

Grace Devotion

“Be the Church” Series Week 4
Forgive Often!

Week of July 21, 2024

Pastor Fred Young

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Matthew 6:9-15

⁹“Pray then in this way: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. ¹⁰Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹Give us this day our daily bread. ¹²And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. ¹³And do not bring us to the time of trial but rescue us from the evil one. ¹⁴For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; ¹⁵but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

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During my first year of ordained ministry, I was serving as the Associate Pastor of Christ Church UCC in Elizabethtown, Lancaster County, PA. I vividly recall the day of the West Nickel Mines Amish School shooting in Nickel Mines, Pennsylvania. The world watched as a 37-year-old gunman stormed the school and fatally shot five female students and wounded five more before turning his gun on himself and dying by suicide. The staff gathered around the TV in the church library watching the events of that morning unfold. Horrified does not come close to the feelings we shared. Nickel Mines would never be the same.

On the year anniversary of the shooting, the pastor appeared in my office and said, *“We have to prepare to be interviewed by Channel 27 News who are on their way here for their Noon Program!”* I responded, *“What do they want to talk to us about?”* *“The Nickel Mine Shooting,”* she explained. We had about 15 minutes to come up with something intelligent yet theological to share on camera. The first thing that popped into our minds, **forgiveness!**

No matter the generation, culture has always struggled with forgiving. The Nickel Mines tragedy reminded our region of Pennsylvania about the value of forgiveness.

The Amish Community consoled the shooter's family as they comforted each other. Some even attended the gunman's funeral in support of those he left behind. Since the tragedy, people around the world have been inspired by the way the Amish expressed forgiveness toward the killer and his family. But while their acts of forgiveness were inspiring, they also caused a misperception that the Amish had quickly gotten over the tragedy.

Jesus spoke about loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. Although Love is the greatest commandment, when Christ taught us first disciples to pray, he spoke of forgiveness and not love. Such love is not possible without forgiveness of self and others. What is it that weighs on your heart today? Can you find a way to let go and let the power of forgiveness wash you clean?

PRAYER: God, help us to forgive self and others as often and freely as you unconditionally forgive each one of us. Amen.

Blessings! Pastor Fred



July 21, 2024

Summer Series "BE THE CHURCH" week 4

Welcome/Announcements
Westminster Chimes & Prelude

"Sweet Hour of Prayer" Koury

**Song: "Grace Wins" ~Matthew West

** Call to Worship

Lector: We are called,

Congregation: to Be the Church.

Lector: When we make mistakes,

Congregation: please help us to forgive ourselves.

Lector: When others make mistakes,

Congregation: please help us to forgive them.

Lector: When we are called to forgive someone who has sinned against us,

Congregation: remind us to forgive not seven times, but seventy times seven times.

** Opening Prayer: (pray silently or aloud)

Forgiving God, we know that forgiveness is a gift You freely and often give to us. We also know that forgiving others and ourselves can be one of the hardest things for us to do. Help us to remember to forgive often, as your Son has taught us. Amen.

** Sharing the Peace of Christ

** Hymn: "Just as I Am"

#342

Joys and Concerns

Praying for Others

Lord's Prayer

Prayer of Confession/Assurance of Grace

Thank you for sharing your tithes and offerings

** Doxology

#625

** Prayer of Dedication

**New Creed*

Hymn: "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

#43

Scripture Readings:

Matthew 6:1-21

Time for the Young at Heart

Message: "Forgive Often"

**Song: "This Is Amazing Grace" ~Matt Maher

** Final Blessing

Please remain standing to sing "A Choral Benediction"

Postlude

*On the screen ** Please stand, if you are able.

Announcements

Congratulations to our “Be the Church” Magnet Winners:

~Linda B, Martha C, and Rick B.

Upcoming Events

“Be the Church” Week #5—Reject Racism

August 11th: Hymn Sing at St. Matthews at 4pm

August 25th: Church picnic

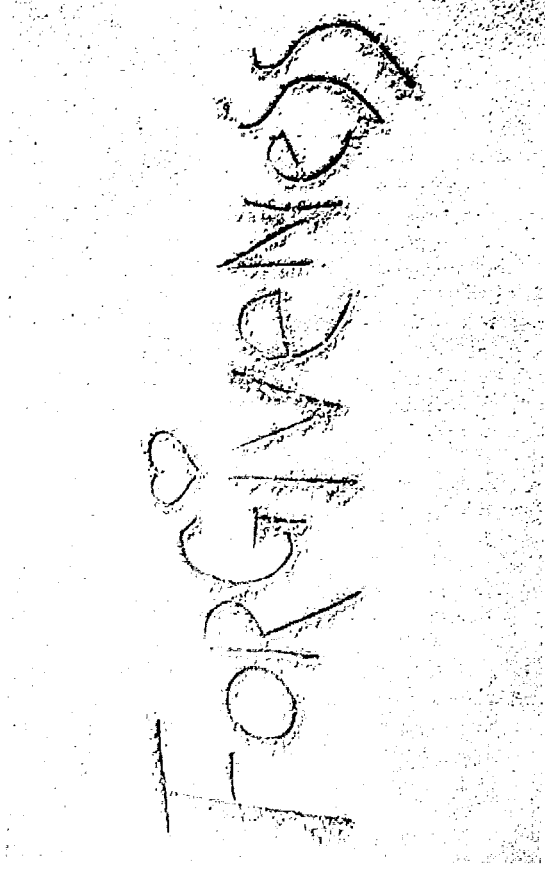
September 7th (Rain Date Sept 14th): Car Show

Volunteer Opportunities—in Gathering Place

- Volunteer counters after church
- Lectors
- Snack providers

Upcoming Meetings

- Worship and Music: July 22nd @5pm
- Pastoral Relation meeting: July 24th @6pm
- If you want to buy a car magnet, you can purchase one here:
<https://www.uccresources.com/products/be-the-church-rainbow-magnet?variant=14136379844>



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J M Y D O T H E A V E N S F P Z
Y J H V H P R A I S E S K D Z D
M S M H T H M L P A L M V H J A
Q G K S X V G V K V O W O D R V
C J M A S W V L A K L O V U B I
O E S T A B L I S H E D I A T D
V J G E N E R A T I O N S N G H
E F A I T H F U L N E S S Y S N
N H F X D X D W O V W O S T T E
A O W Q L C D L L D V V E H E Y
N L C P H O J P R L L O R G A C
T Y X K J M V E B I X L V I D Q
P K I D G B U E W U I N A M F Z
C Y I B S W O R N B X H N G A M
A N O I N T E D H Q Z B T X S U
X P G O P D E S C E N D A N T S

Faithfulness
Steadfast
Heavens
Praise
David

Generations
Anointed
Covenant
Mighty

Established
Descendants
Servant
Mouth

Build
Love
Holy
Sworn



I will sing
of the mercies of the Lord
forever;
With my mouth will
I make known
Your faithfulness to all
generations.
Psalm 89:1

Unscramble the following words found in Psalm 89

1. AINNOEDT _____
2. UBIDL _____
3. CEVONTNA _____
4. ADVDI _____
5. SCSEDNDETAN _____
6. TSBLHAIDESE _____
7. FSFLUNIHTASE _____
8. RONAETESING _____
9. HEESAVN _____
10. OYLH _____
11. OEVL _____
12. TIHMYG _____
13. OMHTU _____
14. RSPESAI _____
15. VNRTASE _____
16. DATSFTSAE _____
17. OWNSR _____