



First Church Tucson Weekly Digest

Well-ness

By Rev. Paul Cho on September 14th, 2020

I presume you are familiar with the word wellness. Merriam-Webster defines it as “*the quality or state of being in good health especially as an actively sought goal.*” Given the state of our world, wellness is something we desire in all aspects of our lives ranging from physical to spiritual. While I cannot begin to account for all of these areas, I want to offer a thought on spiritual wellness.

Perhaps you will find it intriguing that the English word “well” appears in our scriptures over 400 times (449 in the New Revised Standard Version). However, the English word has such a variety of meanings, not all mean the same. Yet, here, I want to share a few that I find helpful for us in our quest for wellness. Hence, the title *well-ness*.

First stop, Matthew 3:17. Here we find a voice from heaven that spoke these words as Jesus was baptized. “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am *well* pleased.” It is easy to conclude that this was simply because Jesus was deserving of high praise. Yet, the truth behind these words is that God is well pleased with *all of us*, just as we already are. God loved us before we ever chose to love God back. As Paul eloquently states in Romans 5:8, “But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us.” Our spiritual well-ness comes from recognizing God’s love for us.

So, take a moment, look into a mirror or close your eyes, speak these words deep into your soul as if God is speaking to you. “*You are my child, my beloved, with you I am well pleased.*”

Second stop, Mark 10:52. The passage is about a blind man’s encounter with Jesus. What is amazing in this story is Jesus’ response. “Go; your faith has made you *well*.” On the one hand, it is easy to recognize the power of Jesus that gave the blind man his sight. On the other hand, we should pay more attention to the fact that a man who had never seen Jesus, never witnessed a miracle, had such a faith. Our well-ness comes from our faith in Christ, even if we have never experienced it as such before.

Last stop, John 4:11. This incident of the Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well is arguable not the *well* we are speaking of. But there is a correlation. In the way people needed to visit the well on a regular basis to retrieve water, we must also be disciplined to drink from the wellspring lest we become spiritually dehydrated. V.14 “*The water that I will give will become in them a well of water springing up to eternal life.*” Our well-ness comes from our

intentional moments with God's words. If you can recognize that even these 3 passages I just shared have done some good in bringing you spiritual wellness, I encourage you to read on your own time.

If reading the bible is difficult to do, then join a weekday ministry on ZOOM and share that time with one another. On that note, here is a word about the Thursday Progressive Christianity Book Study from Pastor Raven Gaston.

Progressive Christianity Book Study

By Rev. Raven Gaston

A new Progressive Christianity Book Study begins on September 24. Join us as we continue to deepen our understanding of Christ. The author, Richard Rohr, "challenges us to search beneath the surface of our faith and see what is sacred in everyone and everything" - words of Melinda Gates.

We have finished Rohr's book "The Universal Christ" and are looking forward to his 2016 book, "The Divine Dance". It is meaningful and enriching to share and discuss spiritual writings together. This study is open to all, though with our Covid-19 restrictions we are still meeting online, at Zoom - each Thursday afternoon at 2:00. *Check below for the links.*

"Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better." - Maya Angelou

"There is no form of protest against racism that is acceptable to racists." - Dr. Bernice King (Daughter of Martin Luther King Jr.)

Visit www.dsc-race.com for more additional anti-racism resources.

First Church Tucson is joining the Desert Southwest Conference's 21 Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge beginning October 1, 2020.

If you want to support anti-racism ministries through reflection, action, courageous dialogue, and/or engagement, contact Pastor Paul at pastor@firstchurchtucson.org.

THIS WEEK'S
ANNOUNCEMENTS & GATHERINGS

Recruiting Weekly Digest Contributors

Have you come across an inspiring story? Perhaps you were able to capture a fascinating shot. We invite you to submit a story, a photo, or anything you feel would be in the best interest of our church. We will work to add them into our Weekly Digest. Submit your story or picture at <https://bit.ly/fumcsubmit>

Women on a Spiritual Quest

Meet with WSQ for book studies and the best kind of Methodist small group accountability.

Mon @ 4:30PM.

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/92059519248?pwd=ZmN4dTFCCcVVCVjINM3FHUHVemNFdz09>

ZID: 920 5951 9248

PW: 6226481

Exploring Biblical Wisdom

Gather for group Lectio Divina as we seek spiritual formation through scripture reading, reflecting, and sharing the Spirit that lives in each of us. **Tues @ 11AM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/98179862680?pwd=ck15OU5KbWUyY0NwOUNxbzJkOUVBUT09>

ZID: 981 7986 2680

PW: 6226481

Music Workshop - World Music Tour

Join Music Ministry Director Lorena Suarez as she tours the world music scene. This week, Spanish music! **Wed @ 5:30PM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/92978304567?pwd=Mmo4UWZtc012TUxzVS9VYXlpVU1iZz09>

ZID: 929 7830 4567

PW: 6226481

Progressive Christianity Book Study

Explore the richness of progressive Christian thought through literature. **Thurs @ 2PM.**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/98015738087?pwd=eGFpVWRCUnZraWxUU1d0anRiU2pFQT09>

ZID: 980 1573 8087

PW: 6226481

Sunday Morning Live!

Join us live on Sunday mornings on Facebook livestream. **Sun @ 10AM**

Visit fb.com/firstchurchtucson/live

Starting in October, Sunday Morning Live! will stream on Youtube.

Visit <https://bit.ly/fumcYouTube> and subscribe to the channel. (Address is case-sensitive)

Sunday Morning Fellowship

Join us on Zoom for fellowship immediately following the live stream. **Sun @ 10:30AM**

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/97274927766?pwd=bVlqNmZjTk84bHFHd0JRS0U5R0c4Zz09>

ZID: 972 7492 7766

PW: 6226481

Korean Language Ministry

한국어 사역 온라인모임을 소개합니다. 주일 오전 1130 폐북 실시간 방송이 있습니다.

fb.com/tucsonkoreanchurch/live

방송 직후 Zoom을 통해 교제의 시간에 초대합니다.

<https://dscumc.zoom.us/j/99861120822?pwd=VWlyZ3FrM2ZrNHhrVIRINHc1NTBLQT09>

ZID: 998 6112 0822

PW: 6226481

또한, 금 오후 7시에 (기존 토요일 새벽 기도회 대신) 온라인 모임을 위에 표시된 Zoom 가상 공간에서 갖고, 일요일 오후 1시에는 한어권 청년들의 모임이 따로 있습니다.

Support the Ministries at First Church Tucson

Now is the time to give courageously to ministries that matter to you.

Visit this [link](#) or go to www.bit.ly/givetofumc to set up online donation.

You may also send gifts via Paypal to recipient address: finance@firstchurchtucson.org

And as always, you can mail in checks to the church office. Alternatively, have your IRA advisor automatically make payments from your IRA to the FUMC checking account.

COVID-19 Survey at First Church Tucson

Thank you for participating in the survey!

THIS WEEK'S BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Lucinda Brunenkant (Sept 14)
Elizabeth Rollings-Friman (Sept 15)
Jeanne Bensema (Sept 20)

[If we have missed your birthday or anniversary, please let us know so we can update our records!]

SONG FOR **THOUGHT** "Give Thanks" **Henry Smith**

by **Lorena Suarez**

Director of Music Ministries on September 12, 2020

Henry Smith was born in Crossnore, North Carolina in 1952. He has written around 300 songs but only one has been published: *Give Thanks*.

This song was composed in Williamsburg, Virginia in 1978. But it was in 1986, when Smith heard his own song in a cassette tape which read "author unknown", that he called the music company that recorded it (Integrity Music) and told them about his authorship of it. The company said that they have tried to find the writer of the song and it has not been possible. Right after that, Smith and the company wrote an agreement of distribution of the piece, and since then the song has been recorded more than 50 times. Enjoy!

Lyrics:

Give thanks with a grateful heart;
Give thanks to the Holy One.
Give thanks because He's given
Jesus Christ, His Son."

And now let the weak say, "I am strong!"
Let the poor say, "I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done for us."
Give thanks!

Suggested recording:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k9uZI4w4xgM>

LECTIO DIVINA PRAYER GUIDE

for Individuals and Families

CENTERING - *Practice Square Breathing*

- Inhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds,
- Exhale for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds.
- Repeat as necessary.

SONG OF PRAISE

Select a song of your choice, or
Refer to this week's Song for Thought

OPENING PRAYER - *Psalm 19:14*

Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Amen.

READING

Matthew 18:21-35

REFLECTING

Take a minute or two in silence.
Allow your thoughts to rest on a word, a phrase, a memory from this passage.
Journal or share your thoughts from this moment of meditation on the passage.

RESPONDING

Respond to the reflection through the guidance from the Holy Spirit.

MINUTE MEMOIR - by Paul Cho

Forgiveness is one the highest virtues of a Christian, especially when you consider it as an act of agape (selfless) love. This does not make it any easier for us to do. But Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant sheds light to our self assumed position of authority when it comes to offering forgiveness.

While we like to think of ourselves in the position of power, to forgive another or not, Jesus reminds us, we are also recipients of mercy. When we are like Peter, eager to do only what is necessary, Jesus reminds us of the unfathomable mercy we have received.

So, before we hang our vengeful fists at our wrongdoers, holding on to perceived power by *not* letting them go, may we remember our place is not on the throne of judgment, but at the feet of mercy. And may we remember that sharing love, sharing mercy is where our true source of strength lies.

RESTING

Dwell in your reflection and response.
Take time to offer God praise and glory.
Repent and seek forgiveness.
Offer joys and the concerns, adding in your personal prayers.
Lastly, offer a thanksgiving for God's grace and mercy.

CLOSING PRAYER *Wesley Covenant Service Prayer*

I am no longer my own, but yours.
Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will;
put me to doing, put me to suffering;
let me be employed for you, or laid aside for you,
exalted for you, or brought low for you;
let me be full,
let me be empty,
let me have all things,
let me have nothing:
I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things
to your pleasure and disposal.
And now, glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
you are mine and I am yours. So be it.
And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.



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