

Sierra Evangelical Lutheran Church
Monday Messenger - February 22, 2021

*“But do not ignore this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord
one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like one day.” - 2 Peter 3:8*

Today marks the sixty-second anniversary of my arrival on this planet. It's fun to share the same arrival date (albeit in different years) with other famous people like Glen Sanner and Penny Crane and, of course, our first President. I do, however, confess still feeling gipped when Lincoln and Washington's birthdays were combined and I lost my birthday as a dedicated holiday.

I don't know what 62 years old is “supposed” to feel like but I'm sure it doesn't feel like I anticipated it when I was in my twenties. I remember my grandmother, Alice, telling us at the age of 95, “I feel like an 18-year-old woman in a 95-year-old body.” She lived to be 101 years old. I've heard other people say similar things. Sure, the chassis is a little creakier and 9 pm is now the new Midnight, but my experience over the years is that the passage of time isn't what I expected it to be. Last night, hearing a song from the group “Bread,” brought back the memory of listening to it when Linda and I would do homework together at her house when we were in high school and it didn't feel that long ago at all.

Strolling down memory lane like this isn't just nostalgia for me. It's also a bit of a spiritual reflection. The “flexible feeling” about time I've described hints at what eternity is like. I feel like I can relate more to the verse about “a thousand years are like one day” with God. And, you know, there's actually something comforting about that reality. Perhaps words like “eternity”, and “eternal life” aren't so alien or unapproachable as we sometimes perceive them to be.

To me, all this seems to affirm that eternal life isn't just something that we look forward to experiencing in heaven after we die. It is something that starts NOW and continues on from there. That's what Jesus in the Gospel of John claims, too. Life isn't, per Macbeth, “To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow/ Creeps in this petty pace from day to day/ To the last syllable of recorded time,/ And all our yesterdays have lighted fools/ The way to dusty death” but, rather, moments like birthdays and other milestones whisper excitedly of a hidden fullness emanating from the center of God's heart and into ours.

May we all grow to celebrate our time together as an eternal NOW.

Walking the Way with you,
Pastor Mark Perry

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING UPDATE

Thank you to the 117 members who responded with your anonymous ballots to overwhelmingly approve all of the motions presented at our January 31, 2021, Congregational Meeting on Zoom! Welcome aboard our newly elected leaders: President Jim Cleven, Vice President Sandy Hall, Secretary Janet Bobar, Treasurer Lynette Nowlan, Council Member-At-Large, Betty Burford, and Financial Secretary Dennis Cook. While this process took more time than it would have if we would have been able to meet in person, we appreciate your patient participation in the responsibility of being faithful and committed members of the Mission of Christ here at SELC in 2021!

“BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS” MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES
7:00 p.m. on February 24, March 3, 10, 17 & 24

All are invited to join with our SELC family as we journey through Lent to the cross of salvation and the eternal Glory beyond. Online only via Livestream on our website, www.selcaz.org, or on Facebook and Youtube. The five Wednesdays we'll start our evenings together with a Zoom soup supper (see link below) at 6:00- 6:45 p.m., then continue with a reflective worship time together at 7:00 p.m. via Livestream on our website. Our Lenten theme will be “Beneath the Cross of Jesus,” based on ELW Hymn #338. We live our lives beneath the cross of Jesus, beneath God’s manifold love and grace that reach to us even from Calvary. This series explores what it means for us to abide at the foot of the cross, to cling to the rock of our salvation, to dwell in the house of the Lord, and to confess our sins and receive God’s forgiveness. In this pandemic season, we trust that reflecting on the cross together through the words and images of this hymn will help us bear our mutual burdens.

**Our first week’s theme is on “Beneath the cross of Jesus I long to take my stand,”
along with photos of crosses from people’s homes.**

Special thanks to **CJ Abraham, Anna & Carissa Bratlien, Sandy Hall, Carl McCourt, Linda Radwick, Cindy Wiste, and Pastor Mark** for helping me to share smiles and joy as we distributed Lenten Gift Bags, soups, and Devotionals authored by our SELC folks, at our two Lenten Drive-byes on February 13! We had close to 40 cars come, along with two bikers, some walk ups and a few visitors from the neighborhood for a total of 61 people. We also gave out 20 children’s gift bags. We have given out additional Lenten bags to those who could not make the drive by that day for a total of 110 bags. We hope this special gift helps to enhance your Lenten journey and reminds you of the love we share with one another and in Christ!

Linda Perry, DFF

FIRST OF 5 ZOOM SOUP SUPPERS
Wednesday, February 24 - 6:00 p.m.

The soups given at the drive-by are to be enjoyed at our first Zoom Soup Supper at 6:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday in Lent, February 24! For those who cannot participate in the Zoom Soup Supper, we trust they still feel a touch of connection in Christ as we break bread and enjoy our soup at one collective time in each of our homes.

Topic: SELC Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers

Time: This is a recurring meeting. Passcode may be needed.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94861459631?pwd=U1BqNlFlSjBjSFJueW9nMnVnVWhTZz09>

Meeting ID: 948 6145 9631

Passcode: 460120

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,94861459631#,,,,*460120# US (Houston)

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDIES CONTINUE

All are invited to join us on Zoom (see invite below) or in person in the Fellowship Hall (please contact the office to let us know you're coming so we can make accommodations.) We explore the following Sunday's readings, led by Pastor Perry and Intern Pastor Rova.

Topic: Wednesday Morning Bible Study

Time: This is a recurring meeting. Passcode may be needed (see below)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97363641908?pwd=WlBMSmloaUNtQkRJbitDTnRCZTNNZz09>

Meeting ID: 973 6364 1908

Passcode: 197271

One tap mobile

+13462487799,,97363641908#,,,,*197271# US (Houston)

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP TIME SUNDAY

Sunday, February 28 at 10:45 a.m.

Join us for informal conversation, catching up and connecting on Zoom.

Topic: Coffee Fellowship

Time: Feb 28, 2021 10:45 AM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/98517320142?pwd=WUhWZm5oam9lTDg1eDRIZE1KUjNEQT09>

Meeting ID: 985 1732 0142

Passcode: 686978

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,98517320142#,,,,*686978# US (Tacoma)

FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is
Genesis 9:13-15

“¹³ I have set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. ¹⁴ When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵ I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh.”

(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 (Mon. - Wed.) reflect upon that Sunday's readings. The days leading up to Sunday (Thur. - Sat.) prepare for next Sunday readings.

Monday

Psalm 6

2 Chronicles 26:1-21

Acts 3:1-10

Tuesday

Psalm 6

2 Kings 7:3-10

1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

Wednesday

Psalm 6

Job 30:16-31

John 4:46-54

Thursday

Psalm 41

2 Chronicles 7:12-22

3 John 2-8

Friday

Psalm 41

Isaiah 38:1-8

Hebrews 12:7-13

Saturday

Psalm 41

Isaiah 39:1-8

Luke 4:38-41

Sunday

Isaiah 43:18-25

Psalm 41

2 Corinthians 1:18-22

Mark 2:1-12