
The InnerNet

Mid-February 2022

Between Exhaustion and The Deep by Nadia Bolz-Weber

Sermon Preached Feb 6, 2022 at Montvale Presbyterian church Denver CO

Jesus saw two boats there at the shore of the lake; the fishermen had gone out of them and were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little way from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch." Simon (Peter) answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing. Yet if you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done this, they caught so many fish that their nets were beginning to break. - Luke 5

This week I started to admire Peter as a person of faith. And here's why: because at least he was honest. ...Jesus said to Simon, "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we have worked all night long but have caught nothing."

You see, if, as the text says, he was cleaning his nets, he was done. He had practically already gotten home for the night and put on his sweatpants and poured himself a drink. He was DONE. And - I imagine...Exhausted by prolonged effort met only with failure.

I've always focused on the abundant catch of fish part of this text, but this week I couldn't stop thinking about this part of the text. A part I never really noticed, but maybe that's because I never preached this story as the world entered into the third year of a global pandemic. See, I don't know about you, but I also am exhausted.

I've gone through all the same stages of this thing that you have. The initial creativity of lock down in March 2 years ago...Then the growing social isolation. The malaise. Then the hope of vaccines. The competitive scrambling to find Vaccine appointments, the joy of ripping those masks off and traveling again, that lasted about 45 minutes before DELTA. The effort we've all had to make to balance staying safe but also staying mentally healthy, yet ...the endless Covid.

I'm exhausted and if I'm honest, I do not want to go into the deep, thank you very much. I want to stay near the comfort of the shore, I just finished cleaning my nets and am ready for my pajamas and Netflix. I want to stay close to the shore Jesus, because I know that in the Hebrew scriptures, The Deep is where chaos and the unknown reside. But this week I started to realize that maybe we aren't at the shore people anymore anyhow and maybe we haven't been for a very long time. In this text, we aren't a curious crowd just a few comfortable meters from home listening on the hill to Jesus. We are Peter somewhere between exhaustion and the deep, trying to still have faith while:

The economy is chaotic.

Our healthcare system is teetering.

And for the last two years any human being standing near us may kill us with their breath - we now have to pay attention to because it might actually kill us.

(Continued on next page...)

(Pastor's message continued...)

So here, today, in this place between exhaustion and the deep, I'll just say the obvious: coffee mug faith isn't gonna cut it. Faith that is really just a cheerful outlook sprinkled on top of an already good life, may have been of help in the past, but now it's useless... in order for it to be of any real help, faith can't be the decorations and furniture - it has to be the load bearing structure that can withstand flood and fire and global pandemics.

Because faith isn't the thing that goes first when a crisis happens, *it's what is left after a crisis happens*

When the power of positive thinking fails us -
When the empty promises of late stage capitalism have failed us -
When our attempts to change ourselves and others have failed us -
When our vision for what our lives would look like have failed us -
When our bodies and dreams have failed us -
Simple faith remains.
Peter teaches us that.

Because Peter's faith is the kind that is honest about exhaustion and failure, ...AND YET, Simon answered Jesus request, "if you say so, I will let down the nets."

It's easy to confuse having faith with just ignoring reality in favor of some kind of delusional positivity, but toxic positivity never helps anything, and it is particularly unhelpful right now...

...In closing, there was a surprising depiction recently of faith being what's left when everything else has failed us in the Netflix movie 'Don't Look Up'. In which a meteor is moments away from destroying the earth. The characters are in the deepest part of the deep. And when putting faith in political solutions and big tech has failed them, they face their last moments by gathering for a thanksgiving style meal, a net-straining feast of gladness and gratitude. But they know something else is needed. And that something is prayer. In the midst of the world quite literally ending, no one was practicing self-improvement, or attempting to "manifest" some kind of excellence, they were praying. The Timothée Chalamet character, a skateboard punk, proceeds to pray a prayer – the words of which have not left me since the first day I saw the film. The world was about to be destroyed AND YET he prayed.

"Dearest Father and Almighty Creator, we ask for your grace tonight, despite our pride, your forgiveness, despite our doubt. Most of all, Lord, we ask for your love to soothe us through these dark times. May we face whatever is to come in your divine will with courage and open hearts of acceptance."

We haven't been on the shore for quite a while. We are exhausted. AND YET ...there is grace in the deep. Despite our doubt, there is forgiveness in the deep... The protective love of God is soothing us here in this dark time allowing us to face whatever is to come with courage and open hearts of acceptance.
So with the simple, AND YET faith of Peter we can say: AMEN.

Accessed on February 7: thecorners@substack.com

VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE SANDWICHES!

We need volunteers of all ages to make 200 sandwiches and assemble bagged lunches. The date is Sunday February 27 after church from 11:45-1p or until done. Mike and Laura Michael will deliver these uptown to the Giles Emergency Shelter , an overflow night shelter for homeless men. This is part of Operation Sandwich by Roof Above. This will be a fun and much appreciated service! Bring a mask and join us on February 27! Contact Laura Michael at lmichael9901@gmail.com or 9802147171 for questions.

Would you like to help? A message from the Synod!

We are seeking someone to do this project. Is it you?

To those who love and want to preserve records of our North Carolina Lutheran history and heritage:

At this time, we need to update our congregational histories in order for them to be published on the synod website showing the current state of our congregations

Much work was done on this some years ago, but it is time to do an update. In most cases, this should not take much work. You can find the history of the various congregations by going to the synod's website: <https://www.nclutheran.org/about-us/our-history/>.

Help is needed to update the LSLC from this file so we can email it back to the Synod History Committee.

If you are interested in helping out, please call or email the church office and Ruth will be happy to give any assistance you might need.

Lutheroad Summer camp is coming! Save the date June 20-24, 2022

for those rising 1st graders through middle school. Pre-camp and post-camp care available at an additional cost. Camp Monday-Thursday, 9-4; Friday 9-12
Cost \$80 members; \$110 non-members.

Returning campers are eligible for a \$10 discount and first chance to register. Registration is now live at the following link: <https://bit.ly/3L1M985>

A Thank You Message:

To: The LSLC Family
From: Sarah Y. Gist

Dear Church Family:

I graciously thank each and every one of you for your prayers, cards, phone calls, and visits during my illness. The floral arrangement received at Christmas was very beautiful, and added to our viewing pleasure!

I'm still on the long road to recovery that has transversed through hospitals, rehab centers and short visits home. Please continue to pray for me, and I look forward to the time I can rejoin you in worship.

Love in Christ,
Sarah Gist



North Carolina Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

February 10, 2022

Dear Pastor Powell and Living Saviour Congregation,

Sitting on my desk today with the incoming mail was your unexpected check for \$5,000 that you shared as a portion of an estate gift that Living Saviour received at the end of 2021. We were humbled and grateful that you would, especially in these challenging times for all of our congregations, share that gift beyond your own congregation, neighborhood, and community.

We pledge to put it to good use for mission starts, support of rostered ministers, candidacy, campus ministries, support of our affiliated agencies and institutions, and so many other ministries that we share as church together. 190 congregations with you, sharing a portion of what they have to make us all stronger in the Gospel together.

We are grateful. God's richest blessings to you.

Your partner in ministry,

Bishop Timothy M. Smith, NC Synod, ELCA

Wednesday Morning Bible Study

We will begin on March 2nd at 10AM at church in person. Since it is Ash Wednesday, we will spend some time discussing Ash Wednesday. Then it's on to "Surprised by Hope" by N.T. Wright. Some things we will discuss are "Hope for the World", "The Hope of Heaven", "The Hope of Salvation", & "The Hope of the Church." If you have any questions, please contact Janet Mayer at 704-562-8695 or janetmayer@bellsouth.net.

4th ANNUAL SHARE THE LOVE EVENT

Due to the pandemic, this will once again be a Lenten VIRTUAL EVENT

“Whatever you did for the least of my brethren, you did for me.” – Matthew 25:40

THE NEED: Everyday 100+ homeless kids seek shelter at the Salvation Army Center of Hope. Mariah is just one of those kids:

For years, little Mariah’s life had been a blur of living with her mom or grandma or relatives – whoever was sober and had a place for her to sleep. Then Covid hit the family, and her mom knew she had to protect her daughter. When Mariah and her mom arrived at the Center, Mariah felt safe for the first time in her life. She loved the warm meals and clothes that fit. She could even go to school and make friends! Within a few months, the Center had helped her mom get sober and find a job. Mariah felt truly blessed when the Center helped them get into subsidized housing and she could finally have a bed of her own!

HOW YOU CAN HELP: The Center has truly appreciated your past generosity. This pandemic has made it especially difficult for them to supply housing, food, clothes, healthcare and social services to 600+ folks at two locations. Due to the Covid-19 restrictions that affect both our church and the Center, we would be most grateful if you could please SHARE THE LOVE this Lent by donating online if you are able (instead of bringing items to church). Simply click on the link below (then click on DONATE ONLINE and in the Comments box write: To help the Center of Hope children).

<https://www.salvationarmycarolinas.org/charlotte/programs/homeless-services/>

Thank you for your generosity. SHARE THE LOVE COMMITTEE: Kristen Haigler (kristenberry@msn.com) and Betty Reynolds (CoachBettyR@gmail.com).

Praying for Possibilities!

01/30-02/06 Traci Anderson & William Charnock
02/06-02/13 Jean Dunne & Janet Wagstaff
02/19-02/20 Frank DeLoache & Marty Jenkins
02/20-02/27 Maria Rozhin & Glenda Kilminster
02/27-03-06 Don Huff & Ray Kilminster



Your Offerings:

Contribute directly to the church through the on-line button on the website, using the QR code or by mail to

Living Saviour 6817
Carmel Road

Charlotte NC 28226



Thank you for your generosity.

Financial Results for December 2021 Month End

General Fund 01	Actual
Contributions, Budget	354,243
Expenses and Transfers	347,681
Net Contributions less Expenses/Transfers	6,562
Donor Challenge Contributions	67,370
Facilities Fund 02-3241-442	
Beginning Balance	83,822
Transfers from General Fund	9,167
Contributions	3,935
Expenditures - H&S Roofing	(70,717)
Expenditures - Adams Heating	(4,197)
Ending Balance	22,010

Vanguard Account

The church has set up an account at Vanguard. If you wish to contribute mutual funds, ETFs or stocks that have an appreciated value, you can contribute these to Living Saviour's Vanguard account. By doing so, you can avoid capital gains taxes. If you have any questions, please contact Don Hathcock or Timothy Goldbach.

EASTER LILIES!!

Yep, it's true. We need to get those Easter Lily orders pretty soon!

Consider beautifying the sanctuary to celebrate our Lord's resurrection by giving one or more lilies. As always, you may offer a dedication in memory or in honor of someone or simply to the glory of God. Please make your donation by contacting Ruth at the church office (704-542-3626 or ruth@livingsaviourlc.org). The COST is: **\$9.90** each. **The ORDER DEADLINE is: March 14th.**

Quilt Ministry News!

The Quilt Ministry at Living Saviour has resumed its monthly workshops. Due to Alice's travel schedule, the next gathering will be on **March 15th, at 10:00** in the Fellowship Hall. If you are unfamiliar with this ministry, we create three layered pieced and tied quilts of a specified size for Lutheran World Relief. These quilts are sent to areas in crisis around the world.

We have one quilt ready for assembly and fabric to cut into squares for the next project. We have had donations of twin-size flat sheets that are needed for the quilt backings - thank you Pat Snodgrass and Barbara Avard - but we are still looking for at-home participants to sew together the quilt squares to form the quilt tops.

We look forward to the fellowship that results at these workshops, and we are humbled by the knowledge that we are creating something that will bring a basic comfort to someone in the world undergoing a crisis. Additional workshop participants! No experience needed and all supplies are provided. Interested? Contact Alice Jenkins at jenkinsalice2019@gmail.com, or come join us!



Ministry of Health and Wholeness February- Create in Me a Clean Heart Oh, God

Remember GRACE:

G- greens & grains

R- rest/ relax

A- activity/ exercise

C- cease smoking

E- emotional peace (Created by Linda Frixen)

February's Health and Wholeness focus is on Heart Health:

"Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." Proverbs 4:23

- The February 2022 is ready for reading virtually or hard copy which can be picked up at church. The emphasis continues on the Healthy Lifestyle Habits of G.R.A.C.E. identified above. These simple (yet elusive) health habits fully within our control form the foundation of all health and wellbeing including heart health. Because many of us are over 65 and because heart disease of some kind is the leading cause of death, we are encouraged to be aware of the **heart disease risk factors, the heart disease symptoms, and the signs of a stroke or heart attack.** May we the body of Christ support and




- encourage one another in caring for the temple of God by embracing Healthy Lifestyle Habits. Know your numbers: weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and blood sugar levels
- A Blood Pressure screening is planned for February 20, 2022. Wear RED to show support for heart health.

Reclaiming Your Rhythm means getting back in the groove of self-care, including focusing on your blood pressure and working with your health care team to get (or keep) it in a healthy range. Blood pressure readings have climbed in the U.S., research has shown, putting people at greater risk of heart and kidney disease and stroke

- There are plenty of masks still available at the church. Please take what you can use. When congregational needs have been met we will discuss making them available in the surrounding community.
 - ◇ Follow Pastor Angela's advice on rotating masks and storing a used mask in a paper bag for 24-48 hours for reuse. See <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/can-you-reuse-a-kn95-or-n95-mask-experts-say-yes-but-follow-these-steps-180979404/>
- There is much discussion regarding whether masking is still necessary. The latest guidance received from Atrium this week is to continue masking at indoor gatherings. Although covid percentages continue to fall fast, they are still way above the desired goal of 5% community spread. Atrium has requested that if we are not concerned for ourselves to please show our concern for the wellbeing of those whose immune systems may not be as robust as well as health care providers. Many continue to die from the illness. The emphasis continues to be that COVID is NOT the common cold and even in its endemic state, whenever that is defined, will be a more significant illness than the common cold.
- Laura Michael, RN, has completed the Faith Community Nursing Foundations Course and is now recognized as a Faith Community Nurse at Living Saviour. Congratulations Laura!!!! Living Saviour is blessed to have Laura leading the Health and Wholeness Ministry.
- The combined digital and paper Congregational Health Assessment is READY to roll out any day. Be on the Look OUT!! Your participation would be helpful to program planning and much appreciated.

FEBRUARY 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 2:00 p.m. Lectionary Study Group (Zoom) 6:45 p.m. Alleluia Ringers bell choir practice	2 Presentation of Our Lord 6:00 p.m. Zoom Choir Rehearsal	3	4	5 1:00 p.m. Ann Chrisie Funeral
6 10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Live Streamed	7	8 6:45 p.m. Alleluia Ringers bell choir practice	9 6:00 p.m. Zoom Choir Rehearsal	10 10:00 Quilting Group	11 10:00 a.m. Caring and Sharing (Zoom)	12
13 10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Live Streamed	14 Valentine's Day	15 6:45 p.m. Alleluia Ringers bell choir practice	16 6:00 p.m. Zoom Choir Rehear 2:00 p.m. Bill Dunne Memorial Service	17	18 6:00 p.m. Hathcock Family Visitation & Receiving	19 1:00 p.m. CD Hathcock Funeral
20 10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Live Streamed	21 President's Day	22	23 6:00 p.m. Zoom Choir Rehearsal	24	25	26
27 Transfiguration of Our Lord 10:30 a.m. Traditional Worship Live Streamed 4:00 p.m. Council	28					

February Birthdays

02/14 Ben Thompson
 02/15 Eric Krantz
 02/16 Patricia Garrison, Linda Poley
 02/17 Elsie McGlone
 02/18 Victor Leeser
 02/19 Collin Quinlan
 02/22 Anna Pearce, George Shabla
 20/23 Matthew Noonkester
 02/24 Janet Mayer, Patricia Snodgrass
 02/28 Jeff Haigler

February Anniversaries

02/06 Chuck and Erin Malinowski