

# MIDWEEK MESSAGES

August 5, 2020

## VERSES OF THE WEEK

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."  
1 Corinthians 13:13

"Love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12:31

God tells us there is no greater commandment than in this verse in Mark. Perhaps the problems in our world stem from the fact that the majority people have not learned to love themselves.

## MESSAGE FROM PASTOR JUDITH RAINFORTH

Greetings,

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*For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body and each member belongs to all the others.*

*Romans 12:4-5*

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Today, I realize one more time the importance of being dependent on one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Sometimes, I can be fiercely independent and almost have to be brought to my knees to admit I need help. I think in some circles that would be called egocentricity. I ask God for forgiveness when that is the case.

On our pilgrimage together during the Covid-19, we grieve the loss, due to this ugly virus, of our brother in Christ, Don Garverick and our sister in Christ, Eileen Blackler. Yesterday, I found out my dear friend in NE, Steve Wolf, who is renting my home, is suffering from COVID-like symptoms waiting for test results. He is very ill.

As I prayed with Steve on the phone today, I felt so emotional knowing the pain he is going through. In that emotion, all I knew that I could do is pray in the name of Jesus Christ and love my friend from afar. It is when I am brought to my knees with grief that I am at my best surrendering to God and I realize the importance of letting go of my independent personality and becoming more dependent.

I cannot heal anyone but God can. Even though we cannot alone heal another, we are enough because God tells us we are his children, created in his image.

Lord, help us all to know we are in this time together and no one need walk alone. Please help us to be there for one another as we live, love and learn, because you are our supreme teacher.

We do not all have one function as we are given different gifts to serve, but, for today, I pray you discern your gifts, to use as you reach out to others in this troubled time. Today, I have shed tears and I know that tears are prayers. Today, I am grateful I can be a ministry of presence for others and I know you have many gifts to share also. Let us keep sharing and loving because God first loved us.

I know I cannot survive and thrive without community. I am glad we are in community with each other at American Lutheran Church inside and outside the walls. Let's keep being an interdependent body of Jesus Christ being his hands and feet.

*Love in Christ,  
Pastor Judith*

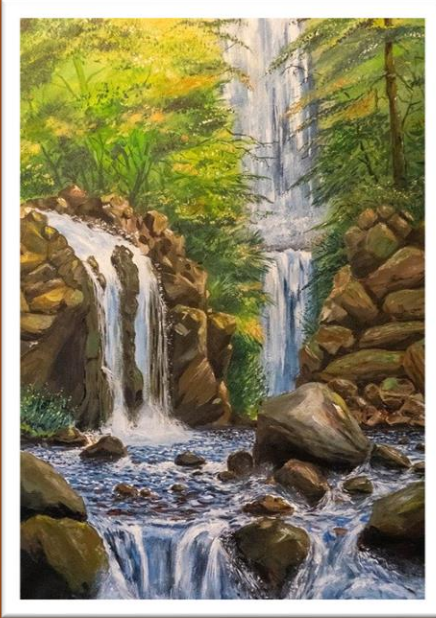
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*American Lutheran Church of Sun City 17200 Del Webb Blvd. Sun City, AZ 85373*

*P: 623.974.2512*

*F: 623.974.2515*

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## DEAR ALC MEMBERS:

I really enjoyed Pastor Lowell's sermon this week on "Cascading Generosity". He reminded us that generosity is many things: kindness, acts, words, deeds, caring, compassion, not just a monetary gift. When I think of the word "cascading," I am reminded of a cascading waterfall that is powerful, beautiful and roaring, or the cascading leaves which are either gently drifting in a whirlwind of color, part of the cycle of seasons. I love the pictures in my head that are created by the term "cascading waterfall" and "cascading leaves."

So, what does "cascading generosity" look like to me? Well, it is strong, purposeful, gentle, and beautiful. Its goal is to help someone or some cause other than "me." Cascading generosity is ongoing and can grow and hopefully be a natural process. What does "cascading generosity" mean to you?

We are fortunate that we have a lot of evidence of "Cascading Generosity" at American Lutheran Church. A special thank you to those who have been helping during our last two weeks of online services: Deborah Nelson and Judi VanDevere-Stage, readers; Kathleen and Flash Helm, Shari and Winston Schmidt, Joanne Greathouse, John Tate, Angy Felcyn, singers; John and Vicki Tate, George and Joyce Zoske, Marliss Danielsen, Faith Gosset, Denice Louderback, Harold Peterson, Christo Bells; Linda Shirck, organ; Rolfe Blaess, Rick Lamb, Dave Tigges, Oddey Hernandez, technology. And a special thank you to all of you who have been helping with your acts and gifts of generosity.

*In Thanksgiving for all of you!  
Terri Polk, ALC Council President*

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*"What does "cascading generosity" mean to you?"*

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## MANAGING THE RISK FOR RE-OPENING OF ALC

We often ask, "when will it be safe to return?" -- return to public worship, to school, to shopping, to the workplace. While we will probably not be 100% safe for a long time, maybe a better question would be "what can we do to manage the risk?" That describes all the precautionary measures we're taking to be as safe as possible, managing the risk, and we'll be ready to welcome worshipers in our beautiful sanctuary and campus when the time is right.

We wanted to share with you some of the things we have been doing in preparation to reopen. We will be implementing the guidelines recommended by the CDC to be as safe as possible, including wearing masks, social distancing, sanitizing the facility before and after services, providing hand sanitizing stations as denoted by signage throughout the ALC campus. Much thanks to Bob Wecker, Pastor Lowell, and the entire "Re-opening team" for their input and help in processing the information and details involved regarding re-opening.

### Scriptures for the Sunday Service:

Lesson: Romans 10:5-15;

Psalm: Psalm 85:8-13;

Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33



A picture is worth a thousand words, so here are some photos.... A special shout out to Ray Brodland for donating materials and his carpentry skills to make the sanitizing stations much more affordable than commercial ones. Ray and Dave Tigges, our Staff Maintenance man/Custodian/Jack of all Trades built the professional plexiglass safety enclosure in the Receptionist office at a greatly reduced cost as well. Dave will also be building stands for the new touch-free offering boxes shown in one of the photos. Amazing teams around here!

On Sundays from 10:00 – 11:00 a.m., another ALC team continues to welcome your drive through offerings and food donations. Linger awhile in the courtyard, if you would like to enjoy the hymns from the Carillon Bell Tower and pick up a copy of the “Celebrate,” (the week’s scripture readings and prayers) or a “Christ in the Home” devotional booklet.

We look forward to the re-opening of the Church for worship, knowing that even with guidelines and precautions in place for safety reasons, it will still be beautiful, and God’s presence will be ever-restorative and refreshing.

*Blessings to you all,  
Toni Molck, ALC Operations Coordinator*