

Sunday, September 26, 2021 – Holy Mountains III, Recommitment & Celebration Sunday
“The Mountain View”

Isaiah 2: 2-5; John 19: 16b-30

Rev. Derek S. Klemm, Mountain View Lutheran Church, Las Vegas, NV

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen.

We start with the end in mind. The VERY end. A beautiful picture in the book of Isaiah, 700+ years before Jesus came and over 2,700 years ago for us today, looked ahead past our time today to the end game of God’s plan for the world. This vision includes a view of a mountain, on a day when people from every nation stream together to worship God. We know this day hasn’t arrived yet. Last I checked swords and spears, the implements of war haven’t been converted into agricultural equipment... a poetic way of talking about the end of violence, suffering war and every bad thing that happens.

We are blessed on this side of the events of the cross to know more about how this would all come about though – that Jesus Christ is the one who will teach us, who will bring peace about, who will settle disputes and reconcile people together. Of course, we’re not there yet, are we?

We’re moving forward on a journey. Earlier this month I flew back to Michigan to help my parents drive across the country to their new home in Arizona. They spent awhile in an in-between time – their old house closed, they rented back for a short time, and then we set off on a journey forward to a new place. And even once they got there, a period of hopeful anticipation and waiting took place. The finishing touches were taking place on their new home before they could move in. They started getting acclimated to a new place, new surroundings – in a hotel room, and then at my sister’s house, before finally moving getting the keys this week. And even now, there’s still waiting for their Pod to be delivered in a couple of days.

That’s a little like the time period we’re in now as the people of God. Jesus has died on the cross – we heard that story. He yelled out “It is finished!” as He perfectly, once and for all satisfied His Father’s need for our sin to be taken away from us – because Jesus finished a perfect life before His death, when He rose again on Easter He rose victorious. And God has now risen us, too! We’re in motion, called by

God to be free! But we use our freedom not to indulge ourselves but to serve one another. That's this weird in-between that we're on now – we're certainly not “there yet” but God has enlivened us. God is with us. God freed us and has us in motion with what Jesus has done. It is finished! Your sin is forgiven! You are free! But the swords and plowshares aren't beaten, not yet. Theologians refer to this as the “now/not yet” paradox.

So too at Mountain View. Set free by God, we're moving forward with a plan. A plan for how we can use our freedom to love others. It's a plan – our plan – for the long term ministry future of Mountain View Lutheran Church and School. We've prayed over this plan, asked for God's wisdom in this plan. We think this plan is wise and carefully considered... no, God's voice didn't speak and say, “This is the plan,” but we know He will be with us no matter what. This is the “long term” of setting up our facilities to facilitate the ministry that happens here in the decades to come. It is a plan that has already started – we blew it open as a public thing last year, launching a campaign on March 15, 2020 that then stretched into last fall. And some small portions of that plan – our new gym floor and redoing our internet network – are complete.

Some of you know all about these plans – you've been to informational and Q&A meetings, you've been keeping up on newsletters and updated FAQs. Others may have heard it referenced in passing. The skinny of the plan, in a couple of sentences, is called Forward in Freedom – a three year capital campaign that started in 2020, with a goal of raising at least \$1 million above and beyond regular gifts that will support vital facility remodeling and repairs that will help us to not only sustain but move forward in new and exciting ways with God's mission, with the bulk of the work to take place this upcoming summer in 2022. While the exact final scope of that remodel will hinge on actual costs once all the construction is bid out, it involves overhauling our HVAC and lighting, remodeling our school classrooms and, as margin allows, hopefully finishing out our basement for new classroom space, Bible study space and youth space. We also hope to be able to include a new organ in this phase of work.

Then there's the *really* LONG TERM plan – God's plan, of which this mission outpost in the northwest of Las Vegas is one small part – God's plan presented in that beautiful **mountain view** of Isaiah 2 – nations streaming to the mountain of God, freed to a life of peace and settled disputes and reconciliation governed by Jesus as our King forever and ever. It's a plan that is definite and certain to come through because Jesus already finished the most important thing that has ever been done – setting us free from our sin, rising to new life and making us His. We are promised by God as part of that plan now, even as it is not yet completed.

Our prayer all along is that everything about the Forward in Freedom campaign and the plans connected to it perfectly serve God's *really* long term plan – that this Mountain View reflects Isaiah's mountain view, the nations streaming to the mountains of God, worshipping Jesus.

Allow me a moment to explain the Recommitment Card before you. There are two versions – some of you have a card that looks like this on heavy card stock. Others of you at home or in the sanctuary are invited to the website listed above: www.mvlcs.org/fif/commit. There are various types of commitments. The first is our commitment to be in prayer, which is something that has grounded us through this entire experience, from the moment we gathered for the first of two congregation-wide feedback sessions about the future of ministry here two and a half years ago. The second is a commitment of our time and our talents – there are some ongoing volunteer roles that can help support carrying out this plan. The third is financial. As you are able and as you are drawn to support the future mission and ministry of Mountain View Lutheran Church and School, we ask you to prayerfully deliberate your commitment – whether it is a new commitment or a change to an existing commitment. Please take a few moments now to pray over that. If you'd like to take a little time to think about that this week you can do that, too.

Join me in praying for the continuing connection and alignment of Mountain View with the mountain view of God's plan – that God would let our plans serve His plan for the good of ever more people knowing Jesus as their Savior. In Jesus' name, Amen.