

Church family and friends,

Greetings! I am praying that during this holiday season God will bless each of us with the presence of his Holy Spirit. I am also praying that during this holiday season our souls would be healed.

I believe the Christ child comes with the purpose of healing each and every one of our souls. And I believe that healing happens when we share an embrace with the new born baby. The Christmas story is not just about observing the baby wrapped in cloths lying in the manger. The Christmas story is about sharing an embrace with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Matt Laney (Pastor of Virginia Highland Church UCC in Atlanta, GA) says; “There is almost no leprosy today, but we know a lot about treating people as unclean, untouchable, cursed and contagious.” Laney goes on to talk about the many things that keep us separated from one another. We don’t dare embrace someone who is gay. We don’t want to get too close to anyone who has HIV/AIDS/COVID. We certainly don’t want to spend any real time with someone who is a fan of Trump/Biden. We don’t want to be too friendly with anyone who dislikes gun/anyone who has too many guns.

Laney says; “Leprosy is rare but treating people as lepers is all too common. Not for Jesus. Jesus wasn’t good at social distancing, whether people were diseased in body or marginalized for other reasons. Jesus was drawn to them.”

If we are going to experience Christmas and all its potential, we are going to have to embrace God. If we are going to experience life and all its potential, we are going to have to embrace our neighbor. That is life at its best.

Merry Christmas to all!

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Bill