

VERSE OF THE WEEK

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

-Philippians 4:6

WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday 4:00 pm
Sunday 8:30 & 10:30 am



AMERICAN LUTHERAN SUN CITY

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 5
4:30 Sun City Stomperz!



5:15 CATERED DINNER*

Beef Stroganoff on Noodles, Broccoli, Salad, Brownies

6:00 Tom Swenson as Mark Twain



*To better serve our caterer, **please purchase your tickets by noon the Monday prior to the program.** You can purchase tickets in the church office, after worship services in the courtyard, or online at www.alcsuncity.org/WednesdayNightAlive by midnight the Sunday before the program.

SCRIPTURE FOR SERVICE

Lesson: Zephaniah 3:14-20

Psalmody: Isaiah 12:2-6
Gospel: Luke 3:7-18

MIDWEEK MESSAGES

December 7, 2021

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR DAVID

"Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

- Philippians 4:6-7

I am blessed to have two wonderful parents. Although they live on the other side of the country, we talk on the phone a few times a week. Sometimes I call them for something specific, such as questions about my car, a dish I'm cooking, or financial advice. Other times, I call to "check-in" with them and share what I've been doing.

Because both my parents are retired, they do stay relatively active. My dad swims and "works" in his barn. My mom volunteers in the gift shop at one of the local hospitals. Sometimes it's busy, while other times it's slow. During those slow times, she will talk to her "co-workers". The last time she volunteered, she told me how one of her "co-workers" didn't speak much, but this time she did.

As the two sat at the counter together, waiting for a customer, they talked about the holidays. Then out of nowhere, my mom's co-worker told her that her daughter passed away twenty years ago, and her family had not celebrated Christmas since then. When I heard that about my mom's co-worker, my heart broke.

For all the Christmas songs we hear on the radio, lights we see on people's houses, and parties we attend, this time of the year conjures up heartache for our neighbors, friends, and maybe ourselves. The holidays remind many people of broken relationships, lost loved ones, and past hurts. For others, it might escalate current difficulties such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, and so much more.

Knowing these circumstances exist in our world, it might be our initial reaction to avoid the holidays altogether, or at least pick and choose who we wish a Merry Christmas. However, we don't believe in a God who avoids pain, suffering and illness. We don't believe in a God who comes to us in fanfare with royal garb. We don't believe in a God who controls our lives.

We believe in a God who comes to us and meets us where we are physically, spiritually and emotionally to love us unconditionally. We believe in a God who loves us in our pain, anxiousness and loneliness. We also believe in a God who won't leave us there; instead, God comes to redeem, restore and resurrect us. We know this is true because we are preparing for this experience during the season of Advent. We are preparing for God to come to us in the form of a vulnerable infant, who will grow to be an adult, and ultimately fully express God's love.

So, during this Advent season, share that love with a neighbor perhaps by hugging them, listening to their story, or even offering a place at your Christmas table. If we are one of the people in pain, then come to worship to hear this story once again. Please know that you are loved. You are sought out, beloved, hidden in Christ, and made for the glory of God. You are known, you are never forsaken, and you are held in the palm of God's hand. May the peace of Christ be with you now and always.

God Bless,

Pastor David



USHER AND GREETER BREAKFAST

Ushers and Greeters plan on saving January 15, 2022, for a catered breakfast at 8:30 a.m. Ushers, please call Carole Alexander at (623) 210-8761. Greeters, please call Angy Felcyn at (623) 687-0115 to RSVP by Monday, January 10th.

WOMEN'S MINISTRY CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

DECEMBER 16TH AT 10:00 AM
TICKETS: \$10

We hope you will plan to join us and celebrate the Christmas Season. Tickets of \$10 will be sold this weekend, December 11th & 12th, in the courtyard.

10:00 a.m.: Mini Bazaar & Social Time
11:00 a.m.: Program
11:45 a.m.: Lunch
12:30 p.m.: Modified Cookie Walk & Christmas Lefse Sale



AN ADVENT MESSAGE BY TERRI POLK

Pastor David reminded us in this past weekend's sermon that Advent is a time for waiting and a time to prepare. I know that many of us are **waiting** to see friends and family this holiday season, and we are **preparing**....oh are we preparing. We are shopping, wrapping, baking, decorating...whew, I am exhausted. Oh, and don't forget those Christmas cards or emails you have to get out as well as the presents you need to send. And the Christmas parties...We all seem to have high expectations and an increase in stress levels at this time of the year. But, wait! I don't think this was quite what Pastor David had in mind.

Pastor David was trying to remind us of what Advent and Christmas are all about! We should be waiting and preparing for the birth of Christ and readying ourselves for salvation. What are we doing to prepare ourselves? Well, I will admit that since my children are grown, I am not rushing around like a "chicken with its head cut off" trying to make everything "perfect". But I can easily get pulled into the stress.

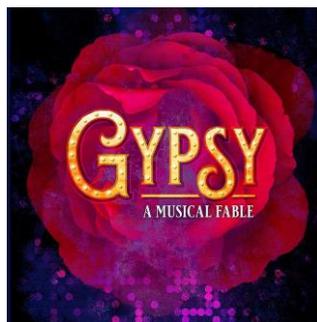
This weekend's message reminded me, again, to put God first in my life. My reading for today, December 6th, in *Jesus Calling* said, "Stay ever so close to Me, and you will not deviate from the path I have prepared for you". Pastor David reminded us to "Stay the Course" and proclaim and demonstrate your love for Jesus Christ. He reminded us of the importance of repenting (being open to change the direction of one's mind and heart, if needed). He reminded us to refocus on what is important and to be Hopeful and Peaceful. What a wonderful Advent message he has given to each of us.

— THANK YOU: FOOD DONATIONS —

Thank you for all the donations from the Thanksgiving service. The week before, the food pantry gave out turkeys and boxes of food to 1,690 people. All of the donations will help fill the empty shelves. Thank you, quilters, who donated quilts for the Christmas gift store at St. Johns. After Wednesday's service, Howard, Dave, and Arvid stayed after the service to help box up 70+ boxes of food donations. We really appreciated the help. Also, to those of you who donate the rest of the year with money and food, we are so very grateful.

Judie V. and Larry Stage

— FELLOWSHIP OF FRIENDS —



Arizona Broadway Theater
February 1, 2022
Dinner and Show
\$65
Contact John and Vicki Tate
623-224-1750 or
309-335-3141
johnvickitrate@gmail.com

Bus Transportation Available

Sign up in the Courtyard
BEGINNING December 11-12

— POINSETTIAS —

You are able to purchase one of our beautiful Poinsettias in honor/memory/celebration of a loved one or event. The Poinsettias are \$15. Please purchase by December 17.