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Hello beloved!

It's week 3 of quarantine, and I pray that you are well. I know I am finding my time working from home to be a little bit less joyful, even though working while wearing comfy pants and slippers is still pretty great. I miss being able to go where I please, though, and greet people with hugs, and welcome people into the church building without reservation. It will be very, very good when all of this is over.

Some of you have shared with me feelings of creeping loneliness and frustration, and even fear for yourselves and those you love. These are real fears and justified worries. None of us has experienced anything like this before. It is normal to feel lonely and frustrated, and it is healthy to be afraid when there are so many unknowns, and so much real danger. You are not crazy. You are not wrong to be afraid. Fear is part of our God-given human creation, and – when it is a healthy thing, and not overtaking our lives – it leads us to make good decisions and take healthy precautions to keep ourselves and those around us safe.

Our hope in God, and the blessing of trusting in God, is that no matter what we are going through God will carry us through it. That even when we are surrounded by danger, God will prepare a table for us, will treat us with lavish affection, will provide us safe places to find peace and rest for our souls until the danger passes.

A friend of mine, Debi Flory, said that being cooped up at home like this feels like being grounded. And she said, maybe we can take this opportunity to become more grounded. To put both feet down, and feel the ground underneath them. To notice the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches around us. To breathe deeply and luxuriously; to breathe in permission to do what you can, and breathe out the frustrations with what you can't do. To leave everything else in the hands of God.

I love this passage from Ephesians, chapter 3. It is the first thing that comes to mind whenever I think of being "grounded", and it is my prayer for all of us. "For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

In God's unfailing love,

Pastor Dawn

News and Fun Stuff

Holy Week and Easter Worship

“Comfort Food” Love Feast, Maundy Thursday April 9 7:00pm on Facebook Live

Prepare a table with something you love to eat and drink, and a bowl of water and a towel, and hand sanitizer. At 7pm, join Pastor Dawn on Facebook Live for a special service remembering Jesus’ command to love one another.

Stations of the Cross, Good Friday April 10 at 3pm.

Join Pastor Dawn on Facebook Live at 3pm for beautiful music, prayer, and scripture readings from the Epworth sanctuary. The video will be available for you to watch at whatever time works best for you, on Epworth’s new YouTube channel.

Easter Sunday, April 12 at 9:00am.

Unfortunately, the Governor’s new stay-at-home directive means that we can’t have Drive-In Worship as we had hoped. But we will celebrate the Risen Christ! We will just do it in the same way we have been, at 9:30am on KVLV AM 980, and on Facebook Live. SO looking forward to celebrating when we worship again in person!

Practicing Patience

“Alaska is where I improved my meditation practice. I traveled to many isolated villages throughout the interior and around the Arctic Coast. Or I should say, I traveled weather permitting. And very often it did not permit. So I was left waiting. I have spent many hours sitting in small cabins learning the lessons of a sacred humility through the exercise of divine patience. I inhabited the Spirit’s sense of time: endless, calm, peaceful. If you find yourself pacing the floor, looking out the window, worrying about what will happen: stop and recognize that the weather has changed. Find a quiet corner and sit for a moment with me in the silence of the snow. Step over into the timeless presence of peace. Let patience find you while you are in a place of waiting.” ~ *Bishop Stephen Charleston, Native American elder, author, and former Bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Alaska*



Civilization

Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones.



April Birthdays!

Jim Hertz, 4/1

Elena Wolf, 4/2

Kyle Dugan, 4/4

♥ **David Clodius, 4/7**

Dana Endacott, 4/8

April Butcher, 4/9

Jake Coval, 4/9

Lexi Pidlypchak, 4/16

Joanne Brown, 4/21

Meghan Hockenberry, 4/24

Ashlee McGarity, 4/24

Nadine Miller, 4/24

Michele Berney, 4/27

Deanna Brown, 4/49

Wilva Blue, 4/30

♥ *David Clodius passed away on March 8 this year, after a short illness.*

He has lived with his sisters Diane and Carol in California for years, but was a longtime member of Epworth. We remember him for his optimistic, outgoing nature and his very silly jokes.

**Give thanks to
the Lord,
for he is good;
his mercy
endures forever.**

~Psalm 118:1

But no. Mead said that the first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal.

A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound up the wound, has carried the person to safety and has tended the person through recovery. Helping someone else through difficulty is where civilization starts, Mead said."

We are at our best when we serve others. Be civilized. ~ Ira Byock via Facebook

Hope and Humor 😊



Sidewalk in New Jersey
March 27



Kids Window Art for the
Brooklyn Rainbow
Project, March 18
"After every storm there
is a rainbow."



American Baptist Church in
Rhode Island, March 24

United Methodist Women

The April retreat at Epworth is of course postponed, but UMW is still active around the world! Check out their website for info about this amazing organization. www.unitedmethodistwomen.org

And many spread
their cloaks on
the road, and
others spread
leafy branches
that they had cut
from the fields.
And those who
went before and
those who
followed were
shouting,
“Hosanna!
Blessed is he who
comes in the
name of the Lord!

~Mark 11:8-9

FDB & Epworth Community Food Pantry

We are so glad to be able to continue to serve our community, even in this time of quarantine! We just have to do it differently now. The lines are just as long for our food pantry, if not a bit longer, and we are seeing more families with kids. Our dedicated volunteers have lots of hand sanitizer on hand, and guide people through the pantry one at a time, while everyone else waits outside. Fallon Daily Bread serves 3 times per week now at the request of the County, with far fewer volunteers who cook and clean and package the meals for distribution outside. We have had calls from Pennington Life Center and Banner Hospital about FDB, too, so that they can pass along information to the folks they know who might need some extra help. We are so blessed to have so many members of our church and our community who continue to step up and provide supplies and give their time!

By the way! Our HeLP ministry could use donations of small travel-sized toothpaste and toothbrushes, and travel sized deodorants. We are completely out!

Kitchen Table Worship

Praying with our kids is one of the most important things we can ever do. For Easter this year, you might like to use something like this to pray with them and teach them about the meaning of Easter, at the same time!

The Jelly Bean Prayer

Red is for the love He gave,
Green is for the grass He made,
Orange is for Heaven so bright,
Yellow is for God's perfect light,
Black is for the place He laid,
White is for the grace He gave,
Purple is for His hour of sorrow,
Pink is for our new tomorrow!
A bag full of jelly beans
So colorful and sweet
Is a prayer, is a promise
Is a special treat!

