



American Lutheran Church of Sun City  
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WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2020

### **GREETINGS FROM PASTOR JUDITH**

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It is a blessing to be back in the midst of God's people here at American Lutheran Church as we all try to discern what God is asking of us at this most difficult time when we are not able to carry on as usual.

Is this perhaps a time to discover more gratitude and commitment for our ministry and fellowship while we feel the pain of not being able to join together in worship, visitations, and Bible study as we did before the pandemic? Is this a time to more fully cherish our relationships and each moment we are given by God to live as a community of believers? Is this a time to be more compassionate and patient?

I have been away from here for two months and was able to spend time with family and friends in NE. As I drove away from home, I realized the magnitude of my changed life. God is calling each of us to change, but perhaps it seems like more now than ever. How do we equip ourselves to face each day of uncertainty?

The reality is that life has always been filled with uncertainty, but God calls us to lead a faithful life in the midst of whatever happens. We can seize these moments to grow spiritually as we embrace our lives with prayer and meditation.

I feel like my role as Pastor of spirituality and care means that I first of all have to address my own spiritual disciplines so that I can be healthy and serve in ways that inspire others. None of us can make this journey alone. Sometimes it is the difficult times such as these when we are brought to our knees to pray more and we find rest and comfort in the Word of God in new ways. I believe we each serve as God's angels on earth and we are to be his hands and feet as we continue to serve inside and outside the walls of ALC.

My prayer is that the Holy Spirit inspires each of us in new ways every day, and trust that my being in the midst of American Lutheran Church is where God wants me to be. Let's all join together as disciples building the kingdom of God here on earth. This is the time to shine the light of Jesus Christ in Word and Deed. We will not do this without stumbling sometimes, but we are here to pick each other up and encourage rather than live in despair.

May we live authentically and respect our similarities and our differences. 2020 is a tough year, and it is a time to reflect on Bible verses of hope. Today, I choose to reflect on Chronicles 16:11, "Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually!"

Let us not grow weary, but trust God to continue to give us strength to face any trials and tribulations that may come our way. What can you do today for somebody else in the name of Jesus Christ?

*Prayerfully,  
Pastor Judith Rainforth*

### **MESSAGE FROM LORI KELLAR**

I want to make a clarification on the mask article in the July outreach. It was an article from the Mayo Clinic newsletter that was written before the governor passed the mandatory mask usage.

Please continue to wear your masks, social distance, wash your hands and also keep in touch with your doctor with your health concerns.

*Lori Kellar*

## **WEDNESDAY MORNING LADIES BIBLE STUDY CONTINUES JULY 15!**

We will continue studying God's word on Wednesday mornings at 10 am by Zoom. If you were not in the first session, we would love to have you join us! It is an informal, supportive group trying to weather this storm together. The Bible studies this time are from Anne Graham Lotz\* (Billy Graham's daughter). They are free and will be sent to you by email, or I can deliver a paper copy.

*Constant Companion* talks about loneliness and uses the book of John as well as other books/verses and has us looking to the Holy Spirit for guidance.

*An Open Letter to the Weary* is a study on weariness and uses the book of Haggai. This interested me because we seldom study Haggai!

Please email me at [deborahnelson@cox.net](mailto:deborahnelson@cox.net) to let me know you are interested in participating, and I will send you an attachment to your email with the Bible study. Those already in the group do not need to reply.

As we get closer to July 15, I will email you the detailed instructions with the link to Zoom to join the meeting. You can participate by video/audio or just audio. Please call me if you have any questions (402-651-3635).

Looking forward to hearing from you!

***God's Peace,  
Debbie Nelson***

\*Called "the best preacher in the family" by her father, Billy Graham, Anne Graham Lotz speaks around the globe with the wisdom and authority of years spent studying God's Word. The *New York Times* named Anne one of the five most influential evangelists of her generation. She's been profiled on 60 Minutes and has appeared on TV programs such as *Larry King Live*, *The Today Show*, and *Hannity Live*. Her *Just Give Me Jesus* revivals have been held in more than 30 cities in 12 different countries, to hundreds of thousands of attendees.

### **SHARING SURVEY COMMENT RESULTS**

We will continue to share survey results from our reopening survey. Today I would like to share with you a summary of the written comments we received. Of the 200+ surveys received, 88 people provided written responses. More than 38% of written responses reported that they appreciated the online services with all of the efforts and/or also wanted to continue to be cautious and/or follow CDC guidelines because of health concerns, either their own or church members as a whole. Several written responses included that they are ready to return immediately so we can get back to normal (about 6%). The majority of responses were suggestions/concerns regarding the air conditioner and ventilation systems, call-in registration, "live streaming", outside public worship in fall/early winter, van service, communion, consistency in messages through weekly E-blast and Outlook as well as putting prayer concerns/ notices in the weekly E-blasts, church offerings, concern for losing membership and staggering worship time.

In addition to the survey, let me assure you that the business of the church continues. Committees are continuing to meet via conference calls or Zoom, our staff is continuing to work hard, ministry and Bible studies continue (via phone/conference calls), Executive and ALC Meetings continue; and we will look at your suggestions, concerns and the survey results to see what we can do and how we make improvements for ALC reopening. We miss worshipping together and can't wait for the time to return to public worship. Thank you for your participation in the survey as well as your giving both spiritually and financially.

**With Prayers of Hope and Thanksgiving,  
Terri Polk; ALC Council President**

### **BIBLE VERSE FOR THE WEEK**

"Jesus said, "In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." John 16:33