



**THE SEBRING CHRISTIAN
FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DOC)
JULY-AUGUST 2020**

510 POINSETTIA AVE., SEBRING, FL. 33870
(863) 385-0352

WEB SITE: www.FCCSebring.com

E-Mail: fccdoc@outlook.com or
firstchristiandocsebring@gmail.com



Psalm 13 says "how long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take
counsel in your soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day?
How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?"

This Psalm calls to mind what seems almost like our current
situations. We may think that we are immune to that which is
around us until we are finally by it. We may think that we have
nothing to do with what's happening, until it comes knocking at
our door; perhaps it will and perhaps it won't.

We have an opportunity to witness in the worst of times. We continue to be in the midst of a pandemic. Now along comes a re-revolution, if there can be such a thing. It brings up old issues and causes hurt which we need to address because there are some things still in our society that are not just and right and fair. And the next thing: hurricane season is among us. The triad seems complete and we did not want any of it.

To quote Charles Dickens, "They were the best of times; they were the worst of times." In the midst of death, devastation and destruction we have a chance to walk through the fires and sometimes they may be of hell. Like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, we pray that when thrown into the furnace we come out on the other side better and stronger and more faithful people.

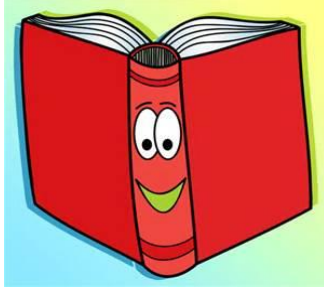
I see positive actions as the right and the left of so many issues are going so far that both groups are coming back to the middle to prayerfully have a dialogue, discussion, and :step of the society for which we are a part. It will not be the same. It will not be the same for so many reasons. I'm not sure we can describe or define all of them but it will not be the same. We will be different people if we do not regress to the past but connect to the present and work toward the future.

May God walk with us as a congregation and you as individuals so that we live as the Psalm stated "But I have trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation. I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me." Amen

PASTOR ALAN

Pastor Alan will be in the office occasionally and by appointment as needed. You can reach him by phone at 503-931-2698. Sunday services will be done on Face Book Live at 10:30 a.m. **There will be no services from the sanctuary until further notice.**

BOOK CLUB



Our new book is "Tearoom For Two". It's part of the Tearoom Mystery series from Guideposts.

We have 2 cousins, Elaine and Jan who are ready for the next part of their lives to begin. They decide to buy a Queen Anne style house in Maine and convert part of it into a tearoom. They expect life to be quiet and uneventful but find they are drawn into some baffling mysteries. They buy an unusual teapot at a flea market and the dealer then tries to buy it back for a lot of money. Then they have a woman snooping around their house. And finally, one of them is threatened by a midnight burglar. They must use their wisdom, deductive skills, and prayer to get to the truth. They find out they are as good as figuring out the truth as they are at serving tea.

July 7 - Please read Chapters 1-8, p. 1-99

July 21 – Read Chapters 9-15, p. 100-185

Aug. 4 – Read Chapters 16-the end, p. 186-275.

Please join us!! There will be a copy in the library for you to read. We meet at 4:30 p.m. in the church library the first and third Tuesdays of the month when we are able to return.

Submitted by Jaquae L. Sands, 382-3428



CHOIR NEWS

**Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus and tomorrow may never be mine
So for my sake teach me to take one day at a time."**

I couldn't have said it better! Respect each other. Wear a mask for others as well as yourself if you can. We WILL get through this!!!

Keep in Tune, Jaquae

A JOYFUL NOISE

For now we can't even think about the chime choir. But don't worry 'cause we will be back before you know it. Just be patient and remember "all things work for good to those who love the Lord."

**"One day at a time sweet Jesus that's all I'm asking from you
Give me the strength to do everyday what I have to do
". I miss you all!!!**

For Whom The Bell Tolls, Jaquae

Patient attention, valuable discoveries

For many people, the coronavirus pandemic has been a test of patience — or worse. Medically vulnerable people face an anxious time of hypervigilance. Furloughed workers wait on hold or in lines for assistance. Special events have been canceled or rescheduled.

Those not impacted directly deal with assorted frustrations and inconveniences. Many people are learning the benefit of slowing down, being present (even virtually) to others and practicing patient attention.

Interestingly, scientist Isaac Newton did some of his best work when the plague forced Cambridge University to close. At home, the inquisitive student invented calculus and developed groundbreaking theories of gravity and optics. Later Newton called 1666 his *annus mirabilis* (“year of wonders”) and reportedly said, “If I have made any valuable discoveries, it [owes] more to patient attention than to any other talent.”

What have you discovered during the Covid-19 crisis? What appreciations have you developed for aspects of life you may have previously taken for granted? What has social distancing taught you about the value of neighbors, church, community volunteering?

During the pandemic, what have you learned about persistence and God’s presence? What empathy do you now feel for writers of words such as “I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his word I put my hope” (Psalm 130:5, NIV)?

God amid pandemic

Last spring, life changed as we became familiar with terms such as social distancing, flattening the curve and self-quarantining. We could hardly believe the closed schools, businesses and especially churches — just as Holy Week and Easter drew near! The coronavirus ran rampant in the world. Where was God?

But as the spread continued, many civic leaders stepped up, calmly informing us of the facts, of actions being taken to mitigate the crisis and of how we could help. Healthcare professionals risked their lives and endured separation from families; teachers drew on astounding stores of creativity to teach online; pastors delivered sermons and lessons to empty sanctuaries as members listened and prayed while living in lockdown. Surely God was present — through them!

Then I remembered how God assures us through Isaiah, “Fear not! When you pass through the waters, the fires, yes, even the pandemics of this world, I will be with you” (43:1-2, paraphrased). And Jesus echoes, “I am with you always” (Matthew 28:20).

—Sandy Hyland

** Remember that our services are live-streamed on Face Book every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. on FCCSebring.com. Pastor Alan also does Wednesday morning devotions live on Face Book.



BIRTHDAYS

JULY 7 Linda Lussier

15 Todd Martin

21 Michelle Johns

21 Kay Duball

ANNIVERSARIES

JULY 4 David & Janet McCord

5 Johnny & Helen Kelly

7 Alan & Kathy Brown

11 Gary & Pauline Kincaid

AUGUST 7 Annakirk Ramisson

8 Lois Hammel

20 Carol Chandler

22 Sandra Laufer

24 Shirley Misechok

AUGUST 1 Bill & Carolyn Hinline

4 Ron & Peggy Davis

7 Don & Barb Tiemens

24 Gordon & Jane Walkington

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-----Sandy Hyland



I recently received the NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH newsletters. They are posted on the Disciple Women's bulletin board. As soon as we receive the latest issues, it will also be posted. Please take time to read them. This mission is a project of our church in that we have a box to contribute foodstuff to be taken to the mission as well as giving financial support.

The April-May newsletter is very interesting as to how they have been coping and serving in the time of the virus scare. They had to make some changes in the way they serve food which has resulted in more costs. But they have praised God every step of the way. They tell of

one prayer for potatoes and someone came to the door with pounds of potatoes.

The newsletters always say how many have been served and I want to quote the March and April-May figures. Total meals in March—2,929. In April-May—6,212. People housed in March 71 in the next 2 months 62. And the food baskets distributed are always “too numerous to count”.

Let's not forget this worthy organization in our prayers and support. You can put donations in the box in the hallway. Any size is accepted but remember they serve 60 plus people each meal.

Sue

The “wow!” factor

After the final notes concluded at a recent symphony performance in Boston, the conductor hadn't yet lowered his baton when a child exclaimed, “Wow!” The break in protocol, magnified by excellent acoustics, didn't upset the participants or audience, however. Instead, several later said it brought them great joy. One even called the moment life-changing.

The incident was especially meaningful because the child, a 9-year-old named Ronan, has autism and is generally nonverbal. Music, his family says, tends to attract his interest and make him happy. When symphony officials learned Ronan's identity, they arranged a private performance so he could meet some musicians.

How often do you shout “Wow!” — in a good way — at what you see and hear? You may tend to do so on vacation or while observing God's natural wonders, but what about during your day-to-day life? Think about the people you encounter and their talents — and your own. When have these sparked a “Wow!” of thanks to God?

Every blessing, large or small, is a wow-moment — a gift from God that warrants our praise.

—adapted from HomeTouch Ministry

How will we use our freedom?

In 2000, Cornealious Anderson was sentenced to 13 years for robbery. The 23-year-old was released on bail and told to await orders to show up to prison. But due to a clerical error, those orders never came. Some people might have taken advantage of such freedom and committed more crimes. But Anderson started a business, coached youth football and volunteered at church, earning respect in his community.

Thirteen years later, when Missouri officials discovered the error and put Anderson behind bars, an online petition called for his release. A judge agreed that Anderson was a changed man and, again, he was freed.

What would *you* do with such undeserved freedom? What *do* we do with the unmerited freedom God grants us despite our sin, and with the freedoms we celebrate on July 4? May we follow Anderson's example and use our freedoms — social *and* spiritual — to serve others.

—adapted from *Homiletics*

