



**SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
HAPPY THANKSGIVING
MONDAY MESSENGER - NOVEMBER 23, 2020**

*“A Day In The Life of A Hospital Chaplain During a Global Pandemic,”
by Intern Pastor Annela Rova**

A typical day at the Canyon Vista Medical Center is one that is full of protocols, accountability and self-discipline on everyone’s part. The spiritual care department is not considered “essential work,” but we are as of August 2020 considered back on board with the day-to- day functions of the hospital.

As the intern chaplain of Canyon Vista Medical Center, I typically work Thursday and Friday mornings and then cover emergency calls as needed. On my days I am working I arrive around 8:00 a.m. and have my surgical mask on and badge ready. They are asking us to please bring our work clothing with us to work and change there before our shift and change after, storing our clothing in a plastic bag and washing immediately when we get home. We are also asked to shower immediately upon arriving home. I arrive with a bag in hand, work clothing ready. I am then guided to get my temperature taken and up until a couple weeks ago, had to fill out a survey every time I entered asking about symptoms and exposure, that I had to sign, agreeing I would not enter if I met any of the criteria listed. They do not have the survey anymore, as the staff is now well-versed in the criteria and know better than to ever enter on our own good conscience if we meet any of the guidelines. I go to the bathrooms to change and then to the office to change into my work shoes to begin my day. As I go to the units to check in on patients, I am wearing not only a fresh surgical mask that was given to me as I entered the hospital, but also a face shield that I keep sanitized and stored securely.

I check the patient's room numbers and mark down those who require full on PPE and N95 FFR respirator masks, there are signs and PPE outside the room indicating this. There are specific staff assigned only to these rooms and patients, and the rest of the staff keep our distance. I visit patients who are not in isolation and require full on PPE. I sanitize my hands before entering a room and after. When I visit patients, I keep 6ft distance and do not touch them. Patients- unless they cannot- are encouraged to wear surgical masks as well. Most patients I visit unless for some health reason wear masks and respect the distance.

It at times has felt sterile and an isolating way to visit people, but the Spirit is present, and intimacy, comfort and connection does happen despite all the precautions. It is possible. A typical day at the hospital never feels unsafe or unreasonable. Everybody is required to follow the rules and does. There is a level of trust and if you are not willing to follow the requirements you are just plain not allowed in. Patients are asked to be masked, have their temperature taken and are asked to verbally confirm that they are not experiencing any of the symptoms or exposure listed on our waiver. Then patients who

are admitted are tested for COVID. So, 95% of the patients that I see have already been tested and confirmed negative. The other 5% are trauma calls I get into the ER, where they have not had an option to test for COVID yet. In these instances, I am never close enough to the patient to be at risk, plus again at all times I am wearing a surgical mask and a face shield. The positive admitted patients are confined to an isolation room, like I described in the previous paragraph.

Spiritual care is possible in a hospital during a global pandemic. The extra precautions provide the ability to offer this sort of care. I am able to pray with people, talk with people for extended periods of time and show up during times of uncertainty and isolation. There are no visitors allowed unless for a special circumstance such as, imminent death, or a patient who cannot communicate for themselves. Each patient is considered on a case-by-case basis of whether a visitor is an absolute need or not. It is very, very, rare, from what I have seen in my 3.5-month stint so far.

When I leave for the day, I sanitize my face shield, clipboard, pen, desk and phone. I change clothes and shoes and transport into a plastic bag to take home, leaving my shoes in the spiritual care office. I grab a large disinfectant wipe as I exit the building and then proceed to disinfect my keys, badge, phone, water bottle, pretty much anything I will bring home with me.

This is not ideal, but it is where we are at. It is safe, effective and how patients and staff can still receive spiritual and mental health care despite the complications of COVID-19. We make do and do the best we can. I personally have never felt at risk, or unsafe at the hospital. In fact, it's been more in places like grocery stores, for example, where I have felt the lack of concern from others that creates unsafe environments. At the hospital there is never a lack of concern and consideration. It is just not possible.

The staff who are assigned COVID patients are the ones most at risk and they and the COVID patients themselves are the ones in need of prayer at this time. The staff assigned to COVID patients are on the front line, risking them and their families lives in order to care for these infectious patients. Much of the teams assigned to these rooms are doctors, nurses, CNA's, food service and housekeeping. We commend them all for the hard work they are doing and every time we wear a mask, social distance and in general practice self-discipline, we are making these folks' lives easier. So, keep up the good work SELC, and thank you for your interest in all that goes into, "*A Day In The Life of a Hospital Chaplain During a Global Pandemic.*"

**(We thought it would be of particular interest to hear how the usual part-time hospital work of our Intern Pastor has been affected in these challenging times. Currently, she is the only pastoral care presence in this hospital until a new full-time chaplain is hired. Keep her and this ministry in your prayers! - Pastor Mark).*

**NOTE: NO COFFEE FELLOWSHIP ON THANKSGIVING WEEKEND SUNDAY, 11/29.
WILL RESUME ON SUNDAY, 12/6.**



**A FESTIVE DRIVE-BY ADVENT PICK UP - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 24th
ADVENTURES IN ADVENT KITS!**

10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. OR 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

In the Drive-thru area in Front of the Church Office

**All who come to the drive by will receive a coupon for a
free large pizza of your choice from Papa John's!**

We are inviting ALL members and friends of SELC of all ages, and especially those with children of all ages, or grandchildren in their homes, to come to a fun Advent Drive-by, to pick up their Adventures in Advent Kits as a part of our Make Mealtime Family Time fun! Our chefs will be “dishing” out the fun, spreading cheer and playing Christmas Carols - yes, before Advent! **Come take a short drive and get your FAITH 5!**

The kit will include some fun treats and a special Christmas gift for each child, along with creative and inspirational Advent and Christmas conversations and activities. These can all be done with children and teens in the home or over Zoom or Face Time for those whose loved ones are far away! We can also email these activities to you if you prefer, just contact Cindy Wiste at cindywiste@gmail.com. If you do not have email capability and cannot pick up your packet, please let her know as and we will help get them to you.

As the new year approaches, we will be launching more detailed information about these faith enriching resources that we hope will bless families, children, teens, couples, and singles! We plan to make the links available each month on our church website that you can click on for easy access under **FAITH5 For Our Faith Family!**



FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is
Matthew 25:40:

⁴⁰And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family you did it to me.'

(Post or keep this weekly scripture in a handy place and every morning or evening share the following as a couple, or with family members in the home or even with a dear friend over the phone.)



Share your highs and lows of the day with one another.



Read the verse of the week and if time permits, the Bible story that pertains to the Scripture of the week.



Talk about how the Bible reading might relate to your highs and lows of the day or how it's speaking to you.



Pray for one another's highs and lows and other prayer requests.



Bless one another. Make the sign of the cross on each other's forehead or the palm of your hands and say something simple such as: "God bless you and keep you in His love and care!" Or feel free to make up your own blessing that incorporates a part of the FAITH5 verse of the week.

Be creative! Stay open to the Holy Spirit!

SUNDAY LECTIONARY DAILY READINGS

The readings are chosen so that the days flowing out from Sunday (Monday through Wednesday) reflect upon that Sunday's readings. The days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the next Sunday readings.

Monday

Psalm 7

Esther 2:1-18

2 Timothy 2:8-13

Tuesday

Psalm 7

Esther 8:3-17

Revelation 19:1-9

Wednesday

Psalm 7

Ezekiel 33:7-20

John 5:19-40

Thursday

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Zechariah 13:1-9

Revelation 14:6-13

Friday

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Zechariah 14:1-9

1 Thessalonians 4:1-18

Saturday

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

Micah 2:1-13

Matthew 24:15-31

Sunday

Isaiah 64:1-9

Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Corinthians 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

From sundaysandseasons.com.

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