



~ Walking in Faith ~ week by week ~

December 16, 2021

Faith Presbyterian Church

Sierra Vista, Arizona

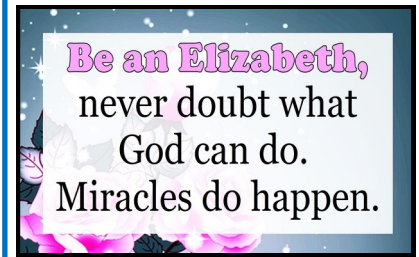
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Seeking Sanctuary

“When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the child leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”
Luke 1: 41-42

Luke tells how it was just a few days after an angel announced Mary’s pregnancy to her that she set off alone to visit Elizabeth, her much older kinswoman. I have an image of Mary trudging up the road toward the home of Elizabeth and Zechariah, pregnant with Christ.

I can only imagine how alone she must have felt as she walked the road to Elizabeth’s house, filled with wonder at the new life growing within her, and unable to share the news with anyone at all. How she must have yearned for the comfort of someone who would truly understand! And, yet, she must have been unsure of her reception under the circumstances. After all, the penalty for her pregnancy was stoning.

Two women, pregnant at time and in a culture where bearing children was a woman’s greatest accomplishment – and, in fact, all that gave meaning to a woman’s life. Two women, one pregnant much too early, before her marriage was even consummated, the other pregnant late in her life, when her peers were having grandchildren. Two women, one who would bear prophecy into the world, and the other who would bear Christ into the world.

Elizabeth ran to greet Mary, and met her with words of excitement and delight, and the prophet she would bear into the world leapt with joy. What a relief that must have been to Mary!

Like Mary, we have been chosen to bear Christ into the world. We are pregnant with Christ. Giving birth is always painful, and always messy. Congregations in transition can be messier than most. And I wonder, who is Elizabeth for you? Who can you count on to receive you, who understands and shares the burden you carry? When you’re pretty sure your faith community is ready to throw rocks at you?

Once Mary had been enfolded in the warmth and security of Elizabeth’s embrace, she was finally able to share her deepest hope, her expectation that God was going to use her to turn the world upside down, and the words of the Magnificat flowed from her lips.

If the Christmas story is only for the ideal situations - and the ideal people, then it is not Good News at all. So, we welcome the Christ story into our very imperfect lives, into the dark deep corners where the light can shine, where our brokenness hides, and God’s joy can dwell too.

What about us? Will we reach out to the Elizabeths and Marys in our lives? Will we join into the healing work of God that seeks this alternative vision for the world, and discover along the way the joy that God can bring to our lives?

Blessings and light, Pastor Renée

New Pastor Search Update

The Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC): Scott Bird, Sandy Brown, Richard Carter, Carolyn Malik, Gene Raymond, Fred Whitley, and Pam Winters have been hard at work searching for our new Installed Pastor.

Our “job posting,” called a Ministry Information Form, was posted on the denominational website for both matching and advertising on September 27, 2021. The first match of twenty-five “resumes” (called Personal Information Forms or PIFs) was received on September 29, 2021.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown

Since that time, the PNC has received and reviewed a total of 60 PIFs. Every PIF was read and evaluated by each member of the PNC. The members also viewed available church service/sermon videos of candidates that most closely met our requirements. We have now also conducted three Zoom interviews with potential candidates.

At various points during our deliberations, the PNC has also closely coordinated with and received process guidance from the Presbytery Pastor, the chair of the Committee on Ministry (COM), and our liaison from COM. This is a necessary activity, since in the Presbyterian form of government even though a pastor is called by a congregation, they are actually members of a Presbytery, and they must be approved by the Presbytery prior to receiving our call.

We ask for everyone’s continued prayers and patience as the committees continues in this effort that is so important for the future of our church.

Advent /Christmas 2021

- Saturday, December 18 - Blue Christmas - 3:00 pm*
- Sunday, December 19 - Communion - Children’s Pageant Video*
- Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service - 7:00 pm*
- Sunday, December 26 - Caroling Service*
 - Guest Speaker, Elder Kay Travis*

It’s the “holiday” season!!

This will be the last weekly newsletter of 2021!

Possibly back to monthly news in 2022!



MISSION AND STEWARDSHIP

SARAH is a locally run 501(C)3 food bank and thrift shop serving Huachuca City and the surrounding area. All proceeds from the thrift shop support the food bank.



On December 9, our Deacons - Carolyn Malik, Diane Derr, Patrick Jones and Pam Winters— representing Faith - donated \$500.00 to support their food bank. It could not have come at a better time. Jeredia Newton, one of the managers, showed us the near bare shelves. As with all food banks across the nation, the need continues to grow constantly. Jeredia was very surprised and grateful for our gift and support.

Thank you Faith Congregation for supporting the Deacons and worthwhile missions brought to our attention.

Pam Winters- Deacon Moderator



Joy and Pam ringing the Salvation Army Bells and sharing their time to help others!



Thanks to Debi, Janis, the choir and the musicians for a fabulous Cantata on December 12!



The Quilters lighting the Advent Candle of Joy!



~ BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE ~

Christmas can be a time of painful loneliness and emptiness for those who have suffered a tragic loss or are going through a difficult time.



The Stephen Ministry recognizes this and invites you to attend a special **Blue Christmas service on Saturday, December 18 at 3:00 pm** in Faith's sanctuary. This will be a Candlelight Service of Remembrance for those whose hearts are aching with pain and loss this Christmas season.

Please join us and bring anyone who is struggling with these issues as we remember the gift of the One who came to bring light into our darkness.

The **Men's Group** will meet for lunch in December at 11:30 am on each Tuesday, with the exception of December 28, at Chili's. Questions? Call Tom Mathias 520-678-1626 or email medic523@hotmail.com.



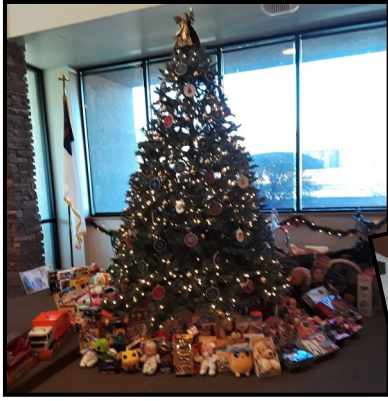
Greeters and Ushers are needed each Sunday. Please sign up in the Narthex for this ministry of hospitality and welcome. Worship Leaders are also needed and asked to sign up. Thank you!



"Merry Christmas"
from
The Finance Committee!

"Christmas Eve Candlelight Service"
Friday, December 24 at 7:00 pm
Carols, Scripture, Meditation
and the lighting of the candles.





The last picture of the **Christmas Tree** with all the toys underneath!!

On December 15 the donations were packed in large boxes and bags for over 100 children in Cochise County. They fit into a truck and two SUV's for transport. Thank you Faith Family for your generous gifts!!

Thank you from Child and Family Resources of Cochise County!



This year the Christmas offering will be given to the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance Program specifically for the December tornado victims.

Please give generously to help so many families in need!

*May GOD's blessings come to you a
Thousand fold; May the Love in your
Heart never get old;
and may you find
treasures more
precious than
gold.*

*Have a
and a*

*Blessed Christmas
Happy New Year
to You and Your Family.*

