

SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
MONDAY MESSENGER - June 29, 2020

Pastor's Message:

Now that wearing face masks in public around other people is a Sierra Vista City mandate, I'd like to comment on the controversy that has arisen around this issue. You see, I have believed all along that wearing a face mask is part of our obedience to the Jesus' divine mandates to "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39, Mark 12:31, Luke 10:27) and "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

As our SELC COVID-19 Response Team (meeting again this Wednesday) has researched best practices in keeping us safer from infection, we read multiple medical reports recommending that the wearing of face masks helps prevent its spread. We read that it is especially important so that we ourselves do not spread the disease even more than it is to prevent getting it from others. And if *everybody* wore them, the likelihood of passing it on is dramatically reduced. Countries around the world and the state of New York are way ahead of us in dramatically slowing the infection rate, in part because they had more stringent face mask practices. On the CDC website as recently as June 28th it says, "Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings." So, it follows that wearing a face mask demonstrates that we care for those around us- especially the more vulnerable and health-fragile- in a very practical, pragmatic way. And that reflects Jesus' concern for all people.

It is highly regrettable as well as exasperating that wearing a face mask has become a divisive issue for many people. This is a medical and scientific reality, not a political one. It would have been much more helpful if a number of our elected officials had been more consistent and persistent in their modeling and messaging about this issue. However, as fellow Christians, we can set a more positive and caring example for others by being consistent and insistent in the wearing face masks. If staff and volunteers are in the church office, or in worship, around others, you'll see us continuing to wear masks. Our Shepherd's Fold Childcare Center staff are required to wear masks, either from those you've donated or others they've purchased. Others coming in to Shepherd's Fold are asked to also wear them. Volunteers have made and contributed over 1000 face masks to ship to Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission (see Intern Pastor Paul's article below). We still have others available for those here who might need them. Just call the church office to arrange a time to pick up one or more or to ask for them to be mailed or delivered to you. We'll be happy to arrange that. And we are so very grateful to ALL the skilled and dedicated sewers who are continuing to make and donate masks. If you're interested in helping with that, there are free material and supplies in the front office just waiting to be picked up. If you need/want help with the design, contact Becky Randall or Leslie McCourt.

It's so wonderful to see how neighbor love is being translated into such easy-to-make and easy-to-use ways! Keep it up! And gently and firmly encourage family and friends to make wearing face masks a loving and consistent habit- for Christ's sake (literally.)

Your fellow servant in Christ,
Pastor Mark

NELM SERVICE JOURNEY UPDATE

This past Sunday was our fourth Education Module on Zoom and Livestream. We were especially blessed to have Patterson Yazzie, NELM Mission Director, with us for the Zoom Session. As carefully as I tried to take notes, nothing can adequately replicate Patterson's words of insight and inspiration as we closed our time together that afternoon. I encourage any and all to view the session as it remains archived on our SELC website. Patterson shared with us both numbers and story. He shared and extended the community's gratitude for masks and contributions from SELC that have made possible part of the service NELM provides to the Rock Point Community. Our current tally on masks is 1071 mailed! We were given the green light to continue making masks for children sizes up to age 18 so that there would be an ample supply of masks for young people in the community throughout the duration of the pandemic. The approximately \$8,000+ you've donated so far will be sent to the NELM office this week and will go towards renovation of the building that will now house the Food Bank which St. Mary's has contracted the mission to provide food for the surrounding community. We invite more donations to this cause as you would feel called to support it. We look forward to the thorough and complete list of materials and budget from Project Coordinator Parker Adleman (Rev. Kate's Husband) which will provide specific connections to where our fundraising will be directed. Current estimates indicate that our donations will go towards the renovation of the building, and an additional estimated \$16,000 will be needed for walk in freezer and walk in refrigerator. While any trip up by a few individuals to NELM the week of July 5th at this point is highly questionable, we hope to make that kind of trip with a larger group sometime after the pandemic ends. Thank you for your continued support in prayers, cards, and donations as we walk this journey with our Navajo siblings!

- Intern Pastor Paul Benz

POST-WORSHIP "ZOOM COFFEE FELLOWSHIP"

We're considering holding a half-hour or so Zoom meeting "Coffee Fellowship" immediately following our 10 am Sunday worship, starting July 11th, for anyone interested in joining us. If you are, please email the church office or Pastor Mark (who has a church Zoom subscription) to let us know and we'll send out the invite when it's arranged.

THANK YOU

SELC Family:

Thank you to all the SELC family members for the prayers, visits (when we are able to do that), telephone calls, cards that I received following my surgery in January through the Chemo treatments. And many thanks to all those who were able to accompany me on the many trips to Tucson (and those who drove when I wasn't able to) and all who have been getting groceries and prescriptions for me.

I am so blessed to be a part of a loving, faithful and praying family. Of course, I have known this for many years from those who were recipients prior to me. This was the first time I became the recipient. You are the best!!!

While Chemo treatments are over, I am still dealing with some side effects but getting stronger every day.

Blessings to all - Joanne March

FAITH5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is
Matthew 10:42 b:

“...truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward.”

(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 119:161-168

1 Kings 21:1-16

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Tuesday

Psalm 119:161-168

1 Kings 21:17-291

1 John 4:1-6

Wednesday

Psalm 119:161-168

Jeremiah 18:1-11

Matthew 11:20-24

Thursday

Psalm 145:8-14

Zechariah 1:1-6

Romans 7:1-6

Friday

Psalm 145:8-14

Zechariah 2:6-13

Romans 7:7-20

Saturday

Psalm 145:8-14

Zechariah 4:1-7

Luke 10:21-24

Sunday

July 3-9

Zechariah 9:9-12

Psalm 145:8-14

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

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