

# MIDWEEK MESSAGES

August 19, 2020

## VERSE OF THE WEEK

"Anxiety weighs down the heart,  
but a kind word cheers it up."  
Proverbs 12:25

We can get weighed down with stress, especially at such times as we are seeing in our world today. Rather than being negative, our positive speech can become an instrument of healing, health, wholeness, and hope. May you discover words that lift the spirits of others.



## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR LOWELL NELSON

Dear members of the American Lutheran Church faith community,

Renewal! I need Renewal in my life! Something fresh, something new, a new start...

How about starting with lower temperatures? Wow, for those of us living in the West Valley this summer, we are experiencing the hottest sustained temperatures on record- already the most days with highs of 110+ F and the most days with lows at 90 F or above. Speaking of the need for renewal!

It is true that renewal can arise from getting out of the environment in which you are living. For relief from the heat, Debbie and I will celebrate our 38<sup>th</sup> anniversary by heading up to Northern Arizona for a few days and then on to Durango, CO. I pray you have been able to find time for cooler respites in this summer blast furnace.

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*"Renewal does not come from simply changing your environment. "*

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However, renewal does not come from simply changing your environment; if so, we'd always be on the move looking for a better environment and risking never truly living in each day. Instead of thinking about renewal from the "outside", it can come from a renewal of the mind, the way we think about God, ourselves and others.

This coming weekend's Scripture for Worship includes Romans 12:2:

**"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."**

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Renewing one's mind is the internal re-orientation to experience the freshness of God's love in any situation. It's so much more than adopting a positive attitude; saying, "Thank you Lord for this heat as otherwise, we'd have 20 million people living in this valley!" This scripture reading encourages us to reclaim a Holy Spirit renewal through clarifying our God-given role and receiving the corresponding gift of grace.



The apostle Paul writes of seven roles with seven corresponding gifts for renewal:

The role of Prophet with the gift of Faith;

The role of Minister with the gift of Serving;

The role of Instructor with the gift of Teaching;

The role of Exhorter with the gift of Encouragement;

The role of Giver with the gift of Generosity;

The role of Leader with the gift of Giving One's Best;

The role of Compassionate Friend with the gift of Cheerful Readiness to support.

Renewing your mind comes from reclaiming your God-given role to serve the faith community in your particular way with gifts of the Holy Spirit. Which role are you called to? What gift is God giving you? Look for renewal in receiving the gift of role clarity and abundance of spiritual gifts. Can you imagine a congregation ministering with clarity and abundance? No temperature can stifle that type of renewal!

*Love, Pastor Lowell*

## **A WORK IN PROGRESS**

There have been periods of my life, and there continue to be these periods, when I battle with the issue of control. I usually just want to "fix" things: my health, my kids, things at work; you get it I am sure. It's not like I am the only one battling this issue; I think we all do. And, I have to say, I am getting better at dealing with it.

But yesterday I had a relapse. One of my kids, okay, adult children, called and dumped on me all that is happening in her life. It's pretty overwhelming, I agree. I was overwhelmed and wanted to "help" (fix) things for her as much as I could. I was burdened with her troubles. I had anticipated some of this with her, but she had her own thoughts on this. I came away with slumped shoulders and heaviness in my chest. I had tears in my eyes thinking of what she might have to go through. What can I do to help? There wasn't much that I thought I could do except be there with her emotionally and physically, if needed.

THEN I REALIZED...once again I was trying to fix things that probably went beyond my ability...BUT it didn't go beyond HIS ability. I stopped. I prayed. I remembered something that was just told to me...Psalm 46 Verse 1: "God is our refuge and our strength, a very present help in trouble". And verse 10: "Be still and know that He is God"...(continues). I was still. I prayed. I turned it over to God. I continue to give it to God, but I also know that I will relapse again. Although, perhaps, I won't beat myself up as long this time. I am human. I am learning. Thank you, God, for Your continued guidance.

*In stillness and prayer, Terri Polk; ALC Council President*