, but also a welcoming of the person who is different than us into our lives.

The process of becoming a more inclusive congregation begins with each one of us. Matthew L. Skinner, Professor of the New Testament at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, and the speaker at the Los Ranchos Presbytery Pastors Retreat February 14-16, reminded us that Jesus remains visible to others when his followers follow his lead, promoting abundant wholeness through public proclamation, advocacy, service, and charity.

Put one foot in front of the other and press on. We are God's agent, individually and as a community of faith, to demonstrate God's inclusive favor to everybody regardless of gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, economic bracket, political party affiliation, vaccinated and unvaccinated, and those who are skeptical.

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New Sermon Series Began Ash Wednesday

Ends May 29

With the Ash Wednesday service, March 2nd, Pastor Steve debuted the sermon series **Embrace Geneva's Future: Ash Wednesday, Lent, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Resurrection of the Lord/Easter and Making Disciples**. You may prepare for the message each week by reviewing the sermon texts, a listing of which is online at genevapres.org/currentsermonseries.

Jazz Vespers

March 13, 4pm in the Sanctuary

Vespers, a form of Evening Prayer, has its roots in the evening prayers of ancient Israel. Jazz music is a perfect compliment to the contemplative nature of this service. If you have not yet attended a Jazz Vespers service we invite you to do so. Learn more and/or become a sponsor at genevapres.org/jazzvespers.

(Pastor's Message continued from page 1)

Our unity is in our common faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Live the Great Commandment, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 25, and the Great Commission. Aspire to remember, tell, and live the way of Jesus by being just, kind, and humble.

A new column is being introduced with this issue of *The Geneva News* to help us along in our journey to become a truly inclusive church culture (see page 6). There are many questions to answer beginning with, what does *inclusivity* really mean and what does it look like? Let's explore these questions together.



March Activities

Meet & Greet Lunch - March 6th, 11:30am

New members, visitors and guests are invited for an Olive Garden lunch and fellowship hosted by Pastor Steve in Simpson Hall immediately following worship. If you are a member and plan on bringing someone new, please shoot elder Jane Kingston a quick email at janekingston@hotmail.com to let her know you're coming.

Confirmation Class - Sunday, March 6, 13, 20 and April 3rd 10:30am-12pm, Youth Room

Middle School and High School students learn the basics of the Christian faith and will be confirmed by sharing their own statement of faith during Palm Sunday worship (April 10). At this time students will also be baptized if they have not already been.



Confirmation Class offered to Geneva youth to be confirmed in worship Palm Sunday, April 10.

Register for the Confirmation Class at genevapres.churchcenter.com/registrations. While students are with Pastor Ryan, from 11:45am-12pm parents are invited to attend a short lesson in *Faith Equipping* with Pastor Steve which will focus on forming faith in children. Please direct questions to Pastor Ryan at rromberg@genevapres.org.

Geneva Presbyterian Women - March 16, 12-1:30pm

Grab a friend and your cowboy boots and join us for a low impact line dancing lesson with Geneva's own expert Mary Payne. Please note the earlier meeting time as we encourage all in attendance to bring your own lunch and beverage so we can eat and fellowship together before the lesson. Masks are still required when not eating. See ya there!

Congregational Meeting - Sunday, March 20, 11:30am

We encourage all Geneva members to join us in the Sanctuary immediately following the 10:30 am worship service for a Congregational Meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to elect Elders for the Class of 2025 and the 2023 Nominating Committee.

Geneva Women's Book Club - Tuesday, March 22

This group meets the fourth Tuesday of the month from 1-2pm in McLennan Lounge. The focus for the March discussion is the book ***Nourished: A Memoir of Food, Faith & Enduring Love*** by Lia Huber. To participate online, join the book club group at genevapres.churchcenter.com/groups to receive an email with the Zoom meeting ID. For questions or technical assistance, contact the church office at 949-837-2323, or email us at info@genevapres.org.



Missional Life Update

Scholarship Recipients Say Thank You!

In preparation of our annual announcement of our O'Neill/Boyer college scholarship program (we will be taking applications April 1-30), the Missional Life team wanted to share with you some of the thank you notes received from a few of the recipients from our partner church in Tijuana. These students would not be receiving an education without this financial assistance. Thank you all for supporting this very important ministry.

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CONNECT GROUPS

A more personal way to be in relationship together.

It's not too late to join a Group!

What is a Connect Group?

Small gatherings of 3-12 Geneva members and non-members who study the Bible, worship and serve together while supporting one another through life's trials and joys.

What if I'm already in a similar group?

Many of you already have groups in which you feel completely connected and supported (e.g. GPW circle groups, Men's Bible Study, etc.). However, if you are not currently in a group, or if you would like to join another group in addition to your current affiliation, feel free to do so.

How do I join a group?

The first step is to choose a group that appeals to you. You may do this online at genevapres.org/connectgroups, at the Welcome center Sunday mornings or by calling the church office at 939-837-2323. The goal is for groups to begin meeting in March during the Lenten season.

Answers to additional questions may be found at genevapres.org/connectgroups. Just click on the "FAQs" or contact Pastor Ryan at rromberg@genevapres.org.



Community Food Drive w/ Stater Bros.

Saturday, March 19 & 26,
8am-12pm

For two consecutive Saturdays, Geneva volunteers will be at the entrance of the Stater Bros. Market right across from the church to collect food to replenish the shelves of the South County Outreach Food Pantry. We'll be handing out flyers to shoppers, collecting donations and getting to know people in our community.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

If you would like to help work the Geneva table, we'd love to have you! [Register for a shift here](https://www.genevapres.churchcenter.com/registrations) (genevapres.churchcenter.com/registrations).

DONATE!

Bring donated items during our Stater Bros. Saturdays, or drop them off at the church during the week. Download the [Shopping List here](#). You may also pick up a list in the church office, at the Welcome Center on Sunday morning or download at [genevapres.org/events](https://www.genevapres.org/events).

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Hello !

I hope you are very well, I am writing you this little letter in order to thank you for the support you have given me during this time. I am only 1 semester away from finishing my studies to continue and take the university entrance exam, thank you very much for all.

Greetings blessings

Alan Israel Lopez Reynaga

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I will forever have gratitude for your support. It has been a great blessing in my academic training. You have motivated me to strive harder every day and to achieve greater goals day by day. May God bless you today and always.

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

Sincerely,

Ananías González García

Hello brothers and sisters from Geneva church,

I write to thank you for the continuous support you have given me throughout my career. I am currently about to attend the fifth semester. Thank God and to each one of you that I have been able to focus solely on my studies. This semester I will begin to accredit my third language in the Business major, which is a requirement in my degree. In addition to all this I have also been able to cover all my medical expenses. My family also thanks you for this opportunity.

I am currently a little less than halfway to completing my degree, and in this new semester I will continue to be constant and strive to have better grades. Many thanks and blessings to each of you and your families.

Sincerely,

Jennifer E. Sanchez Murillo

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Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

A cordial greeting and a sincere thanks to you for the support that you provide in my university career. I am very glad that I can make each monthly payment to my school. Each semester that I finish, I am happy because very soon I advance and I hope to give my best possible effort. I thank God for my career, my subjects and teachers that I am getting to know and receiving more knowledge,

Blessings to you,
Vicky Montoya Castro

Dear brothers and sisters of the scholarship committee,

I hope you are well and that you have an excellent year. I want to thank you for all your support during this time. You have been a great help for my academic and personal development. I eternally thank God for your lives, for his grace and mercy. I also send my grades for this semester. Much success always and may God be with you, thank you.

I thank my God whenever I remember you, always in all my prayers praying with joy for you all (Philippians 1:3-4).

Sincerely,
Rachel Gonzalez Garcia

December 30, 2021 Kevin O'Neill
To: O'Neill/boyer scholarship program

Greetings sisters and brothers,

I thank you for the great help you give me with this scholarship. I have already been in college for three semesters, thank God. This scholarship has made a big difference since it allows me to buy all my school materials and cover the tuition expenses. Despite the difficulties that the pandemic brings, I have made an effort to stay firm in my studies and maintain my average. And so, I thank you very much, I hope you are well and have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sincerely,
Yazmin Seyli Gonzalez Lopez

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Say Hello To Our New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members to the Geneva family. These individuals were received by the congregation in the February 27 10:30am worship service. Let's all introduce ourselves and make them feel welcome!



Lorna
Camfield
Laguna Niguel

Rebecca
Morehouse
Aliso Viejo



John Pomery
Laguna Woods

Nina Pomery
Laguna Woods



Andrew
Romberg
Huntington Beach

The next new member class will be **Saturday, June 11** from 10-11:30am in McLennan Lounge.



Pastor Steve's Daily Inspiration

Begin or end your day with a 3-minute video devotional reflection on Geneva's YouTube channel (youtube.com/genevapresbyterianchurchoc) from Pastor Steve on the daily passage found online from the *Our Daily Bread Devotional* series. Call the church office at 837-2323 or email us at info@genevapres.org for a free devotional booklet.

Lenten Devotional

This devotional from the Presbyterian Mission Agency explores one of Jesus' many Matthew 25 "I was" statements, beginning with Ash Wednesday. Coupled with days of reflections will be opportunities to experience Lent in a new way, including *Wednesdays Soup and Reflection* (recipes included!) Download the Devotional Booklet here (presbyterianmission.org/wp-content/uploads/2022-Lent1.pdf), or request a hard copy at info@genevapres.org.

Dear Scholarship Committee,

Hello, I am pleased to inform you that I have successfully completed another semester and that thanks to God and to you, with the support you have given me, I was able to cover my university expenses. Without a doubt, it has been a great blessing for my life and my studies to receive this scholarship. I reiterate my thanks, hoping that you are well.

God bless you!

Yosmar Hernandez Ricardes



Creating An Inclusive Culture

This monthly column addresses how Geneva may become a more inclusive organization in today's world. The goal is to both educate and begin a conversation about this incredibly complex topic. Questions and comments are encouraged and may be directed to Geneva Communications Director, Edie Robertson, at erobertson@genevapres.org.

i. Inclusivity vs Diversity

"All are welcome here. Really, we mean that! All are welcome!" These are the first three sentences of our newly revised Geneva vision statement designed to send the message that we are a **diverse** congregation who welcomes everyone regardless of race, sexual orientation, age or ethnicity. You may be thinking, aren't we already a diverse and inclusive community? We're on the right track but we



have a way to go toward understanding the complexity of what it truly means to be diverse and inclusive.

The “Big 17” Cultural Identifiers

Diversity refers to the traits and characteristics that make people unique. It’s the “what” of becoming an inclusive culture. This graphic illustrates the “Big 17” cultural identifiers recognized in our world today. Any surprises? Any groups you may find particularly challenging?



Recognizing our own personal bias, and we all have them because we’re *human*, is the first step toward truly embracing those different from ourselves. Once recognized, the trick is to begin understanding and overcoming our personal and collective blind spots.

Beginning to create a welcoming culture

If diversity refers to the “what” of becoming an inclusive culture, **inclusivity** refers to the “how”. It’s the behaviors and social norms that ensure the people in each of the 17 identified cultural groups feel welcome at our church. How do we even begin to do this? It may be simpler than you think. Here’s an example.

Being on the edge of Laguna Woods, Geneva serves many who are deaf or hard of hearing. Hearing challenges is the cultural identifier for the group, or the “what” which makes them different. How could we be welcoming to this community? The answer was introducing the Hearing Loop technology in the Sanctuary making it possible for those with hearing difficulties to participate and be **included** in worship. This non-verbal effort demonstrates weekly that we want this group at Geneva and are willing to make the effort to meet their needs.

What lies ahead

How does Geneva achieve an environment in which all seventeen of the culturally identified groups are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and contribute fully to our success? Herein lies the challenge. But as Christians and members of the Geneva community, it’s a challenge we look forward to facing together.

Men’s Retreat Postponed

We regret to report that the 2022 Men’s Retreat scheduled for March 25-27 at the Luther Glen Conference Center has been postponed. The planning team is hoping to reschedule for some time this fall. Please direct any questions or feedback to Pastor Ryan at rromberg@genevapres.org.

One Great Hour Of Sharing

March 13 - April 10

This PC(USA) Special Offering aids those living in the aftermath of a natural disaster like the recent tornados in Kentucky and Tennessee. Give online at [genevapres.churchcenter.com/giving](https://www.genevapres.churchcenter.com/giving) (choose *One Great Hour of Sharing* in the dropdown menu) or use the special envelope in your offering envelope box.



In Memoriam

We are saddened by the passing February 13 of long-time Geneva friend **Esther**



Karlson. She will be missed. Please keep Esther's family in your prayers during this difficult time.

Join the Choir!

The Chancel Choir is committed to providing music for worship that is uplifting, inspiring, and glorifying to God, even amid today's particular challenges. It's also a great place to connect with one another! It's good to sing alone—but we're also made to sing together, and we've been learning the importance of that. If you, too, have been missing your "connections," consider joining us. We rehearse on Thursday evenings at 7:30 PM in Simpson Hall to facilitate distancing, and masks are required. We would love to welcome you to the choir!

Geneva Job Opening

The church is looking for a *Director of Classical and Modern Worship and Music*. The purpose of the position is, in relationship with the Pastor/Head of Staff, to create and implement a compelling and engaging collaborative classical and modern liturgy and music worship service which embraces intergenerational and missional

emphases. Click here for a full job description or visit genevapres.org/employment.

Please send a cover letter and resume to jobs@genevapres.org by April 1, 2022.

Daylight Savings Time

It's time for the days to get longer! Beginning Sunday, March 13 sunrise and sunset will be one hour later as we all "spring forward".

Get the App

Check the church calendar, register for events, join a group and more! Download the Geneva Church Center App @ churchcenter.com/app.

Save the date for these upcoming events

- **Women's Retreat – June 3-5 @ Luther Glen Retreat Center in Yucaipa, CA** for fellowship and rejuvenation. Sign-ups begin in May. Cost is \$199 per person.
- **Vacation Bible School – June 20-24:** VBS is for kids PreK through 5th grade. A great volunteer opportunity!
- **Summer Camp – July 5-9:** Middle and high schoolers go to Catalina Island. Sign-ups begin in June. Cost is \$475 per person. Scholarships available.

Prayer Requests

Paul Arndt
Bill Barnes
Bruce and Denise Beckhart
Jerra Lynne Beckhart
Cynthia Connors and Jim Juhan
Beth and Norm Coombs
Laura Galvin
Hank Green
David Horne
Cathy Kalina
Carol Van Kirk
Harriet and Bink Lewis
George Marsh
Lucy Messerschmidt
Mickey Vanier
Bob Warren
Frank Whitney

Email prayer requests to prayer@genevapres.org, or call the church office to complete a *Prayer Request Form*.

Our Church Prayer

Disciple making God, experiencing repentance, suffering and resurrection, daily, is a tremendous gift. Give us discipline to live your mission of salvation for the sake of others to discover and experience your favor, love, grace and peace. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.



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