

SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
MONDAY MESSENGER - June 15, 2020

“And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” - Romans 5:3-5

Maybe some hear that and think Paul thinks too positively about suffering. That he gives too much credit to what suffering can do for us instead of just what terrible things suffering does to us. We may feel that especially as our hopes for an end or even a slow-down to this pandemic situation continue to be disappointed.

But that could reflect a misunderstanding about what hope means here and for us as Christians. It is not merely “wishful thinking,” which is what most people think of as hope. We believe in a “hope beyond hope.” For us, godly Hope is a sure confidence in what God has done, is doing and will do. We can rely upon and even stake our lives and our energies on that.

German theologian Jurgen Moltmann, in Theology of Hope, teaches that true Christian faith can only have its transforming effect on the individual, on society and on the world when it is rooted in a vision of hope. "From first to last, and not merely in the epilogue," wrote Moltmann, "Christianity is hope, forward looking and forward moving, and therefore also revolutionizing and transforming the present." To live in this hope does not mean that one lives in a state of disconnectedness from the present because of some expectation of a greater although unrealized future; rather, to live with a vision of hope gives a person--and the church--the inspiration and the motivation never to settle for the status quo, but rather to challenge and perhaps even work towards the transformation of any dimension of life that is not in line with that envisioned hope.

St. Paul calls hope a gift that comes from the love of God poured into our hearts. May we accept and trust in that “hope beyond hope,” let it guide us into transforming the present, and give us strength to move stronger and more patiently through these times.

Your fellow servant in Christ,
Pastor Mark Perry
(Message adapted from 6/14/20 sermon)

NAVAJO MINISTRY PROJECT UPDATE

Intern Pastor Paul received good news on Saturday that St. Mary’s Food Bank decided to make House of Prayer L.C. and the Navajo Ev. Lutheran Mission a central food distribution center, a move that would make the renovation of the shed and purchase of a walk-in fridge and freezer an immediate need. Your most generous donations now will go a long way toward helping to meet that need! Two of the most urgent needs for Indigenous people in North America during the time of COVID are food and running water. We are grateful to help address that urgency! The goal of also putting in a greenhouse is still on the table but is a lesser priority now and will not be something accomplished this summer by our team.

After taking a break for Father's Day, the next Navajo Education Module will be held on Sunday, June 28th, at 1 pm, via Zoom and Livestream. It will feature a live discussion with NELM leader, Patterson Yazzie. Let us know if you want to be included. Contact Intern Pastor Paul Benz for more information and to submit questions you'd like addressed on that Sunday. Deadline for submission is Friday, June 26th. Send them to intern@selcaz.org.

IN-PERSON WORSHIP CONSIDERATIONS

Our Worship and Music Committee met last week and, in consideration of last week's summary from the SELC COVID-19 Response Team, we discussed what we need to do to prepare protocols for the future possibility of in-person worship. There would need to be quite a number of safety measures in place, like everyone wearing masks and no group singing, at least for a time. We also are exploring holding an outdoor worship in Len Roberts Park on July 26th at 8 am, Intern Pastor Paul's last Sunday with us (also observing CDC protocols, such as wearing masks). There would still also be a 10 am worship service streamed online from the sanctuary. We'll confirm whether it's going to happen or not and let you know in the next few weeks.

All of this, of course, is dependent upon infection rates in Cochise County going down and stabilizing. But one of the questions we wonder about is: **What would it take for you to feel comfortable enough to join in-person worship in the sanctuary?** If you have input on that, please send an email or call Worship and Music Committee chairperson, Beth Dechant, (ddechant1@cox.net, 458-8088) or Pastor Mark Perry, (pastor@selcaz.org, 459-0444).

FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is
Matthew 9:37-38

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; ³⁸therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.”

(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!

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 105:1-11, 37-45
Joshua 1:1-11
1 Thessalonians 3:1-5

Tuesday

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
1 Samuel 3:1-9
2 Thessalonians 2:13–3:5

Wednesday

Psalm 105:1-11, 37-45
Proverbs 4:10-27
Luke 6:12-19

Thursday

Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18
Jeremiah 18:12-17
Hebrews 2:5-9

Friday

Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18
Jeremiah 18:18-23
Acts 5:17-26

Saturday

Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18
Jeremiah 20:1-6
Luke 11:53–12:3

Sunday

June 19-25

Jeremiah 20:7-13
Psalm 69:7-10 [11-15] 16-18
Romans 6:1b-11
Matthew 10:24-39