

SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
THE MESSENGER
JUNE 28, 2021

PASTOR'S MESSAGE

It is absolutely clear that God has called you to a free life. Just make sure that you don't use this freedom as an excuse to do whatever you want to do and destroy your freedom. Rather, use your freedom to serve one another in love; that's how freedom grows. For everything we know about God's Word is summed up in a single sentence: Love others as you love yourself. That's an act of true freedom. Galatians 5:13-14 (The Message translation)

As we celebrate on July 4th the great freedoms we have in this country and give thanks especially that we have the freedom to worship and serve God as we choose, let us also remember that, as wonderful as these earthly freedoms are, through Christ Jesus and His death and resurrection we were given even greater freedom as people released from captivity to sin and death. But both the freedoms we have as citizens of this nation as well as the heavenly country are not given to us simply to have the "right" to do whatever we want. They are given that we might use these freedoms to serve others joyfully and lovingly. They are to be exercised in the context of caring for our neighbors and not in simply caring for ourselves. As Martin Luther says of this dual reality in his *On the Freedom of the Christian*, "A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. A Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject of all, subject to all."

May we help others find their true freedom in the love of God as we celebrate the great freedoms revealed in the Word of God as well as in our country's primary documents and laws.

Walking the Way with you,
- Pastor Mark Perry

FOURTH OF JULY WORSHIP

Join us this Sunday, July Fourth, for a special worship service at 9:00 am featuring a special "America the Beautiful/Heal Our Land" solo by Erika (Brynstad) Wootton, Intern Pastor Annela preaching, and rousing instrumental music by our own Billie Hayes. We'll also share coffee fellowship on the patio, hosted by our SELC Fellowship Team. Start your Fourth celebration by honoring the One who gives us true Freedom in Christ!

WORSHIP SURVEY

As pandemic restrictions lighten up and we've returned to in-person worship, your SELC Worship and Music Committee would like your input on our worship practices, specifically around holding one or two worship services. Please see this link to fill out an online survey on "Survey Monkey": <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/V9T2KNQ> or, if you receive this newsletter in the mail, please fill out and return the enclosed survey with the same questions. The deadline for turning this in is July 16, 2021. Thank you for your help in making our worship one that glorifies God and edifies His people in as excellent a way as possible!

“GIFT” KEEPS ON GIVING!
from Dir. of Faith Formation, Linda Perry

It truly was a gift to share with 31 other brothers and sisters in Christ, representing 7 different generations at our first in person GIFT since the pandemic began! Yes, that’s right, 7 generations! We prayed, sang, enjoyed a Reader’s Theatre presentation from our outstanding cast, an inspiring music video created by our own media master, Intern Pastor Annela, and we shared stories at our tables and in our large group discussion as the gospel from Mark 5:21 -43 came more alive for us.

This kind of Sunday morning time together beyond worship, opens up new petals in the blossoming of new possibilities among our people. I know of three tables who engaged in personal and touching sharing that I don’t believe would have occurred in a standard Sunday School class setting or adult Bible study. This is just one new blessing that can occur from this unique intergenerational time together. It is a joy to get to know others in this setting and to be able to support one another in this way that perhaps can’t happen as readily in a worship service alone or a few minutes of coffee chat on the patio.

We will plan to have more G.I.F.T. ministry moments in the months ahead and I hope you will prayerfully consider coming, especially if you have not yet attended one. Your presence, story, sharing, or just a listening ear is something only YOU can offer. You never know if your words, smile, prayer, or even just your eyes and heart listening in care and love could be the very gift someone needed that day. Jesus calls us to be His voice, hands, feet, and love to a world in great need. Come and share your gifts and receive the gifts of others through the body of Christ.

SELC CALENDAR SCHEDULING

As we begin to get more in-person meetings/events happening, please keep in mind whenever you would like to hold a meeting/event (especially on campus) to contact the church office for scheduling.

CHURCH PEWS MINISTRY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

You are needed! The church pew ministry consists of a team of volunteers to weekly straighten the pews and restock the SELC Connect Cards and other supplies. Once a month to twice a year.... whatever you can do. The more people that join in the rotations help spread the job. For more information or if you are willing to help, please contact Cindy Allen at the church office 459-0444 or admin@selcaz.org.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, JULY 5TH
IN OBSERVATION OF THE FOURTH OF JULY HOLIDAY.**

FAITH 5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is
Lamentations 3:22-23:

²²The steadfast love of the Lord
never ceases,
his mercies never come to an end;
²³they are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.

(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.

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 20
Numbers 9:15-23
Revelation 4:1-8

Tuesday

Psalm 20
Exodus 25:1-22
1 Corinthians 2:1-10

Wednesday

Psalm 20
Numbers 6:22-27
Mark 4:21-25

Thursday

Psalm 103:1-13, 22
Ezekiel 16:1-14
Romans 3:1-8

Friday

Psalm 103:1-13, 22
Ezekiel 16:44-52
2 Peter 1:1-11

Saturday

Psalm 103:1-13, 22
Ezekiel 16:53-63
John 7:53-8:11

Sunday

Hosea 2:14-20
Psalm 103:1-13, 22
2 Corinthians 3:1-6
Mark 2:13-22