



# New Covenant Lutheran Church E-Weekly Newsletter

May 20 - 27, 2021



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## PASTOR'S CORNER

**To mask or not to mask, that is the question:** Is it nobler to wear a mask and to suffer the slings and arrows of those who call us anti-vaxxers? Or, is it to take up arms against a sea of tyrants and to claim that I will not wear a mask, even if I have not been vaccinated? Oh, the heartache of just one more way to divide us!

**Pardon my "poor" attempt at humor in reinterpreting Hamlet's famous speech, in the context of our nation today.** Last Thursday, the CDC said, vaccinated individuals no longer need to wear masks. But those who have not been vaccinated should still wear masks. So how do we navigate these new guidelines? I have dear friends who excitedly declared the new CDC guidelines for their churches and organizations only to be pummeled and told that they were "oppressive," "tyrannical" and "undemocratic" leaders, forcing people to declare whether or not they have been vaccinated. I know the hearts of these leaders and that certainly was not their intent, even if it was the felt outcome.

I recall several years ago when the church was in the midst of a herculean fight over the future direction of the church. I remember one leader staking the claim, that it was better for the church to rid itself of all of those who didn't agree with him and think like he did. I was deeply scarred by these remarks from a leader that I had respected. It taught me that I would not intentionally lead the church into division, especially over politics. **My goal has been to keep us united as one, through this pandemic.** After all, is it more important that everyone else agree with my politics before I can go to church with them? I certainly hope not. If that was the case, none of us would be able to worship together. If we silo ourselves off so that we are only around those who think like us, we will usually make unwise decisions and we run the risk of dividing Jesus Christ's church. That is not something I am willing to do.

So where does that leave us with the CDC guidelines? Here is what the Board of Ministry has articulated. If you have been vaccinated, you don't need to wear a mask. If you haven't been vaccinated yet, think about wearing your mask to protect others that might be more vulnerable to the virus. Lastly, no one is ordered to wear a mask. **If you come and choose not to wear a mask, you will not be judged. If you come and wear a mask, you will not be judged.** So, come and gather so that we can once again, worship and offer thanks and praise to Jesus Christ; as one body, worshipping one Lord.

Last week I asked you the question, "Are You Afraid of Dying?" This week, as we celebrate Pentecost, I will ask the question, **"Are You Afraid of Living?"** Join me as we look at the famous "Dry Bones" story from **Ezekiel 37: 1-14**. And thank you for BEING the church!

Pastor Steve

**Sermon Series: Lingering in the Graveyard**

**This Sunday:  
Are You Afraid of Living?  
Ezekiel 37: 1-14**

**Live Stream to Facebook at 9:00 AM**  
**In-person Worship in the Sanctuary at 10:30 AM**

### ONLINE WORSHIP INSTRUCTIONS:

New Covenant Lutheran Church continues to hold online worship services in addition to in-person worship.

**We use Facebook Live for our online worship services.**  
**You do not have to have a Facebook account to watch the service.**

**FACEBOOK:** go to New Covenant Lutheran Church's Facebook page at 9:00 am Sunday to see the service live.

Our Facebook page is at  
[www.facebook.com/NewCovenantAZ](https://www.facebook.com/NewCovenantAZ)



**Tammy Zorn's  
Celebration of  
Life Service**

**SATURDAY, MAY 29, 2021  
3:00 PM  
NEW COVENANT LUTHERAN CHURCH**

## May Mission Project

We are collecting hygiene products (shampoo, conditioner, body wash, deodorant, sunscreen) and money to purchase these items for NourishPHX.

**NOURISHPHX**  
(formerly known as ICM Food & Clothing Bank)



**PENTECOST**



*I will put My Spirit  
in you and you  
will live.*

*Ezekiel 37:14*

**Soul Sisters  
Hiking and Yoga**

**On break for the summer!**



*soul sisters*  
new covenant lutheran church



**SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**Sunday School for  
3rd - 5th graders**

**On break for the summer!**

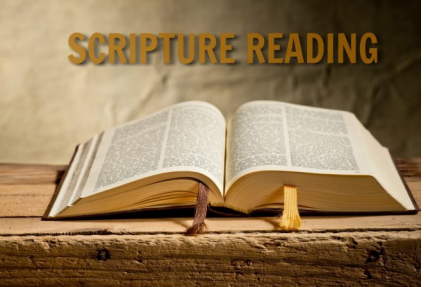


**Weekly Podcasts...**

Clarey Dees is publishing a podcast each Monday based on the devotional "Be Still and Know" (available from Amazon). The podcasts can be accessed through the Communications section of our website at [www.newcovenantaz.church](http://www.newcovenantaz.church)

## Scripture readers are needed!

Please consider reading the scripture for worship this year. Readers are needed for both the in-person and livestreamed services. For livestreaming, you would read and record the scripture, email it to the church office and it would be added to the livestream worship service on Sunday. It's only a few verses, you could use your smart phone to record and send the video, and you can have do-overs if you stumble over a word or name! You would be given the scripture well in advance and it would be needed by the Thursday before your worship service. Sign up on the link at the top of this E-Weekly email and contact the office with questions. Thank you!



**SCRIPTURE READING**