

MAKING FRIENDS WITH DEATH

October 26, 2025

Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



Romans 8:35-39

³⁵Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶As it is written,

'For your sake, we are being killed all day long;

We are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage(s) slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase, or image stands out to you?
2. This famous passage from Romans is often read at funerals and memorial services. Why do you think that is so?
3. The "Making Friends" sermon series is driven by the idea of honestly facing and wisely learning from the reality of those things we cannot avoid (even if we might prefer to).
 - a. How comfortable are you talking about death with loved ones?
 - b. What important or memorable conversations, if any, have you had with a friend or loved one facing death?
4. The current holiday and celebrations of Halloween grew out of various religious and cultural traditions (see the info and link below).
 - a. What do you know or find interesting about the history of Halloween, especially its relationship to death?

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 southelkhornccc.org

- b. How did you practice Halloween as a child?
 - c. How has your observance of Halloween changed, if at all?
- 5. South Elkhorn observes “All Saints Sunday” (first Sunday of November) when the worshipping community remembers those in the church family who have died since All Saints in the prior year. In addition, worshipers are invited to remember and make a prayerful space to honor their own loved ones who have died (be it recently or long ago). Why might these spiritual practices of acknowledging and honoring deceased people be important, personally or collectively?
- 6. Have you prepared for or had conversations with loved ones about your own death? Why and how did you go about that? What was that experience like?

You can find resources on funeral and estate planning using the link/QR code below.

History of Halloween [history.com](https://www.history.com)

- Halloween’s origins date back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain (Nov 1, Celtic New Year)
- Celts believed that on the night before the new year, the boundary

between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred.

- By the 9th century, the influence of Christianity had spread into Celtic lands, where it gradually blended with and supplanted older Celtic rites.
- In the year 1000, the church made November 2 All Souls’ Day, a day to honor the dead. It’s widely believed today that the Church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival of the dead with a related, church-sanctioned holiday.
- The All Saints’ Day celebration was also called All-hallows or All-hallowmas (from Middle English Alholowmesse, meaning All Saints’ Day)
- The night before it, the traditional night of Samhain in the Celtic religion, began to be called All-Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

South Elkhorn Funeral & Estate Planning Document

Use [this link](#) or scan the QR code with your mobile device.



Listen Online

Sermon audio available by podcast. Search for *South Elkhorn Christian Church Podcast*.