

VERSE OF THE WEEK

"I tell you that in the same way there is more rejoicing over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."

Luke 15:7

Sometimes we may feel overwhelmed by the world and the tragic news we hear. Instead of longing for change in the whole world perhaps we need to repent and know that we are all sinners and change can start in our heart as we pray "thy will be done."

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS

with Pastor Judith
June 23
[Unconditional Love](#)

WORSHIP SERVICES

Saturday 4:00 pm
Sunday 9:30 am

GROUP STUDIES

Pastor's Bible Study

Tuesdays 10:00 am
Fellowship Hall
or Conference Call
at 339.209.5700

The Chosen Bible Study

July 7th – 28th
6:00 pm
Education A & B
Men & Women Welcome
Contact the Church office
to sign up.

SCRIPTURE FOR SERVICE

Lesson: 2 Corinthians 8:7-15
Psalm 30
Gospel: Mark 5:21-43

MIDWEEK MESSAGES

June 23, 2021

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JUDITH

Greetings,

I have been out of the office for nearly 5 weeks, and it has been a roller coaster ride. I left for two weeks' vacation and two weeks of continuing education. Upon my return after an all-night flight with no sleep, I was informed that my oldest brother, Eldon Lambrecht had just died.

The first person I called was Pastor Lowell. Of course, I was exhausted and crying and his tender way of being with me on the phone was so helpful. And I want to thank each of you for your condolences and kindness since my loss.

It is in the hills and valleys that we realize the importance of a faith community. Too often we take it for granted, especially if we have grown up in a church, but I want to encourage you to always be grateful for The Church. Even with all its frailties and difficulties, we are The Church and God calls us to be active participants as we reach out in the name of Jesus to not only give but also to receive. I have found it much easier to give than to receive. I try to act strong even when I feel weak. God continues to teach me every day about tears being prayers.

My faith filled brother was the patriarch of our family as my father died at age 53 leaving behind seven children. My brother sacrificed a career in the military and college to make sure we were cared for along with the help of my saintly mother. I am forever grateful God provides in mysterious ways.

I realize now much of our family history is gone. I am now the oldest with only 1 living sibling, my sister Carolyn who is 3 years younger. I also realize that the more we love, the more we hurt, but it is in the midst of joy and sorrow that we grow spiritually.

So once again I thank God for the American Lutheran Church community as they have shared their love with me while I continue my pilgrimage of faith. We all have known grief in our lives, and we know that without each other, we would have a much more lonely and difficult time when we experience loss.

I pray that we can continue to be a strong community of believers as we rejoice in being Brothers and Sisters in Christ. I look forward to the new freedom we have since health is being restored in many ways. Our plans for building upon old and new programs at American Lutheran will bring peace and joy as we continue to feel blessed to be a blessing inside and outside the walls of The Church.

It is good to be back with our faith community serving, worshiping, and rejoicing in the love of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Gratefully,



Judith Rainforth

Pastor Judith

ACTS OF KINDNESS, PEACE AND HAPPINESS by Terri Polk

Today in this writing, I wanted to focus on things that were "light" and made me smile. Things that were peaceful or perhaps humorous. So, I decided to focus on those "acts of kindness, peace and happiness" that I have observed in the last few weeks. This was a great exercise because it started each of my days with positive thoughts and looking for positive messages. I want to share some of those things with each of you. Try to picture these:

I did a lot of work this week in my daughter-in-law's garden. Although it was very hot this past week in Minnesota, I thoroughly enjoyed myself because I was outdoors. I saw honeybees, dragonflies (lots of them), frogs and tadpoles. I smelled the fragrances of mint and chives. I saw 11 puppies sleeping at the same time! I saw cranes, turkeys, and a deer. I felt the mild breezes

and the heat from the sun. I heard the crane's song and the owl's "whooh". Oh, I am thankful for this peace and happiness.

I got a great laugh when I saw a quail and their babies walking across the street and was thankful that the car had stopped to let them finish their street crossing. My mom had often described the baby quails as "little walnuts" and I had to laugh as I remembered her description. I heard the ducks quacking away as the grandkids chased and caught them. The ducks also watched us play corn hole as they were waiting for the bags full of corn to land within their view so they could try and break into them. I witnessed the baptism of a baby and a 6-year-old (she asked her grandparents, who were her guardians, if she could be baptized.) I also witnessed 2 children taking communion for the first time (we

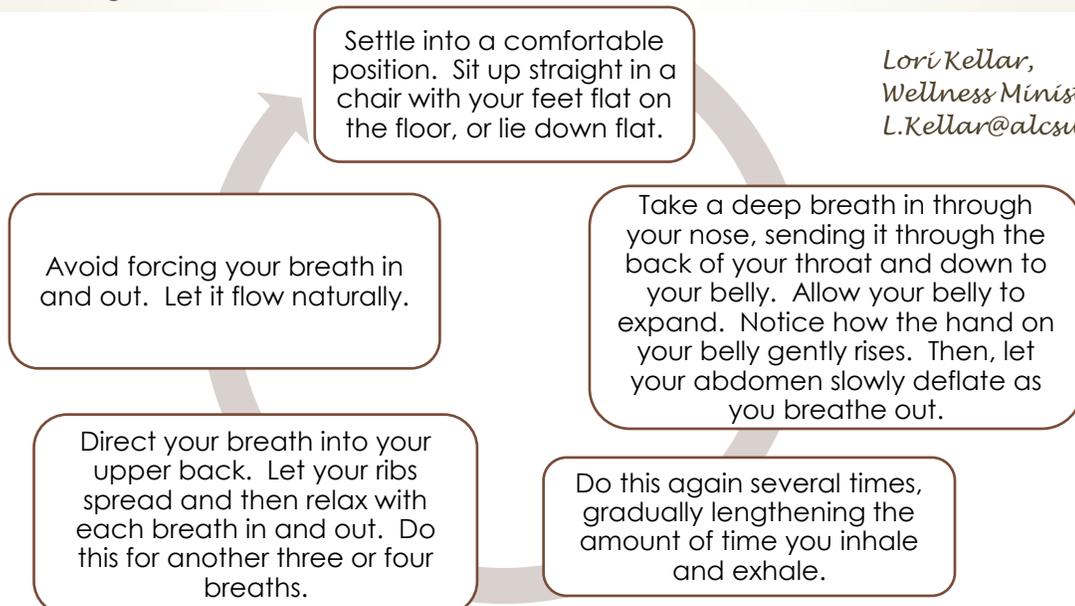
don't get to see many baptisms or first communion at ALC, so it surely made me smile).

I also saw many acts of kindness: families leaving food for the food pantry, children wishing their fathers a Happy Father's Day, teens raising money for a mission trip by selling water, sodas, chips and ice cream at outside events, and people finally HUGGING each other...oh what JOY!

As you finish reading this article, I hope you will reflect on the kindness, peace, and happiness that you have witnessed. Even more, I hope that you can start each day with a prayer of thanksgiving and the simple exercise of observing positive thoughts and positive messages throughout your day. I can assure you that you will be able to feel peace, joy, and happiness as you close your eyes at night.

KEEP CALM AND BREATHE

When you feel anxious or stressed, something as natural as breathing can serve as a tool to relax your mind and body. Deep breathing exercises-also called diaphragmatic breathing or relaxed breathing-can slow down your breathing and keep it in a regular flow. This in turn settles your nervous system and increases feelings of calm. Studies also suggest that deep breathing can have the immediate effects of lowering your blood pressure and regulating your heart rate. Deep breathing draws on the body's dominant breathing muscle-your diaphragm [rather than your chest muscle to pull oxygen more effectively into your body. **To practice deep breathing:**



*Lori Kellar,
Wellness Ministry
L.Kellar@alcsuncity.org*