

## SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH MONDAY MESSENGER - MARCH 22, 2021

### **“WHERE HAVE ALL THE CHILDREN GONE? - YOUTH & KIDS CARRY ON IN COVID-19!”**

(By Linda Perry, Director of Faith Formation)

Some of you may be wondering where are the kids and youth of SELC and how are they doing in these still trying times? It has been a long and grueling year for them. They and their families have had to navigate through many days of on-line school at all varying grade levels, Zoom classes, computer crashes, technology troubles, sharing crowded spaces at home, missing their friends and the social contact, and so much more. Learning has been very difficult for many of them and some are struggling with their grades or just comprehending what is being taught. But I must say, the families with whom I have been in touch have endured this past year with so much love, patience, faith, humor, and perseverance that is truly inspiring. Their parents have shared honestly and openly about these challenging times and I give them great applause!

I also marvel at what our Junior and Senior High youth have been about in our faith family. They have been so supportive of one another as we have met on a weekly basis. I think the in-person contact and time together has been a special blessing for them. About 7 to 10 Senior High Youth have been gathering in our backyard for months- masked and distanced- while the Junior High have met for Confirmation with Pastor Mark, Anna and Carissa Bratlien, and Intern Pastor Annela in the Fellowship Hall due to their smaller numbers. While most of our time together is spent sharing, listening, supporting, praying and studying God's Word, these youth have also taken time to serve others. They have written over 50 cards of encouragement to church members, have helped others with laundry, cleaning, groceries, babysitting, providing special music for on-line worship, decorated 100+ rocks for our Lenten gift bags, and a few- including a second grader- wrote devotions for our Lenten Devotional. They also took part in a joint youth time over Zoom with Tanque Verde Lutheran Church in Tucson and Holy Spirit Lutheran in Las Vegas to help encourage two youth groups who needed a boost. Future joint youth Zooms are scheduled to begin again in late April. Children and youth have participated in our Zoom G.I.F.T. mornings and our soup suppers. They have shared their thoughts, ideas, grace before the meal and opening prayers and even a blessing at the end of one of our times together. They most recently began a special project that involves a “refresh” of the Junior High Youth Room cleaning, painting, and redecorating. The Senior High will clean and help reorganize their youth room too with the Seniors adding their names to the “walls of fame!”

These youth and our younger kids enrich everything they are a part of and are truly wonderful blessings to our SELC faith family. As you can see, they are carrying on indeed in these COVID-19 times with courage, creativity and the love of Christ! I give thanks for each one of them. I can't wait until we are all together in person again so I can hug and squeeze them all! You just might want to do the same!

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## **“BENEATH THE CROSS OF JESUS” MIDWEEK LENTEN SERIES CONCLUDES**

Join us for our fifth and final Midweek Lenten Worship this coming Wednesday, March 24th, 7:00 pm, livestreamed on our website, on Facebook and YouTube. We conclude our meditation on the cross of Jesus focusing on the last verse of ELW #338, on “I take, O cross, your shadow for my abiding place...” What does it mean to abide at the foot of the cross? How does it change our lives knowing that God loved us so much that God died for us? For this week, along with an excellent reflection time by Intern Pastor Annela, we’ll take an extended time of silent meditation in preparation for Holy Week as a worship activity. And join us beforehand at 6:00 pm for our Zoom “Soup Supper:”

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=U1BqNlFISjBjSFJueW9nMnVnVWhTZz09>

Meeting ID: 948 6145 9631

Passcode: 460120

One tap mobile: +13462487799,,94861459631#,,, \*460120# US (Houston)

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## **PALM SUNDAY G.I.F.T. EVENT**

Our SELC Faith Family of all ages are invited to a Zoom G.I.F.T. (Generations in Faith Together) time this coming Palm Sunday, March 28th, at 10:45 am. Our theme is “God Holds Us in the Palm of His Hands and in the Palm of Victory!” What is Palm Sunday? What is the significance of the palm branches laid before our Savior as he made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and began His journey to the cross? Come share, discover and celebrate with us as we focus on the Gospel of John 12:12-19 and learn about the surprising history and significance of the palm branch, a powerful emblem in Judea at the time. We will also discuss what can distract us from living more deeply for Christ and what crosses we ourselves might take up for the sake of the Gospel as we are reminded how Jesus took up the cross for all of us. (Note: This will take the place of “Coffee Chat” this week).

Topic: Palm Sunday 2021 GIFT

Time: Mar 28, 2021 10:45 AM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting <https://zoom.us/j/95330227606?pwd=ZlZBSC84dDQ5TENhSjcxvN3bnZDZz09>

Meeting ID: 953 3022 7606

Passcode: 061943

One tap mobile: +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

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## **HOLY WEEK WORSHIP**

Maundy Thursday - Thursday, April 1st, 7:00 pm

Good Friday - Friday, April 2nd, 7:00 pm

(Both livestreamed on our website)

Virtual Prayer Vigil - Friday, April 2nd, 8 pm to Sunday, April 4th, 8 am

\*To sign up for a half-hour slot, go to <https://calendly.com/selcaz> (the link is also on our website) or call the church office at 459-0444.

Easter Sunday - April 4th, 9:00 am (Note time correction)

(Watch for updates as to whether or not it will be feasible to hold this in person or online only, depending on current trends of virus spread.)

Reminder: If anyone is still having challenges getting registered for a COVID-19 vaccination for which you’re eligible, please contact our church office and we’ll see if we can help. Several of our members have received their shots because some of our members who have offered their help.

### **CREATION CARE / RECYCLING**

The Creation Care team is glad to report the church is recycling again. We are using a private company Bolstering Buffalo with small tote weekly pickup for church use only. Bolstering Buffalo is able to recycle many items but no paper products yet. Currently the Shepherds Fold Daycare is the primary contributor to the recycling tote but when we return to church services, look for the blue containers and contribute your clean and empty plastic water bottles and aluminum cans used at church. If you want to recycle at home, the rates are reasonable and it is a great step towards our Creation Care, recycle and reduce landfill space! Their website: <https://bolsteringbuffalo.com/>. - Christie Brown, Creation Care Team Leader

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### **THRIVENT MEMBERS**

If you haven't allocated your 2020 Thrivent choice dollars yet, you have until March 31. It is important to do this during March or the dollars from 2020 will be removed. You may go to Thrivent's website ([Thrivent.com](http://Thrivent.com)) or call Thrivent (800-847-4836) and listen to the prompts.

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### **CHRIST IN OUR HOME DEVOTIONAL**

The next quarter (April - June) Christ In Our Home devotional books are available. You can pick them up from the church office. Questions: contact the church office 459-0444 or [admin@selcaz.org](mailto:admin@selcaz.org).

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### **LENTEN DEVOTIONS**

Along with our Faith5 verse we invite / encourage you to continue to read the Lenten devotional book handed out in the Lenten bags.

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# FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is  
**John 12:23-26**

<sup>23</sup>Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. <sup>24</sup>Very truly, I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. <sup>25</sup>Those who love their life lose it, and those who hate their life in this world will keep it for eternal life. <sup>26</sup>Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.

*(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 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 part of the FAITH5 verse.

## 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 119:9-16  
Isaiah 43:8-13  
2 Corinthians 3:4-11

### Tuesday

Psalm 119:9-16  
Isaiah 44:1-8  
Acts 2:14-24

### Wednesday

Psalm 119:9-16  
Haggai 2:1-9, 20-23  
John 12:34-50

### Thursday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Deuteronomy 16:1-8  
Philippians 2:1-11

### Friday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Jeremiah 33:1-9  
Philippians 2:12-18

### Saturday

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29  
Jeremiah 33:10-16  
Mark 10:32-34, 46-52

### Sunday

John 12:12-16  
Isaiah 50:4-9a  
Philippians 2:5-11