



**Sierra Evangelical Lutheran Church**  
**MONDAY MESSENGER**  
**December 14, 2020**

*From Pastor Perry:*

Dear Friends,

Even as we experience a brightening of Christmas lights on our streets, in our homes and in our church, we also are experiencing a darkening reality of the pandemic. Hospitals in Tucson are full; urgent cases are routed to Phoenix, or just being treated at home as best they can. Cochise County cases have topped 5000. The rate of transmission here as of late last week is 1.22, when the goal is to be under 1.0. And it appears it will only get worse as we head into Christmas and the New Year.

We are not without hope, though, as the first shipment of effective vaccines are being shipped into Arizona today. And, as believers, of course we are never without hope because of Emmanuel, God-with-us *no matter what*. That's what Christmas is about. Attached to this email newsletter is a beautiful and poignant letter from Grand Canyon Synod Bishop Deborah Hutterer which spells out both the reality and the hope of this time that I thought was worth sharing and reading. I pray it's helpful.

Together, God will get us through and will get through us to bless others with His Grace, love, and hope! And, as the Bishop says, I also invite you to call me if you want to "unload" or talk.

Walking the Way with you in Christ,  
Pastor Mark Perry

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**CHRISTMAS WORSHIP ONLINE**

As previously publicized, our Christmas service this year will be presented only on our website, [www.selcaz.org](http://www.selcaz.org), to be posted by the afternoon of Christmas Eve day, 12/24/2020, for viewing any time after that. This video recording will feature the traditional Christmas hymns sung by an ensemble, a special cowboy folk song by Dan Germain on guitar, Beth Dechant singing "Jesu, Bambino," the hand bell choir and other special instrumentalists, a children's time led by Director of Faith Formation Linda Perry, unique readings of Isaiah 9 and the Christmas story, Pastor's sermon, and, in culmination, the singing of "Silent Night" with a Zoom candle lighting ceremony featuring as many SELC members as possible. (We'll be recording that Zoom event tomorrow evening, 12/15, 7 pm. If you want to be a part of it, let Pastor know). This service will also be recorded on DVDs for the usual delivery to our homebound members without internet. Let us know if you need that as well.

We will also be celebrating a Christmas service including traditional carols and communion during our 10 am worship service on Sunday, December 27, 2020. (Note: no communion celebrated in the recorded Christmas service).

**Join us from home or wherever you are for Christmas celebrations like no other!**

## CONTINUED GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

**STOCKING STUFFERS** - Thank you for the overwhelming generosity of donations to this community effort providing clothing and other gifts for children and families for whom Christmas would otherwise be bleaker!

**BRIGHTEN CHRISTMAS FOR OLDER ADULTS WITH LSS-SW** - Older adults are experiencing more isolation than ever this year. Brighten this Christmas for over 1,300 older adults with donations of new towels and soap from local small businesses. In addition, LSS SW in Sierra Vista is asking for “beanie” type hats that can be pulled down over the ears and gloves and socks.

**GOOD NEIGHBOR ALLIANCE** - This Sierra Vista ministry for unhoused families and individuals has struggled this year financially during the pandemic but is still making it thanks to the community’s generosity. Now they are in special need of warm coats and hats, as well as any other monetary gifts. Drop them off at Good Neighbor Alliance, 420 N. Seventh St. Call first for hours, 439-0776.

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## 2021 OFFERING ENVELOPES

**Come DRIVE-BY and pick-up your 2021 Offering Envelopes.**

Pick up dates are: **Thursday, 10:00 am -12:00 pm or 3:00 pm -5:00 pm and**

**Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup> - 10:00 am -12:00 pm or 2:00 am -4:00 pm**

We invite you to drive into the front drive of the office (next to Lenzner Ave.) Just roll down your passenger window and we will hand it in. Minimal contact, and don’t forget to wear your mask too. For more information contact Sandy Stephenson 520-378-4678

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## WORSHIP SERVICE TIME CHANGE IN THE NEW YEAR

Please note that our Worship and Music Committee is announcing that SELC livestreamed-only worship will take place at **9:00 am, starting January 3, 2021**. This will better serve our Fellowship and Faith Formation ministries going forward. We continue to pray we can reinstate in-person worship once the pandemic calms down more. Once the pandemic is completely over, the intention is to return to our two-worship services format.

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## ENJOY ‘MIRACLE ON 34<sup>TH</sup> ST. RADIO PLAY’

You may have heard Pastor mention in his sermon two weeks ago that his daughter, Christina, with fiancé, Kirk Gostkowski, and their NYC Chain Theatre, are putting on this classic story as a “radio play” which features our own **Miles Dennis** as Mortimer Mara! Adapted and directed by Greg Cicchino, ***Miracle on 34th Street***, streams December 18, 19, 20 and 21. Ticket holders may stream at any time within those days. Benefit Tickets are \$11 and may be purchased online at [www.chaintheatre.org](http://www.chaintheatre.org). Sign on and enjoy this heart-warming presentation! (Offered by “Pastor’s Perogative/Proud Papa” Perry).

# FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is

John 1:7-8:

“[John] came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light.”

*(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 readings. The days leading up to Sunday (Thursday through Saturday) prepare for the next Sunday readings.

### Monday

Psalms 125

1 Kings 18:1-18

Ephesians 6:10-17

### Tuesday

Psalms 125

2 Kings 2:9-22

Acts 3:17-4:4

### Wednesday

Psalms 125

Malachi 3:16-4:6

Mark 9:9-13

### Thursday

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

2 Samuel 6:1-11

Hebrews 1:1-4

### Friday

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

2 Samuel 6:12-19

Hebrews 1:5-14

### Saturday

Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

Judges 13:2-24

John 7:40-52

### Sunday

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55 or Psalms 89:1-4, 19-26

Romans 16:25-27

Luke 1:26-38