



The Jewels

May 2020

A publication of Crown of Life Lutheran Church, Sun City West, AZ

From Your President

As the pandemic and fear surrounds us, let us pray for those in need even though we cannot wrap our arms around each other. We know that our loving God embraces all.

- We may be inconvenienced. Others may have their lives at stake.
- We have the option to work from home. Others must choose between preserving their health or paying rent, purchasing medications, etc.
- We may need to cancel a trip or vacation. Remember those that don't have a safe place to go.
- We may be losing a portion of our retirement money in the economic market. Remember those who have no retirement savings.
- We may be tired of staying home. Think of those who have no home.

It is my prayer that you stay well. It is also my prayer that in the very near future, we can gather together to praise the Lord.

Say Nelson

An Unusual *Jewels* by Pastor Phill, Sr. Pastor

We're so used to activity, to action, to be doing SOMETHING – that's a Western, I suppose even American trait. Here's a problem, let's wade in and fix it. And now, with one of the biggest problems we've had in a while, we're told to stay home and do nothing. In fact, it is the very staying home and doing nothing that is supposed to fix the problem. That just doesn't sound right...and it sure doesn't feel right. How are we supposed to live, with nothing to do? And of course, there's plenty to do. Catch up on your reading, I am. Catch up on those phone calls to friends you've been putting off – a friendly voice of reassurance, even long distance, is a good thing. I heard a new perspective today on this shut-in business: one of our members didn't leave his home for many months last year, undergoing chemotherapy, except for treatments that made him feel sick. His comment: couple of months like this is nuthin'...

Today, a Sunday as I write this, I've read again the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew's gospel, chapters 5 through 7. And right there it is, how we are supposed to live in a time like this.

Chapter 5, V1&2: Now when He saw the crowds, He went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to Him, and He began to teach them, saying:

What follows in the next 3 chapters are lessons for His church in how to live in a strange new world. The disciples, following Jesus, were walking away from the lives they had known and toward something new, even alien. They invited persecution; the closest to Him, save one, lost their lives to that persecution. Terrible times for them. Does any of what He said to them apply to us? All of it.

The Beatitudes follow immediately, you know them, of course. And then look at verse 13 and 14: *"You are the salt of the earth. You are the light of the world."*

They then, and we now, are called to be witnesses of a faith that is strange to many. The faith in your heart in that Jesus, your personal Lord and Savior, makes of you a different being than many – let your light of faith shine, let the salt of your faith give a new taste to a strange world.

Look at what comes next, in verses 17-20. Jesus teaches He did not come to do away with God's Old Testament design for our lives, in fact He says He has come to fulfill what was written about Him, and to lead us to keep what He

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An Unusual *Jewels*

from cover

gives us. The next 90 verses, through Chapter 7, lay out for us exactly who God has called us to be, in the way we live our lives, even or especially in uncertain times.

But wait, we cry – we can't be those things! I've tried – haven't you? Not that I wake up every day intending to disappoint the Jesus of the Sermon on the Mount – just seems to happen, the sin thing, in so many ways. That's exactly why He had to come to us, and to die for us, and to rise again – we're not perfect, He is. We're not sinless, He is. We're not condemned, He was, once, for all. We follow His lead in that famous Sermon, in our flawed way, and we are reminded that God's grace, through faith, for the sake of His sacrifice, sustains us now and always, no matter how crazy the world might seem.

I pray we hold that truth dear, even as we're frustrated, shut in, running out of paper towels (and other stuff), wondering what's next and when "normal" might return. Until we meet face to face in our Sanctuary, commune together, hear His word proclaimed together, let's keep that truth in our hearts.

Pastor Phill

Cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you.

1 Peter 5:7

Thoughts from Pastor Gary

Paul writes in his first letter to the church at Corinth, "Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20).

Most victories do not come easily; they are often preceded by frustration, even defeats. In 1858, Abraham Lincoln ran as a candidate for the United States Senate, engaging in debates with the then occupant of the seat, Stephen A. Douglas. Lincoln lost the election, but thanks to the debates, he became a national figure. Two years later, he was elected President.

Many people in Jesus' time consider Him a loser. He lost many followers, prompting Him to ask the Twelve, "You do not want to leave too, do you?" (John 6:67). The people of His hometown Nazareth were offended by Him, and for a while He lost the support of His family. His being sentenced to the cross and His subsequent death and burial seemed to spell out failure in large letters. In the words of Paul Gerhardt's hymn, when they "in the grave did sink Him, the foe held jubilee."

But by completing His work on the cross, down to dotting the last "i" and crossing the last "t", Jesus had won the victory over sin, death, and Satan. His resurrection on Easter morning attested to the fullness of this victory. We exclaim with Paul, "Thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Christ's victory assures us of the completeness of His work for our salvation and the certainty of our own bodily resurrection. And, set free from the rule of sin and the fear of death, we can rise daily to the newness of life in Him.

During these times of uncertainty with the COVID-19 Virus, let each of us keep our eyes focused on the empty tomb. Let us always remember that we are God's redeemed children. Let us always know in our hearts that God loves us so much that He sent His only Son into this world of sin, death, and so much more, that when we believe in our hearts that Jesus Christ is Lord, then whatever comes our way is a battle that we will win. God forsake His beloved Son on the cross and thus, will never forsake those who believe.

Take a moment today to get on your knees, express your joy and thankfulness for Jesus' victorious resurrection from death and all things that attack us, (even COVID-19), and for granting each of us new life, today and forever. That is God's promise to each of us this day. Amen.

Saying Goodbye for the Summer

Just a reminder to call the church office with the dates of your departure and arrival back to Arizona in the fall. Also, please make certain we have your email address as we continue to keep you informed electronically of our status during COVID-19 pandemic.

Have a great summer ... we look forward to your return in fall ... and hopefully see you back in church!

More on Safety with the Coronavirus

by Carol Steficsek, Parish Nurse

We are still locked out at church and most places of business. Looks like we're having to live with the virus threat for a while. Here are additional tips to remain safe:

- Wear a mask in populated public places like grocery stores, drug stores, etc.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. Count at least 20 seconds of vigorous rubbing before rinsing. Include your wrists. Dry your hands hanging downward so the dirty water doesn't run back up your arms.
- You need to humidify your hands with moisturizer if they become dry and cracked. The virus can hide in the cracks. Also keep your nails short.
- Washing your clothes with normal detergent will kill the virus. It can survive 6-12 hours on fabric. Hand wash your fabric face masks.
- Listerine, diluted hydrogen peroxide, and saltwater are all good mouthwashes.
- Avoid eating raw or undercooked meat.
- Wash your vegetables with a dilute vinegar solution. It won't kill the virus but will remove other germs as well as the chemical pesticides used in growing them.
- Dehumidified, dry, warm and bright environments will degrade the virus faster. Ventilate your home when you can by opening doors and windows.
- Look for ways to keep yourself busy without the urge to over-eat! Look for new ways to be creative with a hobby, clean drawers; do things you've been postponing. This will give you a positive attitude.
- Any social contact should be at a safe distance. People are enjoying their patios, driveway get-togethers, etc. Fresh air is good for us.
- Look for ways to keep in contact at a distance. Call people you haven't talked to for a long time to cheer them up. Social contact will help avoid loneliness and depression from the isolation.
- Above all – view You Tube church services, stay in the Word of God and prayer. Psalm 91 is a good daily reading.

In the Mailbag

I want to thank everyone for their prayers and get well cards following my surgery. Thanks also for the lovely birthday cards.

Louise Fountain

Dear Sue,

The mailman brought a letter that I did not expect, regarding your retirement. When I read the list of qualities that Thelma St. Pierre had prepared for someone to fill her shoes, it was overwhelming. However, you exceeded those qualities and you will be sorely missed. The 23 years have dissolved into thin air, and you truly deserve a well-earned retirement. Your efforts have been the glue that kept the church office running smoothly and efficiently. Your vacancy cannot be replaced. I sincerely THANK YOU!

Gladys Strohschein

Summer Worship Schedule

A reminder that when we do return to Worship, our schedule will be:

SATURDAY – 4 PM
SUNDAY – 9 AM
BIBLE STUDY – 10:15 AM



Crown of Life has easy online giving directly from our church website (colchurch.com). Select the link DONATE on the home page. Select a fund and enter your donation amount. You can choose a donation frequency if you create a GivePlus account. Enter your debit/credit card or checking/savings account information. Review and submit your gift by clicking DONATE NOW.

--or--

Set up Electronic Giving through our Simply Giving program. Contact Sue Stuempfig in the church office if you would like more information.

Faith in Times of Pain and Uncertainty

by Christine Escobar, GriefCare Coordinator

What an opportunity we have had to test our faith and hold on tight to God's promises! We have never gone through a pandemic such as we have been experiencing. For those who have recently lost a loved one, having to shelter in place complicates the grieving process and makes things even tougher. It may seem that you really are supposed to grieve and heal alone and isolated.

We have learned, however, that that is not the case! We definitely miss our hugs and physical contact with our family and friends. However, in this time of technology, we have been able to stay in touch with our loved ones, our pastors, our church and our church family through the many platforms available to us.

If you are currently grieving the death of a loved one and feel you are alone and isolated in your grief, please join our GriefCare group on Wednesday mornings via Zoom video conferencing.

We are meeting every Wednesday from 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM. You will find in our meetings comfort, support and tools to help you to get back on your feet, find joy once again and fulfillment in carrying out God's purpose for you. Call Christine Escobar at 623-218-6793 or email griefcare@colchurch.com for more information and to register. As soon as the shelter-in-place restrictions are lifted, we will once again meet on Wednesday mornings in the Chapel.

Thank you, Lord, for all your blessings and resources to get us through these stressful and uncertain times!

Happy Birthday

2 LeAnna Grell
2 James Kunzie
2 Dale Stoltenow
4 Myrna Borchert
4 Marilyn Goodnight
4 Lawrence Mills
6 Nancy McAfee
6 Lynn McKeag
6 Don Raridon
7 Mel Howry
8 Ed Kristof
9 Donald O. Carlson
9 Ken Grover
11 Patricia Petersen
11 Paul Stuempfig
13 Tom Mertins
14 Joan Byrd
15 Rhonda Adam
15 Fran Wallin
16 Ron Mara
16 Dianne Mertins
18 Debra Mirly
19 Ruth Anderson
19 Mary Fritz
19 Bob Holstein
19 Gloria Redburn
19 Bill Schulzetenberg
20 Don Dupras
20 Paul Heimbuch
20 Jeanette Martin
20 Audrey Rolf
21 Gloria Adams
22 Joyce Hall
22 Dave Roeker
23 Shirley Gaden
24 Gloria Mansfield
24 Ed Pisacich
25 Gary Kowatch
25 Roberta Lane
26 Mary Mehner
27 Dan Mehner
27 Joe Rau
28 Marion Abraham
28 Lynn Johnson
30 Forest Neumann
30 Walt Rodie
31 Roger Engelbrecht
31 Phyllis Naumann

Happy Anniversary

2 Mark & Tenna Brauer
6 Marv & Vita TenBroeke
8 Ed & Sharon Kristof
12 Ken & Laurel Coffman
14 Duane & Orvillena Neal
22 Henry & Dene Munzinger
23 Mark & Rhonda Adam
24 Dave & Dawn DuRocher
24 Jerry & Karen Myers
25 Ken & Rita Grover
29 Rev. John & Vi Pope
29 Al & Lucy Stoudemire
31 Don & Colleen Lekawa

COVID-19 and Crown of Life

We are closely monitoring the situation and commit to keeping you informed as new information becomes available. We will continue to keep you informed via email, mailings, Phonetree, and our church's website.

All COL events continue to be suspended temporarily.

Worship
with us
from
HOME

We encourage you to join us in online worship. Our website, colchurch.com, includes a direct link to our YouTube channel. You can also reach us by checking us out on Facebook (@colchurchaz).

Joining the Church Triumphant

Jean Luehring
March 31

We celebrate the victory won for the faithful dead, but we grieve for our beloved as well, knowing that God honors our tears.