

Message for the Memorial Service of Suzanne Wehling

“The blessing of the Triune God” Numbers 6:24-27

June 10, 2026

Rev. Ed Weber

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, especially dear family of Suzanne...Dan, Christa, Renata and all spouses and grandchildren, our text for this day in which we remember our dear sister Suzanne’s eternal victory through her faith in Jesus Christ, is the blessing that she often heard and received throughout her earthly life from Numbers 6:22-27.

**“22 And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: 23 “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, ‘This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them: 24 “The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.” ’27 “So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them.”**

So far our text:

At all times in our lives, and especially at the times of sudden change...at the hearing that the body of our dearly departed loved one rests, God reminds us that He blesses us both now in this life and eternally. And His blessings calm our troubled spirits and give us much joy and peace in what He imparts to us – His gracious and abiding love.

The Lord speaks to His children of Israel in the Old Testament and to us, His spiritual Israel, children of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob through faith in the Messiah, Jesus. And He gives to us His way of pronouncing His three-fold blessings upon us.

Aaron and his sons, the Levitical priesthood spoke these blessings upon God’s people. Jesus, the Prophet, Priest and King outstretched His hands as He ascended into heaven and blessed His disciples, and pastors at the close of worship, follow God’s instructions and bless His children who have heard His word and now go forth under the mighty and gracious hand of the goodness, forgiveness and peace of the Triune God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The pastor makes the sign of the cross as he repeats these words, for it is

through Christ's work on the cross alone that this blessing is fulfilled and given to the believer.

And Suzanne, thanks be to God, is a believer and received this blessing often as she came to worship with us here at Immanuel. This Aaronic blessing is not just a pious wish, but God transmits His divine power upon us that He has rescued us from every distress, and curse of sin and its consequences, especially death itself.

After hearing this blessing, the believer can also make the sign of the cross upon his or her heart as a sign that I have received this blessing...it is mine by God's merciful hand.

**"The Lord bless you and keep you"** begins the blessing. Everything starts and originates from God alone. All glory be to God! He imparts His sure promise that He will bless you and keep you throughout the manifold changes in life, the tests, the attacks of Satan, the persecutions and especially at our final hour...the Christian, is in the loving and strong keeping of the Lord.

The Good Shepherd, Jesus, keeps watch over His sheep that He has brought back into His fold. Jesus kept watch over Suzanne throughout her life, in the many places that she served, in Massachusetts, Colorado, Brazil, her in the valley and the many Duty Stations that she and Dan lived at.

Psalm 121 comforts us with these words:

**"I will lift up my eyes to the hills—From whence comes my help?"**

**2 My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.**

**3 He will not allow your foot to be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.**

**4 Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.**

**5 The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade at your right hand.**

**6 The sun shall not strike you by day, Nor the moon by night.**

**7 The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; He shall preserve your soul.**

**8 The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in**

**From this time forth, and even forevermore.:**

The Lord kept Suzanne close to Him through the hearing of His Word. And this beautiful Word of God we also heard earlier from Romans 8 how nothing can separate us from our Keeper!

**33 Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."**

**37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.**

**38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

So is the work of the love of the Father keeping us in Him, keeping us so close to Him that nothing can separate us from Him.

And this is all possible only because of the blessings the Father gives us through Christ Jesus our Lord. So we hear in the second blessing the work of Jesus.

**"The Lord make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you;"**

Jesus, the Sun of righteousness, shines His gracious work of justifying the sinner upon us in this blessing. He shone His forgiveness upon Suzanne. Instead of His righteous anger because of our sins, because of Suzanne's sins, He shines His gracious face of forgiveness. For Jesus paid for all our sins on the cross, for all of Suzanne's sins.

There is no condemnation in Christ. Instead, God continually lifts up His gracious countenance upon the believer, upon Suzanne through the Lord, the Holy Spirit.

**26 The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace."**

The Lord, the Holy Spirit imparts all these blessings through the hearing of His Word and most especially through the sacraments that God instituted for us, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. His gracious face is continually lifted over us for He has claimed the believer, claimed Suzanne as His own in Baptism -in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. And the Holy Spirit imparts peace through Holy Baptism.... **"So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."** and through the Lord's Supper our sins are forgiven. Yes, through this washing of regeneration and the receiving of Jesus very body and blood in the Lord's Supper we have peace!

Peace. Jesus imparted peace, resurrection peace...be with you as He outstretched His arms to His disciples on Easter. And this Easter peace He gives to us in this blessing that we are united in His resurrection and so will rise again.

Yes, the Sun of righteousness, Jesus, shines in heaven. There is no need of Sun for He shines for all believers forever, shines for Suzanne who was faithful until death and received the crown of life. So Revelation 22 describes the glory of heaven which all believers in Christ, including our dearly departed sister, Suzanne, enjoys now and forever!

**“3 And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. 4 They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. 5 There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.”**

Yes, this is the confidence that Job spoke of in the midst of his tribulations.

**“25 For I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; 26 And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God, 27 Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!”**

This is our confidence... we who are on this side of heaven. Receive the Triune God's blessings to keep you ever strong in our faith in Jesus until we see our gracious and loving God face to face and spend eternity with Him and all believers...all our loved ones in Christ... our sister Suzanne.

What a gracious God we have and know. So we shall receive His three-fold blessing once again at the close of this worship service and then sing these beautiful words in our closing hymn.

*Hold Thou Thy cross before my closing eyes; Shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies. Heav'n's morning breaks, and earth's vain shadows flee; In life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.*

Amen.

**And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” Amen. (Philippians 4:7)**