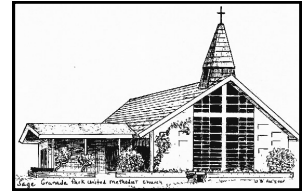




Sage Granada Park United Methodist Church

1850 West Hellman Avenue, Alhambra, California 91803



August 2021 E-Thymes



Our Vision:

To be a light on a hill for our community (Matthew 5:14).

Our Mission:

We are called to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Our Values:

We reaffirm our values as a multi-cultural and inclusive community united in the love of Jesus Christ.



Rev. Dr. George Martzen, Pastor
gmartzen@gmail.com

Kris Taniguchi, Organist
ktani28@hotmail.com

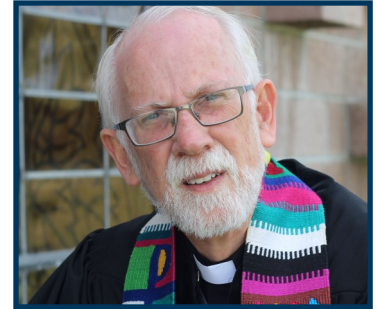
Sally Bell, Sunday School
sallycbell@gmail.com

Julie Quezada, E-Thymes Editor
sagegranadapark@gmail.com

Julie Quezada, Admin Assistant
sagegranadapark@gmail.com

Strength in Weakness

—by *Rev. George Martzen*



“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power.” -
Ephesians 6:10

Gymnasts are amazing. As a youngster my siblings and I were always scrambling up trees and rocks, and doing flips off the monkey bars. But the flips and spins of Olympic athletes are breathtaking. One of the current great gymnasts is U.S. gold-medalist, Simone Biles. At 24, she has probably accumulated the most world medals, having successfully performed in every gymnastic event.

What was maybe more breathtaking was when she dropped out of the competition earlier this week. Her decision came after losing her orientation in midair during vaulting and completing one and half twists instead of two and a half. Gymnastics, like many other sports, rely as much on mental as on the physical state of being. In an ESPN report she said that you have to “be there” 100 percent. “If not, you get hurt,” she said. Teammates have accepted her decision, recognizing that she is more than just her accomplishments.

This reminds me of grace. Scripture calls us to be “strong in the Lord and in the strength of God’s power.” The clause can be misleading. You might just hear the first phrase, “be strong” and the last word, “power.” Yes, be strong! Be powerful! That’s what we look up to in our society, superheroes who single-handedly vanquish the bad guys.

But this isn’t about brute force. A parallel expression is to “be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:1). To be thus strong is to practice relying on that divine energy that draws us into God’s orbit. “But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (Eph. 4:7). We gain strength of character as we gradually submit to God’s greater strength.

The literary context is the “household code,” a typical part of ancient Greek letters instructing moral responsibility to family members, so that they will be fitting members of the larger “polis,” the city state. In the Ephesians

letter, the larger polis is God's household. In God's household, power structures are leveled and reversed. "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Eph. 5:21). Even those who are masters of their households are co-subordinate with their own slaves under God's rule, because they have "the same master in heaven" (Eph. 6:9).

So, this strength is, first of all, not just individual brute strength, but strength that is focused for the family of Christ. Being strong in the Lord, or being strong in grace, is to have a shared strength. Though one person in the team may be weak for the moment, other members of the team pick up the slack and continue the pace. For example, when Simone Biles stepped out, other members of the USA team, such as Sunisa Lee went on to win gold.

Second, being strong in grace, is to be a channel for divine strength to flow through us. Rather than forced brute strength, which can cause injuries, you become so attuned to the relationship between your body and the environment, to others and to God, that movement seems effortless. It is divine grace working through us.

Just as athletes and musicians must engage in regular practice to be at top form, disciples must practice being strong in the Lord. The objective is not power over, but power with, to be so at one with one's craft, physically, mentally and spiritually, that it flows naturally.

For Christians, some of the most important exercises, or means of grace, include daily prayer, scripture reading, worship, good conversation, acts of mercy and acts of justice. Like the gymnasts and other athletes who practice being physically and mentally present, let us also practice being strong in the Lord, so that our Christian service and discipleship will eventually flow effortlessly for the transformation of our world.

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The memorial for David Nakamura will be this Friday, August 7, at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary. David was a long time member who passed away May 4, 2021 at the age of 98. You may come in-person or view online. For those coming for the service in the sanctuary, use this link for registration, health screening and waiver: <https://forms.gle/syvxXUXeX1sADCK97>. To watch on YouTube, go to <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGjW7t4TGk4T2satSSsTJQ/featured> For Zoom log onto [https://zoom.us/j/6803953106?](https://zoom.us/j/6803953106?pwd=YzZWZUN1ODdMeEJlMUIYMy8xaE9GZz09)

[pwd=YzZWZUN1ODdMeEJlMUIYMy8xaE9GZz09](https://zoom.us/j/6803953106?pwd=YzZWZUN1ODdMeEJlMUIYMy8xaE9GZz09). No internet or computer? Dial by your location: +1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose) or +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston). Meeting ID: 680 395 3106 // Password: 2843229

July 4

Attendance: 51
Offering: \$1,175.85

July 11

Attendance: 70
Offering: \$28,844.25

July 18

Attendance: 55
Offering: \$1,922.25

July 25

Attendance: 70
Offering: \$ 107.25



Because we are not taking in-person offerings, you may give to the church by mail or online at our website www.sgpumc.org. Click on [Make a Donation](#). Please make note of your name and contact information on the memo line. Thank you for supporting our church and ministries! *Please note that our general offerings year to date are \$75,769.36 and our general offering budget for 2021 is \$102,000.

August 1

Worship
Liturgist: Paul Wong

August 8

Worship
Liturgist: Alicia Marquez

August 15

Worship
Liturgist: Angelea Marquez

August 22

Worship
Liturgist: Ratheesh Pillai

August 29

Worship
Liturgist: Jim Bell



Thank you to our Zoom Worship Crew: Ruel Reyes, Kris Taniguchi, Sally Bell, Jim Bell, Doreen Bolten, Kai Garcia, Ratheesh Pillai, and Rev. George Martzen.



COCOONS AND DYING

The dying man at Kuakini Hospital begged the chaplain to find his son. He had fought with his son several decades ago and they had not reconciled.

We all wear armor to protect our ego. Sometimes dying people are transformed in the melting away of ego-protection. Sometimes anger, jealousy, bitterness, and vanity melt away in the dying process. Our best word at a funeral is not "May he rest in peace," (stay dead forever) but resurrection! A second chance with new possibilities. A caterpillar breaks out of a cocoon as a marvelous butterfly. Death is our cocoon to a new life in a new world with new possibilities -a second chance.

In the powerful transitions of dying, Hitler can receive a second chance transformed into a wonderful, compassionate person. Death as a cocoon! A caterpillar reborn as a butterfly!

Rev. Dickson Kazuo Yagi



**Granada Park United Methodist
Nursery School & Kindergarten**
1850 W. Hellman Avenue
Alhambra, CA 91803

For more information, contact us at: 626-284-5006
gpumns1850@gmail.com <http://gpumnsk.org> <https://www.facebook.com/gpumns1850>

We are currently accepting Registration for the 2021-2022 school year: Children 2 years 9 months (potty trained) to 5 years old.

For more information, contact us at 626-284-5006
gpumns1850@gmail.com <http://gpumnsk.org> <https://www.facebook.com/gpumns1850>

Fun pics from July's Summer School Themes 2021

STARS & STRIPES



June 28-July 2

AHOY, MATEY!



July 5-9

**AROUND THE
CAMPFIRE**



July 12-16

HOWDY PARTNER



July 19-23



AUGUST 13, 2021:

School is Closed – Teacher Work Day

Follow us

AUGUST 16, 2021:

on Facebook

First day of school – All programs



IN PERSON WORSHIP NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

We have returned to in person/hybrid worship. Masks will be worn indoors and we will continue to register participants given the presence of new Covid variants in our region. Look for the Friday email from the church for online registration and links for viewing on Zoom or YouTube.

School Supply Drive 2021: "Backpack Blessing" In person class is resuming starting the first part of August in most areas. We are again teaming with Catalyst to help provide needed support in our community. Thank you to all of you who have already donated to this worthy project. **Donation Deadline:** August 8 **Drop Off:** Church Office **Needs:** Backpacks (all ages), subject notebooks, pencils/pens, highlighters, crayons, sharpeners, paper, etc.

APAC News: The concert series is underway, beginning with the performance of legendary Spanish dancer Inesita and her Flamenco Troupe on August 14 at the church at 7:00 PM. Her Flamenco troupe features Miquel Bernal, Clarita, and Ahmae supported by the guitarists Stamen Wetzel and Benjamin and The Arte Flamenco Ensemble. Inesita will dance six solos and present a musical interlude as pianist with the guitarists and castanets by Clarita. Admission: \$15.00 Donation at the Door or Free if you RSVP by August 10, 2021. **RSVP:** Email: bizwind@yahoo.com Contact: (626) 230-5435



The Gift

Ratheesh Pillai

Ephesians 2:8-9 says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works so that no one can boast," and Romans 6:23 says, "The wage of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Gifts, who does not like gifts! Hmmm... We may not like all gifts, though, because some may have expectations of the gifts they want to grasp, and also we may underestimate or devalue free gifts. We may also hear that a free gift is too good to be true and that there must be something we have to do to ensure we attain this gift.

Marcel Mauss' classic, well-written book, *The Gift*, expresses a theory of gift exchange. The book raised many thought-provoking questions when I read it. For Mauss, there are no free gifts. According to his observations, analyses, and discoveries, "gifts are inescapable" in every single human culture. Mauss' observations of cultures like the Polynesian, Melanesian, Northwest Native American, and Asian contexts, led him to argue that gift-giving and receiving necessitated obligatory reciprocity or squaring. Mauss raises many questions for the readers to think about gifts that we receive and give to someone. From this standpoint, we need to ponder what influence dwells in the object that triggers its recipient to pay it back. Is it the gift itself, the attitude, or the social-cultural obligation?

As humans, we all have experienced some sort of gift-exchange. Even though the sizes, characters, and values vary, we all still like receiving gifts that feel good. I also want to note that the "gift" is so much more distinctive than the structure of "barter" (You give me that, then I will give you this) and "commodity" (which is market-based and founded less on relationship). One of the Bible's greatest truths and questions that people often ask is that God offers us our salvation as a free gift. Is it truly free? It isn't something we can buy, nor is it something we can earn by our good works, but is it free? The Bible unquestionably communicates to us the two characteristics of God's free gift called "Salvation." First, it tells us that it is a costly gift; Jesus paid it on the cross (John 3:16).

Secondly, like any other gift, God's gift of salvation does not become ours until we accept it, or devalue it as cheap. We keep many "cheap" gifts on the side or put them in the trash instead of understanding the value of a person's love, respect, and attitude. Suppose we do not understand the value and the love of a free gift and that we are obligated to live by the way of salvation and grace. The Church turns into a religious building, the Bible turns into a storybook, and Jesus becomes an idol of Christmas.

Yes, salvation is generously offered to us by God's amazing love and grace but at an immense price for Him! Our individual, "reciprocal" response through obedience by accepting the total call of salvation to save the world conveys that we love God and are thankful for His gift.

Shalom!



8/8: Ruth Sangok Chon
8/9: Cyndi Hutchins
8/10: Jesse Chang
8/12: Ashley Park
8/13: Elena Littlefield
8/14: Elsie Takahama
8/15: Adison Bariya
8/16: Duli Dhar
8/17: Jasmine Furukawa
8/28: Janice Hurtado
8/30: Stuart Jacobson



8/3: Alan & Vivian Mori
8/7: Marshal Mock & Phyllis Tyler
8/9: Cyndi & Paul Hutchins
8/11: Yenny & Brett Staal



-Family of Alfred Chu
-Family of David Nakamura
-Jeannie Wong
-Family of Mike Hurtado
-Ken Matsumoto
-Yoko Hayashida
-Iketani family
-Littlefield family
-Nursery School
-Echavarria family
-Marilyn McIver
-Mary Sue Lodwick
-Matt Nakamura
-Alfred Chu
-Derek Tani
-Jean McIver
-Mariko Garrett
-Sho Tabata
-Morrison family
-Ratheesh Pillai and his wife
-Family of Dorothy Kinoshita
-Elaine's sister Lavina
-Laura Quezada Huerta
-Leonard Quezada



August 2021



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 In Person and Zoom Worship Service 10:00 VBS 4:30	2	3	4 Bible Study on hiatus Evening Prayer 5:30	5	6 Scouts 6:30—9:30	7 Memorial Service for David Nakamura 10:00 AM
8 In Person and Zoom Worship Service 10:00 VBS 4:30	9	10 Nominations Committee 7:30	11 Bible Study 1:00 Evening Prayer 5:30	12	13 Scouts 6:30—9:30	14
15 In Person and Zoom Worship Service 10:00	16	17 PAC 7:00	18 Bible Study 1:00 Evening Prayer 5:30	19 Ministry Coordinating Team 7:30	20 Scouts 6:30—9:30	21
22 In Person and Zoom Worship Service 10:00	23	24	25 Bible Study 1:00 Evening Prayer 5:30 Outdoor Worship Team 7:30	26 Discipleship Huddle 5:30	27 Scouts 6:30—9:30	28 East District Training Webinar 9:00-12:15 PM
29 In Person and Zoom Worship Service 10:00	30	31				