

**SIERRA EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**THE MESSENGER - JULY 6, 2021**

From Intern Annela:

*"Thank God for stories- for those who have them, for those who tell them, for those who devour them as the soul sustenance that they are. Stories give shape to experience and allow us to go through life unblind. Without them, everything that happens would float around, undifferentiated. None of it would mean anything. Once you have a version of what happened, all the other good stuff about being human comes into play. You can laugh, feel awe, commit a passionate act, get pissed, want to change things."*

*- Tomas Alex Tizon*

As Christians we believe in one of the greatest stories of all time. One that has inspired civilizations for centuries. A story of a Divine being made vulnerable in a human being. Jesus' story was not one of power and might like many of the stories from powerful civilizations at the time. Greeks and their Zeus, Hindus and their Kali Ma. Although the stories of these divine beings inspired people and are very exciting (I would encourage any and all of you to consider reading up on these deities), they are not the story of Jesus. What is so compelling about Jesus' story. Is that it is relatable, and it called for societal change. Humans, although we love our fantasy, an all-powerful being and magic, it is also important for us to also listen to the stories that can apply to our daily lives. Jesus lived under occupation of the Roman Empire. He called for societal change and was murdered, but his story spoke truth to power and modeled sacrifice for the betterment of all. All of this happening from a man who didn't hold any power in the society he lived in. Jesus' story is all of ours. His story motivated others living under Roman rule to stay true to themselves and their communities despite experiencing persecution.

My hope for all of us this week is to take a moment to consider this quote and the questions posted below. My hope is this practice can be a reminder for us as believers to listen to each other so we can move towards greater change in the church and world. To truly hear one another's stories and to hold them close. The story of the guy next door just might be the story that you are called to hear this week. It just might be the story that inspires you to want change for the better. In a world where there are a lot of questions around what is fact, what actually happens in reality, our personal stories shared with one another are where we can find truth. Our shared stories are where we can find laughter, awe, passion, but most importantly the motivation for change.

- What role have stories played in your life?
- What stories mean the most to you?
- How can you use your story to change things?

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**Goodbye And God Bless For Intern Pastor Annela Rova - Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup>**

We will have special Farewell and Godspeed at our 9:00 am worship service for Intern Pastor Annela as she completes her Internship with us. A farewell reception on the patio will follow the service. Please make sure to join us and send her off in a strong prayerful way!

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### **Gift Card Collections For Our 2021-22 Intern Pastor**

Our new Intern Pastor, Diana Washington, will soon be here and settling into our community. As in past years, we are looking to collect a variety of gift cards from local stores as a housewarming and welcome gift to help make the transition a bit easier. **A container is located in the narthex to deposit these gifts. Please have cards etc. to the church office by July 30<sup>th</sup>.** Let's give her a big Sierra Vista welcome!

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### **2021 Summer Retreat – Grand Canyon Synod**

#### **The “S” Course-Satan, Sin, Eschatology, Resurrection, and Salvation**

**2 Sessions – 07/10/2021 and 07/17/2021**

**8:45 am. – Noon      Zoom Online – Fee: \$20.00**

In coordination with the Grand Canyon Synod Diakonia program, a retreat is being offered for anyone interested in attending.

What people believe today is not necessarily what people believed in biblical times. Indeed, people's beliefs about a Satan, sin, eschatology, resurrection and salvation have evolved over time.

This course is a brief introduction of this evolution from the earliest parts of the Hebrew Scriptures, to the later Hebrew Scriptures after the Babylonian exile, to what Jesus said, to what rest of the New Testament says, to what we believe today.

Then we will look at what might be an appropriate "S" Theology moving forward in the 21st century. The "S" Course might surprise you and even make you rethink what you yourself believe about the five S's.

The course is lead by Rev Stewart McDonald with participation from those attending by Zoom.

To sign up for the retreat, go to: <https://www.diakoniaaz.org>, click on the “Retreats and Workshops” link and then click on the “Sign-Up” tab.

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### **Wednesday Morning Bible Study ON ZOOM ONLY**

Join us for a wonderful time of study and discussion led by Intern Pastor Annela, focusing on the upcoming Sunday's lectionary readings: Amos 7:7-15, Psalm 85:8-13, Ephesians 1:3-14, Mark 6:14-29. **\*Note that there's no in person option for 7/7 or 7/14.**

Topic: Wednesday Bible Study July 7, 2021

Time: Jul 7, 2021 09:00 AM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/97793489282?pwd=dzNsV1pLcVJkU3FBRHhjUWMYUjFmwdz09>

Meeting ID: 977 9348 9282

Passcode: 998291

Dial by your location: +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

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**Coffee Chat and Fellowship Time Sunday - Sunday, July 11 at 10:45 a.m.**

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

Topic: Sunday, July 11th ZOOM Coffee Fellowship

Time: 10:45 AM Arizona

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/99981474662?pwd=aGVkandRWXdKNDIzR2Fzb05tenlkZz09>

Meeting ID: 999 8147 4662

Passcode: 125191

Dial by your location: +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

Meeting ID: 999 8147 4662

Passcode: 125191

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**SELC Year to Date Financials as of June 30, 2021**

\$178,058 Year-to-Date Income

\$195,194 Year-to-Date Expenses

**(\$17,136)**

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**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. Thank you for your help in making our worship one that glorifies God and edifies His people in as excellent a way as possible! If needed a copy can be emailed to you or come to the office and fill one out. **The deadline for turning this in is July 16, 2021.**

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**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 out the tasks. For more information or if you are willing to help, please contact Cindy Allen at the church office 459-0444 or [admin@selcaz.org](mailto:admin@selcaz.org).

# FAITH 5

Every Night In Every Home!

Our FAITH5 verse of the week is 2 Corinthians

12: 9-10

**“But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”**

*(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 119:81-88  
Ezekiel 2:8—3:11  
2 Corinthians 11:16-33

### Tuesday

Psalm 119:81-88  
Jeremiah 16:1-13  
James 5:7-12

### Wednesday

Psalm 119:81-88  
Jeremiah 16:14-21  
John 7:1-9

### Thursday

Psalm 85:8-13  
Amos 2:6-16  
Colossians 2:1-5

### Friday

Psalm 85:8-13  
Amos 3:1-12  
Colossians 4:2-18

### Saturday

Psalm 85:8-13  
Amos 4:6-13  
Luke 1:57-80

### Sunday

Amos 7:7-15  
Psalm 85:8-13  
Ephesians 1:3-14  
Mark 6:14-29

**Be creative! Stay open to the Holy Spirit!**