

VERSE OF THE WEEK

"Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord,
O my soul! I will praise the Lord as
long as I live; I will sing praises to
my God all my life long.

Psalm 146:1-2

If we could remember to do this each day, what a wonderful world it would be! But of course, this is probably not the way most live. But if we tried to be more aware of these verses, perhaps we could make a difference. Do we desire to make a difference or are we satisfied with the darkness that seems to abound? My prayer is that we repeat and embrace these words regularly so that we can shed the light of Jesus Christ more brightly this Advent Season and beyond.

POINSETTIAS

Reminder: You are able to purchase one of our beautiful Poinsettias in honor or memory of a loved one or for yourself. The Poinsettias are \$12. In order to have your name listed before Christmas, please purchase it by the 20th of December. We are asking that you pick up your Poinsettias after the Sunday service on December 27th.

ADVENT HYMNS

Our video series on Hymns of Advent presented by James Gerber and Janet MacDonald continues through the four weeks of Advent. You may view these videos at

www.alcsuncity.org/servicesanddevotions

2021 CALENDAR

Please send 2021 committee/group meetings and events to O.Hernandez@alcsuncity.org, by December 20th so they can be added to the 2021 church calendar. You will then need to speak to our receptionist, Elizabeth Borgman, to complete a room set-up sheet.

MIDWEEK MESSAGES

December 16, 2020

MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LOWELL

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we move into the remaining days of December, here are my thoughts for your consideration:

- "Sparked by the Spirit"- By now, you have received your Commitment Card to express your intended support of 2021 ministry at ALC. Thank you in taking the time to prayerfully consider your response to God's blessings and your commitment to our common call to proclaim Christ, invite people into ministry, and bless in both word and deed. For those who have responded, thank you! For those who have not, please use one of three options to return your card: You may mail it to ALC, drop it off at the office or mailbox by the Admin Building's front door, or use the online option at:

<https://bit.ly/StatementOfIntent>

- A couple of reminders; first, please return your Commitment Card with your intent. We are developing a culture of intentional generosity, and your participation is so vital. Second, the "Sparked by the Spirit" campaign is dedicated to our operational ministry for 2021. Additional gifts, such as Debt Reduction, are in addition and express your generous spirit. You can go online to the ALC website at:

<http://www.alcsuncity.org/giving>

and specify your giving, including any additional ministry support. "Sparked by the Spirit", we will focus on putting a plan in the 4th quarter of 2021 in order to eliminate our debt by our 50th anniversary in January 2025. The mortgage was retired at ALC's 25th anniversary, and how remarkable it will be to do this for our 50th anniversary.

- In regard to the 2020 year-end giving, member, Bob Rogalski, reminded me that for this year only, there is a special opportunity to express your generosity. The CARES Act, passed by Congress last March, allows taxpayers taking the standard deduction to claim up to an additional \$300 in charitable deductions as well. As a member of the Benevolence Committee, he invites you to give your gift to our church for upcoming benevolent blessing projects. Thanks, Bob, for the reminder and what an opportunity to finish 2020, Sparked by the Spirit!

SCRIPTURE FOR THIS WEEKEND'S SERVICE

Lesson: Romans 16:25-27

Magnificat: Luke 1:46b-55

Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

PHOENIX BOYS CHOIR

Over the past several years, ALC has hosted many Christmas concerts in our sanctuary that we have all enjoyed. This year, many concerts are being offered online. We have received a special invitation from The Phoenix Boys Choir to hear their upcoming virtual concert on Saturday, December 19th, at 3:00pm. More information may be found at:

<https://www.boyschoir.org/holiday>

BULK MAIL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Are you interested in volunteering for ALC from home? We need bulk mail volunteers for the foreseeable future for 2021. This involves picking up letters/supplies from the church office and returning them the next day. Please contact Oddey Hernandez at the church office by phone, 623.974.2512 or email, O.Hernandez@alcsuncity.org. Thank you!

- I am so thankful for our staff, committees, and Church Council as we discern together how to best navigate difficult issues in this time of pandemic. One key we learned is to develop detailed plans but be ready to pivot based on the reality of the situation. We plan to have our Advent Service tonight, 12/16, at 6 pm; and worship this coming weekend on Saturday at 4 pm and Sunday at 9:30 am; and, a "Blue Christmas" service on Monday, 12/21 at 6 pm; and, Christmas Eve services at 3, 5 and 7 pm; and, Christmas Day service at 9:30 am with communion. At the same time, we are examining key community health indicators including ICU occupancy. If our availability of ICU beds dips to 5% or below, we will suspend in-person gatherings to protect our members and express love to our neighbors, so everyone receives necessary care. Let us continue to lead lives expressing our love of the Lord and our neighbors. Thank you, Lord, for sharing your Advent message of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love to sustain us in these weary times.

Love,
Pastor Lowell



LINK FOR ONLINE INTENT FORM

When putting the link for the online intent form in your browser (i.e. Internet Explorer, Google Chrome, etc.) please be sure to type the link exactly as it appears into the address bar at the top of the webpage. This includes any capital letters, no spaces, periods, so on and so forth. If you put in the link into a search engine, the intent form will not appear in the search results. It must be typed directly into the address bar. Thank you!

CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Be sure to reserve your spot for the Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services. Please note: People attending are encouraged to arrive no more than 15 minutes prior to the start of service. Register at the links below:

Christmas Eve Service

Thursday, December 24

3:00 pm: <https://bit.ly/ChristmasEveService3pm>

5:00 pm: <https://bit.ly/ChristmasEveService5pm>

7:00 pm: <https://bit.ly/ChristmasEveService7pm>

Christmas Day Service

December 25 at 9:30 am

<https://bit.ly/ChristmasDayService930am>