

# *Los Altos Church of Christ*

*"...being of the same mind, maintaining the same love,  
united in spirit, intent on one purpose." Philippians 2:2*

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## **This Sunday...A Purim People**

For the first eight chapters of Esther the battle between good and evil are on display. For awhile evil, in the person of Haman, held the upperhand. Then good triumphs as God's people overcome their enemy. What's left? A time of celebration.

**PRAYERS** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7*

- Please pray for Terrie Lee's brother Ernie. He was taken on Tuesday to the ER with a serious health condition.

**Continue to pray** for John and Jennifer...Tim's recovery... Roger Townsend... Berry... Jeff's mother... Jene's hand...Christine's mother... Allen Sawyers...The Britton Family ... Barbara... Gwen and her son Caleb... Emmy Creswick... Jene's friend, Jim Thorpe... Lu...City of Children... Healing Hands International... Japhet's work in Zimbabwe...and New Hope Uganda.

## **Notes of Thanks...**

Mountain States Children's Home has sent several thank you cards for the gift cards we sent at Christmastime from the house parents and young people in their care. Here's a sample...

*You all have been so good towards us for years now. It is truly a blessing to be gifted by you but most importantly you love, support and care for us.*

*Thank you for the gift cards. This is such a blessing for us.*

*Thank you so very much for thinking of us during this time. May God bless you and keep you safe today, tomorrow and always.*

*Thank you for the gift cards. It means a lot. I'm so thankful. Jesus loves you.*

*Thank you all so much for thinking of us at Christmas. We really appreciate the gift card to Kohl's. That will help with items we need for the cottage. We wish you all a New Year filled with God's blessings.*

## Ordinary Things that God Makes Extraordinary

By Steve Ridgell

They are just ordinary, everyday things that God makes extraordinary.

Water. You see it everywhere. Common and found all over our world. People drink it. They cook with it. They wash themselves with it. They wash clothes and dishes. They use it to grow things. And they are baptized in it. Not to get clean on the outside, but to get clean on the inside. I Peter 3:20-21. God's work in the waters of baptism saves us. The Holy Spirit comes to live in us. Acts 2:38. God's mercy, grace, and love meeting our faith and love in the water. Ordinary H<sub>2</sub>O. That changes everything. That makes us holy by the blood of Jesus. Where we share in his death. Romans 6:3-5. I have baptized people in baptisteries, horse troughs, hot tubs, fountains, swimming pools, and lakes. Ordinary water where God does something extraordinary.

Bread. Common in every meal all over the world. But when Jesus shared it with his apostles it was extraordinary. We are invited into that same meal with Jesus. I Corinthians 11:23-24. A meal of ordinary bread that has the power to focus our memories on what God has done for us. The gift of his Son. Our declaration that we believe Jesus came to this earth and died for our sins. I have had homemade flat bread, crackers, bread that I pulled apart, bread that handed to me, and bread that I went to the table to get. Ordinary bread that is the body of Jesus. Extraordinary gift of God.

Wine. Served at almost every meal in Jesus' time. Ordinary beverage that becomes a memorial to the blood of Jesus. I Corinthians 11:25-26. A call to examine ourselves and to remind ourselves that we believe Jesus died. I have had wine, grape juice, homemade wine, fermented wine, and raisin wine. Ordinary drink that is used by believers to announce our conviction that Jesus will come back. Because we believe.

Water, bread, wine. Ordinary items made extraordinary by God. Made holy by God.

And most amazing of all -- the ordinary me that God has made holy by the blood of His Son.

Extraordinary.

How great is our God.

### **Time For A Laugh**

A fourth grader celebrated his birthday on crutches, so he couldn't carry the cupcakes into his Sunday school without help. So the Sunday school teacher asked another student, Noah, to help the boy carry them in.

"I could," he said, "but I'd prefer not to." Spotting a teaching moment, the Sunday school teacher asked Noah, "What would Jesus do?" Noah answered, "Jesus would heal him so he could carry his own cupcakes."