



# THE ANCHOR

September 2021

Vol 12, Number 12

Hope Lutheran Church of Rossmoor

*"We have this Hope of Christ's promises as an anchor for our lives." Hebrews 6:19*

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## RELECTIONS OF HOPE

*from Pastor Andy*

### **"A Faith that Works"**

*"When Jesus saw their faith..." Mark 2:5*



I love the story of Jesus healing the paralyzed man found in Mark 2:1-5. Because of his disability, the man was unable to make his way into the house where Jesus was preaching. Confined to his mat near the entrance, the man watched helplessly as many people walked by him on their way into the home to hear the new teacher and miracle worker who had come to their town. They were eager to get a good seat. Mark tells us that four men stopped when they noticed the man on the stretcher. His need to see Jesus became their burden. They picked up his stretcher, tried the front entrance and the windows on the side of the home, but the crowd had filled the house to its

capacity. There was no way they could get their new friend into the house...except through the roof. Carrying their new friend's stretcher, the four men make their way onto the roof, make an opening directly above Jesus and carefully lower their friend to the feet of Jesus. What a story! What friends! What faith!

I especially love how the story *does not* end. Jesus *does not* look down at the man on the stretcher lying at his feet. He looks up to the hole in the roof and the four men peering through it! Mark tells us that Jesus *saw their faith*...Wow. Jesus **sees** our faith. Our actions are an outward expression of an inward belief. The four stretcher carriers believed that Jesus would heal their friend. Their faith demanded action. Genuine faith always does. Jesus **saw** their faith. Genuine faith and good works fit together like two interlocking pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. When faith and good works come together, the result is always a faith *that works*

For the next five Sundays (August 29<sup>th</sup> – September 26<sup>th</sup>), we at Hope will spend time in the epistle of James in the New Testament. The author, James, was probably the oldest brother of Jesus and the prominent leader in the Jerusalem church following the death and resurrection of his half-brother. Following the death of Stephen (Acts 7), the church in Jerusalem was scattered throughout the Roman Empire. James was concerned about his dispersed congregation now experiencing trials and tribulations as followers of Christ in a hostile environment. Pastor James desires for his people to experience a faith that works in difficult times. His letter is about developing a faith that works in the real world.

Please plan to join us each Sunday morning in September as we take this journey with James to discover the power behind a faith that works in the world. Do people around us see our faith in action? Like the four stretcher carriers, may we all long for the day when we hear our Savior say to us, *"When I saw your faith..."*

Together, in the name of Jesus,  
*Pastor Andy*

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## Learning to Forgive Ourselves

by Janice Callentine

At the beginning of August, I really enjoyed watching the Olympics in Japan. I have always loved the Olympics, and in 1984 I was lucky enough to be able attend a few of the events at the Olympics in Los Angeles



I believe that the most disastrous Olympics occurred at the Olympic Games in Munich, in 1972. Palestinian terrorists infiltrated the Olympic Village and killed 11 members of the Israeli Olympic team. When the shootout was over, there were 11 Israelis, five terrorists and a German policeman who were dead.

At the same Olympics, two US sprinters, who were heavy gold medal favorites, were both eliminated from the 100-meter track race. Their coach unknowingly used an outdated Olympic schedule to determine the starting time of their quarterfinal heat, and failed to deliver them to the track on time. The sportscaster Howard Cosell asked the coach what I thought was a really harsh question: "Will you ever be able to forgive yourself?" At the time I thought to myself that of course the coach would be able to forgive himself, it wasn't the end of the world.

It's been almost 50 years since then, and over the years there have been a number of times when I have had trouble forgiving myself for mistakes that I have made. For example, as parents, we have all made mistakes with our children that we regret. The thing that helps me let go of my mistakes is to remember that mistakes are not failures as long as we learn from them. If we can learn not to repeat our mistakes, we can forgive ourselves and move on.

I once saw a bumper sticker that said: "Forgiving is not forgetting; forgiving is remembering and letting go." I believe that forgiving is different from letting

go. I think we have to learn to forgive ourselves before it will be possible for us to let go.

I think that another reason that it is sometimes hard for us to let go is if we let guilt turn into shame. Guilt is okay because we need to acknowledge that we have done something wrong. Guilt can lead us to repentance, which is a good thing. Guilt focuses on our actions, but if we let it turn to shame, it can negatively impact our self-esteem. Shame tells us that if we did something bad, that means we are bad people.

It is interesting to look at the people in the Bible and see how they dealt with their guilt. When King David acknowledged his sin in having his soldier Uriah killed so David could have Uriah's wife Bathsheba, he was overcome. He expressed his feelings and his need for confession to the Lord in Psalm 32

*"When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord." And you forgave the guilt of my sin."*

When we have a problem, we might as well confess it to the Lord, because He knows all about it anyway, and after we confess, we will feel better.

Another interesting Bible example is Saint Paul. He didn't seem to have a problem with guilt, because he had such a profound understanding of the power of Christ's ability to forgive. Paul said that since Jesus could forgive him, and he considered himself to be the Chief of all Sinners, that Christ could forgive anybody. So instead of turning guilt into shame, all we can really do is just do the best that we can, and leave the rest in God's hands, counting on his promises of forgiveness.

Peace, love and HOPE,  
Janice

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## Pastor Karen's Page

### *Women of Hope*

This small group is open to all women! If you have a friend you'd like to welcome, we usually meet on the 1st Saturday of the month in the Bunker Room at Creekside, here in Rossmoor. During the pandemic we have met via Zoom, and we will do that again when circumstances require it.



Since the first Saturday of September is on Labor Day Weekend, we will meet on September 11, at 10:00 AM, via Zoom. Our conversation will focus on:

#### ***The gift of the Spirit***

Celtic Christians likened the Holy Spirit not to a dove, but to a goose. In these three sessions of the fall Gather Bible study, the Rev. Sara Olson-Smith, associate pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport, Iowa, will lead us on our own divine Wild Goose chase. We'll track the Holy Spirit's actions throughout the Bible and throughout our lives. We'll explore how the Spirit moves God's people into adventures and lives we would never dare risk on our own.

#### ***Session 1: Spirit of God: Revealer and resource***

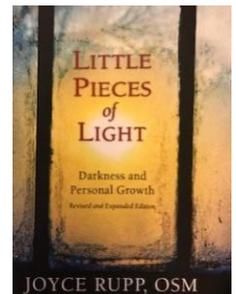
The Holy Spirit might be the most misunderstood or mysterious member of the Trinity, but the Spirit of scripture is not shy. Together we'll uncover the bold, truth-telling Spirit active in our lives. After a quick review of the mystery of the Trinity, we'll read parts of Jesus' farewell discourse, and hear how the Spirit continues to reveal the truth of Jesus to us and to the world. We'll discuss how the gift of the Holy Spirit is a resource for God's people, giving us power we need to do God's work. (Gather Magazine for September 2021)

Call or email me to receive the Zoom invitation. It's a lively group and we'd be so happy to have you join us!

### ***Little Pieces of Light***

"There is no getting away from the reality that life does not always unfold as we wish. All sorts of disappointments, obstacles, painful incongruities, unfair circumstances, and harsh events hit us with force. Illness, accidents, termination of relationships, depression, financial dilemmas, deaths – and sorrows of all sorts we did not expect and certainly did not desire – come charging in with such fierceness they knock us off our inner and outer moorings. "

Joyce Rupp, OSM, ***Little Pieces of Light***,  
Paulist Press, Copywrite 2016

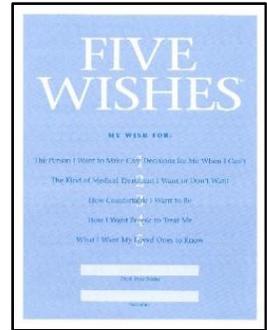


Grief and loss, whether recent or in the distant past, are burdens we carry within our hearts. If you, or people you know are struggling right now, there will be an opportunity to talk and listen and pray together following worship on Sundays August 29, September 5, 12, & 19. ***Little Pieces of Light*** by Joyce Rupp will be a guide for us. Please let me know of your interest.

## ***Five Wishes***

***When my husband, Duane, was facing 5-way bypass surgery*** we knew the severity and risks of this kind of surgery and decided to answer the following questions:

- Who is the person I want to make care decisions for me when I can't?
- What kind of medical treatment do I want or not want?
- How comfortable do I want to be when I'm ill or dying?
- How do I want people to treat me?
- What do I want my loved ones to know?



Thankfully, Duane survived the heart surgery, and we enjoyed a few more years together. When he later became ill, I was so grateful for the information he had included in his **5 Wishes**. It helped me and our children to know how he wanted us to care for him and how he wanted to be remembered.

**5 Wishes** is a booklet of thoughtful questions about our end-of-life concerns. Developed by parish pastors for their congregants, it is now published by the non-profit **Aging With Dignity**. It's a very helpful tool in making our wishes known to our families, medical personnel, and also for anyone who brings pastoral care from the church.

There will be an opportunity to learn more about **5 Wishes on Sunday, October 17, 2021, following worship**. Pastor Karen Woida will lead the conversation and there will be booklets to examine or to purchase. The cost is \$5.00 per booklet. If you have any questions about this document, particularly if you already have set up a Durable Power of Attorney for Healthcare and Finances, please give me a call.

Peace, hope and love,  
*Pastor Karen*

## ***Friends***

On Wednesday, August 18, Congregational President Bill Kuhnsman, and I drove to Napa, CA, to visit Marv and Carolyn Schick in their beautiful home at the Meadows in Napa.

After a long spell of having no visitors, Carolyn was so excited to have company, she hardly slept the night before! She met us at the main entrance, brought us through check-in and security measures, then gave us a grand tour of the facility. The large dining room has been expanded to accommodate social-distance seating, and concerts have been provided outdoors while residents watch and listen from their balconies! The Meadows has really provided wonderful care during the pandemic.



Lunch was delivered to the Schick's apartment, and we enjoyed the meal together! Since Carolyn's birthday is August 19, we celebrated a day early with singing and Birthday Pie & Ice Cream, complete with a candle!

Before we said goodbye, we shared a quiet moment and Holy Communion, then ended with prayer. What a delightful visit!

Carolyn and Marv would love to have company, so plan to make the relatively short trip (50 minutes with good traffic) to see them and their beautiful new residence!



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**Fall Sermon Series 2020**  
***“A Faith That Works”***  
***A Sermon Series in the Book of James***

*“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.”*  
*James 2:14-17 (NRSV)*



<b>Date:</b>	<b>Sermon Title:</b>	<b>Scripture Lessons:</b>
August 29 <sup>th</sup>	<b><i>“A Faith that Works”</i></b>	James 1:17-27
September 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b><i>“Faith and Equity for All”</i></b>	James 2:1-10, 11-13, 14-17
September 12 <sup>th</sup>	<b><i>“Faith and Words that Bless”</i></b>	James 3:1-12,
September 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b><i>“Faith and Selfless Ambition”</i></b>	James 3:13-4:3, 7-8a
September 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b><i>“Faith and Healing Prayer”</i></b>	James 5:13-20

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### Minister of Music Report



It's hard to believe that we are approaching fall when our summer weather has often felt like it. We must all feel like wearing light-weight clothing but our climate is denying it no matter how much we need the sun. I'm hopeful that we will get what is known as "Indian Summer" to put some color on my face, arms and legs. Right now, I'm so washed out I feel like I could /should be playing piano for the "Addams Family". Let me assure you all that our church services will be more pleasant than our weather!

We had a great August musically and I can say that you're all in for more good music this September. Labor Day weekend holds a return for one of our favorite sopranos. Judy Ryken will bring her powerful voice to shake the windows and I promise to remind her that we have no seat belts in the Fireside Room. The following week we get to hear the rich baritone of Steve Rogino as he steps in to sing in the absence of our Hope Choir. The third week we should expect to hear the sweet singing waitress, Andrea Cano Fray, that we met when she served dinner to Jack, Ruth, Margaret and I. She jumped in to sing Happy Birthday to Margaret and Jack and I immediately asked her to sing for Hope. I have decided to ask another prior performer to sing for us. Mike Foreman has a background in musical theater and has always pleased us. While in Spain attending a wedding, Mike sent me a text saying he would be happy to sing. What an age we live in which features communication in minutes around the world.

Once the mask mandate is lifted, we will resume both the Hope Choir and our TTBB Chorus as soon as possible. The last 18 months have been difficult for all of us and we must be satisfied that no one in our congregation has succumbed to COVID. That is

a blessing just as much as our ability to gather together whether it is live or on-line. Please pray for our health and happiness!

Wayne Anderson  
Minister of Music



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### Language!!!

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meaning than any other two-letter word and that is "UP."

It is easy to understand UP, meaning toward the school or at the top of the list but when we waken in the morning, why do we wake UP? At a meeting, why does a topic come UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report? We call UP our friends and we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver. We warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP an old car.

At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite and think UP excuses. To be dressed is one thing but to be dressed UP is special. And this UP is really confusing. A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night. We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP! To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary it takes UP almost 1/4 of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions. If you are UP a lot of your time but if you don't give UP you may wind UP with more than a hundred or more!

When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out, we say it is clearing UP. When it rains, it messes things UP. When it doesn't

rain for a while, things dry UP. One could go on and on – but we'll wrap it UP, so it's time to shut UP.

Submitted by Wally Hale

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### White Elephants

By Wayne Quan

We are familiar with the term “white elephants “. These are items we possess that are useless to us.

In Asia, a living white elephant is declared sacred. If you own this animal you are required to feed it and care for it; however, you may not use it to do any labor which is the purpose of having an elephant.



Are you a “white elephant”? You don't have to be one if you support and serve others. Giving a neighbor a ride for a medical appointment or making a meal for a person in need, for example, will make you useful and both the giver and the recipient will be blessed.

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### Hope Family & Friends News

#### A Walk in the National Park



Sigrid Beach, Lois Nelson, Jean Faszholtz and friend Paula posing at the tunnel log on their walk among the Sequoias at General Grant Grove. The ladies were guests at Jean's cabin in Kings Canyon National Park.

#### A Day by the Bay



Clint & Priscilla Mah and sister-in-law Debbie enjoying a beautiful day by the Bay.

#### Family Support

Playtime at Heather Farms – Debbie Bergvall's son RJ gives a hand to his son Will.



#### Celebrating Helen's Birthday

Helen celebrated her and Margaret delivered flowers from all of us at Hope.



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### Interfaith Council of Rossmoor

By Sally Nordwall

Once again, the Rossmoor Interfaith Council treated us to a fine “Big Question Forum” on August 16th at 3:00 PM. David Longhurst shared his views from the Christian perspective of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. An active lay member of this church, he has a special interest in Interfaith Organizations. His introduction included details of his involvement in the church along with his family which includes 7 children and 12 “perfect” grandchildren.

Longhurst set the tone by quoting Krister Stendahl’s rules for approaching interfaith study:

1. Allow the other person or group to define themselves. Don’t think you know what they are about.
2. Compare ideas or beliefs equally, rather than in judgement. The point is to learn and understand, not to evaluate.
3. “Holy Envy” is the appreciation of another’s piety or point of view. \*

Using this conversation as a means of illustrating the use of these guidelines, he started by defining the basic beliefs of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

- God is supreme intelligence.
- Mother God exists and is separate from God the Father.
- God loves us and helps us learn to love.
- Each of us has a piece of divinity within us.
- Our spirits are co-existent with God.
- The Biblical Eve opened the way for humankind to knowingly disobey God.

Based on these beliefs, Longhurst believes that the purpose of life is to establish relationships. Relationships require imagination, and curiosity. He said one must be curious about the other’s thoughts and beliefs and have enough imagination to fill in how they may feel about the way we approach them. In his view, *The Purpose of Life* is to find a way to establish relationships, to build a

community of relationships. He also said that God, both Mother and Father, wants us to share joy, and learn to play. He promoted the value of prayer and meditation and recommended the book *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* by Cynthia Bourgeault.

We were reminded that the Big Question is to be answered by each of us individually. I was personally challenged to remember that when asked for a summary of my beliefs I often quote the Bible saying that God created humankind for fellowship. When it becomes a theological question: Is that fellowship with God or fellowship with each other? My answer is YES!

#### \*Krister Stendahl’s Three Rules of Religious Understanding

(1) When trying to understand another religion, you should ask the adherents of that religion and not its enemies.

(2) Don't compare your best to their worst.

(3) Leave room for “holy envy.”

By (3) Stendahl meant that you should be willing to recognize elements in another religious tradition or faith, elements you admire, and wish might find greater scope in your own religious tradition or faith.

*Sally Nordwall is Hope’s representative to the Interfaith Council of Rossmoor*

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### Hope Council’s Corner

The Council took a break in August and did not meet. We will be back next month.

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### Upcoming Events in September

**Sunday, Aug 29** – Grief & Loss gathering with Pastor Karen following worship

**Sunday, Sept 5** – Our Hope Choir probably will not rehearse due to COVID precautions.

**Sunday, Sept 5** – Grief & Loss gathering with Pastor Karen following worship

**Tuesday, Sept 7** – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

**Saturday, Sept 11** – **Women’s Bible Study** via Zoom at 10:00am. Note the changed date!

**Sunday, Sept 12** – Our Hope Choir probably will not rehearse due to COVID precautions.

**Sunday, Sept 12** – Grief & Loss gathering with Pastor Karen following worship

**Monday, Sept 13** – Hope Council Meeting at 1:00pm via video conference

**Tuesday, Sept 14** – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

**Sunday, Sept 19** – Grief & Loss gathering with Pastor Karen following worship

**Tuesday, Sept 21** – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

**Saturday, Sept 18** – Anchor articles and group updates due for *October* Edition

**Sunday, September 26** - Our Tenor-Bass (TTBB) Choir will probably not rehearse due to COVID precautions.

**Tuesday, Sept 28** – Staff Meeting at 10:00am via video conference

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### Small Group News

**The Women of Hope Bible Study** – The women's Bible study group has changed its September meeting date to the second Saturday (9/11) to avoid a conflict with the Labor Day holiday weekend. We will be meeting via Zoom from 10:00 - 11:30am to study the first session of the fall

Gather series on the gift of the Spirit. The session is entitled Spirit of God: Revealer and Resource. Please contact Pastor Karen if you would like her to send you the Zoom link. We welcome all newcomers!

**Monday Lunch Group** – on September 20 the group will have lunch at the diner in the Rossmoor shopping center at 11:30 a.m. If you need a ride to get there, call Dorothy.

**The Small Group Going Out to Dinner** – The Small Group Going Out to Dinner will be dining on Tuesday, September 14th at a restaurant to be selected at the August dinner. Persons planning to attend should contact Karen P by September 9th to be included in the reservation. The dinner will be scheduled for 5:30 PM. Persons wanting to carpool should meet at Gateway at 5:00 PM.

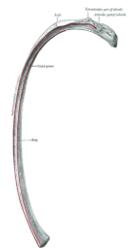
**Dinner-in-homes Groups** – The two Dinner in Homes groups have been meeting for several months after a long hiatus. The two groups are thinking about ways to encourage the formation of additional dinner groups in the fall to accommodate our new members who may be interested in this fellowship format.

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### Laughter is Therapeutic

Bill’s Beneficial Bible Study

The reading from Genesis – “and the rib that the Lord God had taken from Adam he made into a woman”.



Clearly, that was the rib we men were supposed to use to READ MINDS!

Submitted by Bill Kuhnsman

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**2021 Hope Church Council Members**

- Bill Kuhnsman (President)
- Barrie Christensen (Vice President)
- Mark Krauth (Secretary/Treasurer)
- Robin Kanno (Operations Manager)
- Jack Padley (Liaison to Endowment Committee)
- Wayne Quan (Anchor Contributor)
- Carolyn Schick (Financial Manager)

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**God's Work, Our Hands.**



Have you remembered the **Hope Endowment Fund** in your will or trust? When you plan your giving for 2021, think about the Hope Endowment Fund. Your contribution is tax deductible. For more information, please contact Evelyn Olson or any member of the Hope Endowment Committee. Members are identified on their name badges.

**Endowment Committee Members**

- Evelyn Olson (Coordinator)
- Mark Conrad
- Mark Krauth
- Jack Padley (Liaison to Hope Council)
- Wayne Sampson
- Carolyn Schick

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**Hope Lutheran Church Staff & Representatives**

- Pastor: The Rev. Dr. Andy Smith
- Associate Pastor: The Rev. Karen Woida
- Pastor Emeritus: The Rev. Jack Niemi
- Minister of Music: Wayne Anderson
- Financial Manager: Carolyn Schick
- Cantor: Kimberly Twesme
- Care Ministry: Margaret Anderson
- Operations Manager: Robin Kanno
- Interfaith Council Representative: Sally Nordwall
- Webmaster: Clint Mah
- Website: [www.hoperossmoor.org](http://www.hoperossmoor.org)

Anchor contributors: Janice Callentine, Wayne Quan, Bill Kuhnsman, Ingrid Wood, Sally Nordwall, Wally Hale

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**On This Day**

Mend a quarrel. Search out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion, and replace it with trust. Write a love letter. Share some treasure. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in a word or deed.

Keep a promise. Find the time. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Listen. Apologize if you were wrong. Cry to understand. Flout envy. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Appreciate, be kind, be gentle. Laugh a little more.

Deserve confidence. Take up arms against malice. Decry complacency. Express your gratitude. Worship your God. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love. Speak it again. Speak it still again. Speak it still once again.

Submitted by Ingrid Wood

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## **Pray & Act for the People of Afghanistan.**

*A letter from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

Contact your lawmakers through the [ELCA Action Center](#).

As the United States and other nations withdraw from Afghanistan, Afghan nationals who cooperated with the U.S. military, independent journalists, dissidents, local nongovernmental organization staff and other vulnerable groups are at risk of retaliatory action. With a complete U.S. withdrawal expected by the end of the month and a rapidly deteriorating security situation, the White House and Congress must guarantee a place for all Afghan nationals seeking protection from persecution and fleeing threats to their lives because of their affiliation to the U.S. government.

The Biden administration should immediately provide urgent humanitarian protections, including a full-scale evacuation to U.S. soil of those who have assisted the U.S. presence in Afghanistan. [Your email today](#) will emphasize this urgent need!

Adjudicating lengthy visa applications is a laborious and time-consuming process—a luxury many do not have due to a depleted embassy staff. There is a glimmer of hope—the [administration is working](#) to secure the airports for travel as they prepare to ramp up the evacuations of thousands of U.S. personnel, Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) applicants and other vulnerable people, including those who have passed initial security screenings. However, much more coordination and resources are needed.

Fulfilling a commitment to be a sanctuary for people fleeing political and religious persecution, and standing as a beacon of hope, the United States should prepare to receive Afghan nationals affiliated with the U.S. government on U.S. territory, such as [Guam](#), to kick-start the rigorous vetting process they must undergo. Congress can make a difference by ensuring that the [125,000-refugee resettlement goal](#) for FY22 is fully funded and met.

[Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service \(LIRS\)](#) and other resettlement agencies are prepared to assist. LIRS is a leading resettlement agency and has helped 11,244 Iraqis and Afghans resettle in the United States through the SIV program over the years. [Hundreds](#) of international organizations, recognizing additional groups in need, are calling on the Biden administration to scale up their humanitarian response and expand programs for protection.

### **Compelled by Our Beliefs**

The ELCA’s commitment to peace is based on the belief that all humans are created in the image of God, deserving of fulfillment, safety, and love. At a time like this, the church is called to be a serving presence in society, advocating for generosity and a compassionate welcome for all those in need of a new home. “The Church serves when it holds power accountable, advocates justice, stands with those who are poor and vulnerable, provides sanctuary, and meets human need” (ELCA social statement “[For Peace in God’s World](#),” 1995). That statement also affirms the ELCA’s long-standing practice of welcome and hospitality for refugees. This tradition also includes Lutheran congregations’ sponsorship of refugees following periods of conflict.

### **Prayer in Solidarity with the People of Afghanistan**

Almighty and merciful God, whose Son became a refugee and had no place to call his own, look with mercy on the Afghan people who are fleeing from danger, persecution, violence, and seeking the safety of home. Bless those who work to bring them relief; inspire generosity and compassion in all our hearts; and guide the leaders of this nation and nations of the world toward that day when all will rejoice in your kingdom of justice and of peace. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.