



The Elim Waterfall

January/February 2021

From the Pastor:

2021! I don't know about you, but my heart is doing a happy dance! First, because I'm looking forward to spending it with all of you, and second, because I'm more than ready to put 2020 in my rear-view mirror. It's been a tough year for all of us! But now, with the promise of a new, safe, and effective vaccine, we also have the promise of a brighter New Year! So, what are some of your personal hopes and aspirations for 2021? Have you made some New Year's resolutions yet? Maybe it's my age, but I tend to think of it more in terms of my bucket list! What is it I want to see, or do, or accomplish before I...kick the bucket? Now I know that sounds rather morbid, but you'll remember that the whole purpose of a bucket list is to encourage us to live larger, not smaller. So, with that in mind, what might be on your bucket list? Learning a new language? White-water rafting down the Colorado River? Seeing the Eiffel Tower? Dying your hair pink? In the time that you have left on this earth (and I hope it is a VERY LONG time!), what dream, what desire would you like to see realized before you go on to glory?

I read with interest, the message that Pastor Cary wrote on December 27th. It was his sermon about Simeon. It got me to thinking how Simeon was a man with a bucket list! Only one thing on it, but it was a doozy. Before he died, he wanted to see the promised Messiah! While our bucket lists come with no guarantees (essentially, just a wish list!), Simeon's bucket list was different. It did come with a guarantee, a promise from God Himself!

Now what I find interesting about Simeon, is how he approached this event with both a spirit of optimism and a spirit of realism. Which is how I believe we should approach this new year. You'll notice how positive Simeon is. He's not surprised to see the Messiah. He knew this moment would come because he knew God to be true to His word and faithful to His promises. That's the reason he's an optimist. He shares that optimism with Mary and Joseph as he tells them the good news. "Salvation has come to the world in the person of your son!" He holds that news up like a beacon of hope. In doing so, I hear God calling all of us, to do the same. In this world of despair and darkness, be a beacon of hope!

But then you'll also notice that Simeon is an optimist in terms of God's love. For the first time, he offers us a window into God's heart, a heart large enough to love Jew and Gentile alike. And that's also what I hear God calling us to be and do this year...to see people the way He sees them and to love people the way He loves

them! I love the signs I see in some of our yards today, “Hate Has No Home Here!” My prayer is for that sign to be written more and more on the door posts of our hearts! Like Jesus, let’s love people lavishly, unconditionally, and inclusively.

One more note while we’re on the subject. Because Simeon is optimistic in his approach to life, you’ll notice that he is also optimistic in his approach to death. Having seen the promised Messiah, he now shares his readiness to die. Having seen our/his salvation, he can now die in peace! May that also be true for you and me.

But now finally, while Simeon is a man who approaches life optimistically, he also approaches life realistically. He no sooner shares his good news with Mary, when he feels compelled to share the bad news. While the salvation that your son has come to bring is going to be wonderful, it’s also going to come at a cost. His heart is going to stop, and in the process, your heart is going to break. Simeon makes it clear, that it doesn’t matter if you’re the mother of the Messiah, or like you and me, a follower of the Messiah. None of us are immune to the trials and tribulations of this world. Bad things are still going to happen to good people. Life’s swords are still going to pierce our hearts!

When I lost my beloved wife in 2009 to a brain tumor, I was devastated. I couldn’t imagine life without her, or even doing ministry without her! And yet, over time, I started to heal and to grow-vertically and horizontally. Vertically, in my love and faith for God, and horizontally, in my love and compassion for others. I discovered that while swords can cause us great pain, they can also result in some great growth.

So, what do you say? As we approach 2021, let’s approach it like Simeon, with a spirit of contagious optimism! We know the end of the story. God wins...and so do we! Let’s reflect that confidence and hope! At the same time, let’s approach it with a spirit of realism. As long as we are in this world, we will always face challenges like Covid and cancer, violence or economic hardship. But those things don’t have to destroy our faith or drive us away from God. Instead, they can strengthen our faith and drive us closer to God. Closer to God and closer to one another! Please know how much I look forward to drawing closer to you this year as together we draw closer to God. May God bless us all with a wonderful New Year!

Marv

While I’m not a Lectionary Preacher, like Pastor Cary, I certainly want to encourage you to be a student of the Bible! So, while we will not be following “At Home with the Word,” I would like to suggest the **2021 5-Day Bible Reading Program** as an alternative. This program is designed to help us read the entire Bible (or just the New Testament) in one year while only reading five times a week. You can find the reading plan in the narthex of the church or look it up online at <https://fivedaybiblereading.com>. I’m sure you’ll be blessed by it.



**** Returning to In-person Worship January 24th ****

We are pleased to announce our return to in-person worship January 24th.
Unfortunately, we still need to follow our previous guidelines.

PLEASE: If you are not feeling well or know that you are likely to have been exposed to Covid-19, wait until you are healthy to join us.

PLEASE: Feel free to remain home if you are unsure of the risk. The printed service will be mailed to those who request it.

SOCIAL DISTANCING is to be maintained; a 6-foot buffer is recommended. Thus, no handshakes, no hugs.

FACE MASKS are required for entry and all interactions. You are encouraged to keep your masks on for the entire service. When that is not possible every effort should be made to isolate oneself from others.

SEATING is designated. A green tag will be on the pew in front of available seats. Seating is set 9-10ft. (Recommended when singing is a part of gathering.) Remain seated, to limit particulate spread, we will not rise for singing or recitation.

BULLETINS will be in the racks with the Bibles and hymnals.

OFFERING drop box available. We will not pass the Offering plate, A drop box (at the back of the sanctuary) can be utilized before or after Worship. You may prefer to continue mailing your offering.

COMMUNION. We will not pass the Communion plates. On weeks when Holy Communion is observed, individual servings will be placed in seating areas and include a wafer and juice.

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP. Cancelled. We have determined that the risks are, for the present time, too great.



Are there things in your life that you've wanted to accomplish but haven't?

Are there personal goals that would bring you joy and fulfillment,
but are always put on the back burner because "life happens?"

If you've answered "yes" then you need to work on your bucket list. Karla Belzer will be talking to seniors about this topic on Wednesday, January 20 at 10:00 a.m. at the Rock River Center in Oregon. Learn how to create a bucket list and set goals to pursue your interests and fulfill your dreams. Call 815-732-3252 to register for attendance.

Consistory Highlights from January 11, 2021 Meeting

As of 12/31/20, the following are the cash available end balances for:

General Fund - \$ 1,713.31
Investment Fund - \$ 196,694.55
Benevolent Fund - \$ 1,589.01
Bldg & Grds Fund - \$ 56,843.86

It was decided to return to a quarterly Communion schedule. The next celebration of the Lord's Supper was set for the first Sunday of Lent, February 21.

In Person worship services will resume on Sunday, January 24, 2021.

Linda Alderks will remain the Vice-President of Consistory and Sharon Alderks will remain the Clerk of Consistory.

The following elders and deacons were named to committees:

Worship and Education – Linda Alderks and Sharon Alderks
Church Life – Arlene Hansen and Cyndy Hayenga
Mission Outreach – Sharon Alderks and Cyndy Hayenga
Buildings & Grounds – Roger Hayenga and Denny Alderks

Portions of the 2020 Consistorial Report were discussed and completed.

Dennis Alderks was installed as an Elder and Arlene Hansen installed as a Deacon.

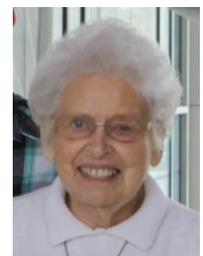
The next Consistory meeting is set for Monday, March 8 at 6:30 p.m.

† Recent Passings †



Melvin (Tim) Schaneberg, 74, passed away peacefully on January 11, 2021 at his home in Euless, Texas. He was surrounded by his family and loving neighbors. Tim is survived by his wife, Jill, of Euless, Texas; his son Brian Schaneberg of Seattle, Washington; his daughter Jodie (Claudio) Ramos, and grandchildren Isaac and Anniston Ramos of Euless, Texas; as well as his brother William (Bill) Schaneberg of Franklin Grove, Illinois and sister Shirley (Cissie) Webb of Ashton, Illinois. There will be a celebration of life at a later date due to Covid19. In lieu of flowers, please make donations in his memory to Tender Heart Hospice Care, LLC, 3210 West Park Row Dr., Arlington, Texas 76013, (817)265-0066 (www.tenderhearthh.com). Condolences may be sent to Jill at: 510 Cullum Drive, Euless, TX 76040.

Marjorie Lois Dragt entered the loving arms of Jesus on December 16, 2020. Marge was the wife of former Elim pastor, Herman H Dragt for 66 years. They moved to Pine Village, Indiana in the early 90's after serving at Elim. She leaves behind children: Bill Dragt; Larry (Cindy) Dragt; John Dragt; Judy (Steve) Talbert; Jack Anderson (Meghan Collins) and many grandchildren.



January Birthdays

1 – Dustin Alderks
Rogene Fraley
6 – DeWayne Adams
Ryan Wild
11 – Carol Hayenga
14 – Diane Terviel
21 – Bethany Hayenga
28 – Blanche Houston
30 – Berniece Hayenga (101)



February Birthdays

3 – Renee Langeland
8 – Gary Rozeboom
9 – Wayne Hayenga
12 – Brad Engelkes
14 – Sue Calveard
Dana Meyers
28 – Dawn Somers

Rochelle Christian Food Pantry
Annual Meeting
Thursday, January 21, 2021 - 10 a.m.
Hicks Hall of Rochelle Methodist Church

Come hear about how the past year has gone and what is planned for the upcoming year. Ask any questions you may have. All are welcome but please wear a mask and social distancing will be maintained.



Thank you for all your thoughts, prayers and memorials for Bo and our family through these past several months. They are appreciated more than you know. It is such a blessing to feel so much support and comfort through our Elim family.

Thank you from Sue & family

James "Bo" Tasso
1953-11/22/20

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