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Happy second week of August, friends! I pray that you are well, and that the love and grace of God is wonderfully present in your life right now.

I had a conversation with a good friend and colleague the other day that was on my mind this morning as I spent my time in prayer. I was inspired to read again the many things the Bible – especially Proverbs – says about the power of words:

Proverbs 11:17

“Your own soul is nourished when you are kind, but you destroy yourself when you are cruel.”

Proverbs 15: 1

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but hard words stir up anger.”

Proverbs 15:4

“Gentle words bring life and health;
a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit.”

Proverbs 16:24

“Kind words are like honey—sweet to the soul
and healthy for the body.”

Proverbs 18:4

“A person’s words can be life-giving water; words of true wisdom are as refreshing as a bubbling brook.”

Proverbs 25:18

“Telling lies about others is as harmful as hitting them with an ax,
wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow.”

Words are powerful, friends. They can build up, create, heal, and bring life and hope. They can also destroy, and do terrible harm. That whole “sticks and stones” thing is not true at all.

I’ve been thinking about this as I observe and participate in conversations about the different matters facing our church and our country. It has become so easy to accept untrue things as fact, to dismiss factual information as lies, to slander people or groups we don’t know or don’t like, to use unkind and even cruel language with each other. It can happen in families, too, and neighborhoods, and marriages, when life brings us something stressful or scary or painful and we lash out at each other in response. And it does so much terrible harm, to relationships and to our own spirits.

But we need not be discouraged because praise God, we are given the keys to life, and hope, and peace in Jesus Christ. Jesus offers us the miraculous ability to know the truth, and to speak it in love...to resist the temptation to lash out in anger or spread gossip, and instead to speak with wisdom and love even for those who lash out at us. And when we join Jesus in this, when we seek first the Kingdom in everything we do, say, and even think (Matthew 6:33), then we find that our love for God and one another grows by leaps and bounds. We find hope, peace of mind and heart, and even joy, because Jesus’ words in Luke 17

“Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.”

Revelation 22:1-2

become true: the Kingdom of God is within and among us.

It takes a whole lot of practice, this discipline of letting God rule our conversations and even our thinking. But it is so rewarding! That’s my prayer for us this week, that we practice this discipline of care in our language with one another and with ourselves. I pray that every word we use this week is filled with both truth and love, and that the Kingdom built within and among us might become a blessing to everyone we meet.

In the great name of Jesus Christ.

Pastor Dawn

PS. Church council meeting after worship on Sunday! August 9 at 10:30am. We will meet both in person and via zoom. Watch your email for the Zoom link :-)

Worship at Epworth and at Home!

This week in worship we continue with our worship series about hope. This time, we are in the weird and wonderful book of Revelation, where we discover how it all ends. We won’t have time to go into too much depth and detail, because good Lord there is so much. But the power of God is in every word. And our hope in it is this (spoiler alert): love wins.



We have suspended our 11:00am service for now, because those who requested it found that they weren’t able to attend just yet. When you are ready, we will be very glad to re-start it! So, we will meet together at 9:00am in the sanctuary and in the parking lot (for those who prefer to stay in their cars). We will broadcast as always on Facebook Live and on the radio at AM 980. And wherever we are, we will expect God in the Holy Spirit to meet us there.

Weekly and Quarterly Prayer Services

Beginning next week, August 14, Pastor Dawn will be leading a vespers service of Lectio Divina each Friday evening at 7:00pm on Facebook Live. Lectio Divina, if you’re unfamiliar with it, is a Latin phrase that means “divine reading”, and the service is an ancient way of praying with the scriptures. You are invited to have a Bible with you if you’d like, and a notebook or journal as well, to write down your private thoughts and prayers. For those who don’t have Facebook, the service will be uploaded to YouTube afterward for you to use and pray with later Friday evening, or any time that works best for you.

Each quarter, Pastor Dawn will lead an in-person prayer and healing service in the Epworth sanctuary, with masks and distancing requirements observed in order to love one another by caring for each other’s health and wellbeing. That service will also be broadcast on Facebook Live, for the sake of those who can’t join in person. The next prayer and healing service will take place on Wednesday, October 28 at 7:00pm. ♥

News and Fun Stuff

Being the Church

Your church has ALWAYS been about “being the church.” So even when we had to close our building, our ministries with the poor and hungry never stopped. Our care for each other through prayer, phone calls, and notes in the mail never stopped. Our desire to share the Gospel never stopped.

Last week, Fallon Daily Bread served over 150 fresh to-go meals; last month, over 800. Volunteers led by Margaret Knox have cleaned up and organized our Community Food Pantry and Golden Threads clothing ministry, and continue to see busy Mondays and Tuesdays serving folks in need with food, clothing, shower and laundry services, and dignity. We are blessed to be a partner with New Frontier and the Pennington Life Center to distribute fresh produce and dairy to families in need every Tuesday through the USDA “Farmers to Families” grant program.

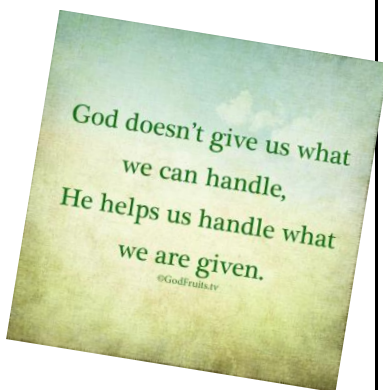
In worship these past few weeks, we have seen familiar faces and welcomed visitors at each service who found us through our radio and online ministries. Pastor Dawn has organized a growing group of local pastors to write a column for the Fallon Post, so that we can reach out to the unchurched and those who need a word of faithful encouragement in this strange and difficult time. And God is even working through us in developing relationships with our neighbors! All of this and more is only possible because of YOU: you make it possible by your prayers, your presence, your gifts, your service, and your witness. God is good, ALL THE TIME. Even during Covid-19. 😊

A Study and Support Group for Those Who are Grieving

Pastor Dawn and Rev. Trudy Erquiaga of Trinity Episcopal Church are organizing a time of study, prayer, and support for any who are grieving. If you would like to attend, or if you know someone who would, please call Pastor Dawn at 423-4714. We anticipate that the group will meet on Tuesdays, either daytime or evening, but we will talk together with those who would like to attend and set a time that works best for all of us.

The 172nd Session of the California-Nevada Annual Conference

Annual Conference this year will be 100% online! Along with Pastor Dawn, your voting representatives this year are Margaret Knox, Barbara McGarity, and Kenny Coval. Your alternates are Doug Coval and Kathy Fraker. The Conference, though, is open to everyone to observe and share their thoughts and opinions about the issues before us. Annual Conference takes place September 17-20; stay tuned for information about how to join electronically in this important, prayerful work. ♥



August Birthdays!

- Sophia Jeffs, 8/2
Madison Tiede, 8/2
Molly Eberhart, 8/4
Jim Foster, 8/4
♥ Robert McCallum, 8/5
Michael Eberhart, 8/6
Brody Hughes, 8/7
John Miller, 8/8
Ann Rapp, 8/10
Steve Russell, 8/10
Sylvia Fausey, 8/12
Barbie Hertz, 8/12
♥ Charles Burgess, 8/13
Donna Strickland, 8/19
Tim Bennett, 8/20
Aydan Butcher 8/20
Logan Butcher 8/20
Carol Roeder 8/26
Kay Knudtsen 8/29
Susan Hurd, 8/30
♥ Jerry Ivey, 8/31

Ayden and Logan turn 6 this month! Six!!!

♥ *Jerry Ivey, Bob McCallum and Charles Burgess (also known as Roddy) passed away in 2019. We love to think of them in paradise, resting beside cool waters with their Savior, where all is peace, joy, and love.*

What Methodists are Doing: UMCOR Covid-19 Grants in Brazil Reach Isolated Communities

From an article by Christie R. House at www.umcmmission.org

Seven ministry partners across Brazil have received United Methodist Committee on Relief COVID-19 Sheltering in Love grants to extend their caring outreach deeper into their communities. In a coordinated effort, through the Life and Mission ministry of the national Methodist Church in Brazil, Methodist congregations accompany vulnerable people through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Transmission rates of COVID-19 are currently climbing in Brazil, and there is no unified government strategy to combat it. At the end of June, the country had 1.35 million confirmed cases and 57,658 deaths. The Rev. Joana D'Arc Meireles, the national secretary for the Life and Mission ministry, describes the climate in Brazil as “terrifying.”

“People are suffering,” Meireles explained in a [video interview](#) with Global Ministries’ general secretary, Thomas Kemper. “We have hunger and unemployment and many sick people right now, and not everyone has access to good health care.”

In the city of Teresina in Piauí, Northeast Brazil, Teresina Methodist Church has worked for several years to reach an underserved community in a place called Jerusalem. Raquel Gonçalves Da Silva Filgueira Rocha, a graduate student in psychology, leads the Social Action team at the church. Rocha describes Jerusalem as a dangerous place for outsiders. “Our outreach started by offering soup for people, many of whom are addicted to drugs. And then, someone from that community invited us to come in.” This was the beginning of Homes of Peace, a ministry focused on ways to improve the lives of children in Jerusalem by strengthening families. They started with a small group and the numbers grew large enough to begin a weekly program. An UMCOR grant will help the Teresina Methodists provide hygiene kits, COVID-19 prevention guidelines and basic food baskets. The church registered 40 families for the COVID-19 outreach, which they named “Project New Jerusalem Against COVID.”

Another project grant for Northeast Brazil, in Paraíba, serves a hidden community through the João Pessoa Methodist Church. The congregation is gathering volunteers to put together hygiene kits in partnership with a Brazilian LGBT association, to serve sex workers in the area. “We have been trying to help these women to keep their dignity, their health and hygiene in these times,” Meireles, noted.

In Piracicaba, São Paulo, the Methodist-founded Betel Social Assistance Association is a nursing home with 80 residents and 77 employees. It reports 86 cases of COVID-19 among residents and staff and eight deaths. An UMCOR grant will help to save lives by providing COVID-19 testing and strict adherence to new guidelines.

A grant for a project in Campina Grande, Paraíba, supports health professionals and their families as they take risks to contain the virus.

And there are many more. These ministries and more are funded by your Conference Tithe and by your special giving. If you feel inspired to give or participate in ministries like this, you can find more information at www.umcmmission.org. ♥