

Note from Pastor Steve

I love you and miss you. These words have been in my heart for weeks now. I miss seeing your faces. I miss your smiles. I miss hearing your voices and knowing that we are together praising God.

When we lived in Wisconsin it was not abnormal to have large snow storms that would make it hard to work or go to school. You would go out when you needed too, but you would stay home. At first you would have fun in the snow and being home with the children, but as the days would go on you would start to dream of the spring that is to come. A time where we can be out of the house. This week it has felt we are beginning to move collectively to wanting all this to be over. We want the snow/isolation to be over and get back to normal. However, the end just as in winter sometimes alludes us.

One of the things that becomes really important when you live in the snow is to not let it control your heart. Jesus in Matthew 23 speaks of Seven Woes to the Pharisees for their hypocrites that centered around focusing on the wrong thing. They lived their life focused on what is going on outside that they miss the chance to get right what is on the inside. We can not go outside and visit with each other very much right now. But we can spend time working on cleaning out the inside and realizing that when the spring or our isolation comes to an end. We will have already done our spring cleaning so that we can go out and Worship God together.

“First clean the inside of the cup and dish,

and then the outside also will be clean.” - Matthew 23:26

Prayer Update from the Church Body.

Karen Richardson is asking for prayer for her friend Jamie. He was advised that he has cancer after just going through surgery to remove his tonsils and base of his tongue. They found cancer in his lungs and colon. He is in the ICU and can not have visitors at this time due to Covid-19. Pray for this man.

Barry Adams brothers are both in need of prayer. Kenneth has been dealing with MS for many years and has contracted Covid-19 in the nursing facility that is taking care of him. James his other brother had his leg amputated a few weeks ago and has been in out of the hospital over it. Please be in prayer for them.

Please continue to be in prayer for Marlene and Jerry. Jerry is still having chemo treatments and they just celebrated their 50 wedding anniversary. Pray for God’s healing and touch on this great couple.

Prayer List

- Joyce Sear’s Family
- Carolyn Norwood
- Barry’s Brothers
- David Myers (Cancer)
- Judy Pollard (Health)
- The Clarks (Health)
- Sally Overton (Heart Surgery)
- Judy Pollard (Family’s Health)
- Jackie Burke’s Father
- John Fletcher (Health)
- Coronavirus Crisis
- Cindy Koontz’s Son (Andy)
- Cecil Dale
- Wilma Stephens
- Karen Richardson (Jamie)

Giving to the Church

Way to Give

1. Online Giving through Website.
2. Mail.
3. Drop them off at the church building.

Devotional Note— Luke 23:46

Of the seven things Jesus said from the cross, the one I most need today is: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” It reminds me that there is a big difference between a life that is taken and a life that is given.

In another place, Jesus said: “No one takes my life from me - I lay it down.” The cross was not a tragic ending to a promising life or a disappointing failure of mission. Quite the opposite. It was the fulfillment of God’s rescue plan. Said another way, Jesus’ sacrifice was not imposed upon him - he willingly embraced it for us.

Frederick Buechner says: “To sacrifice something is to make it holy by giving it away for love.” Even if we think something is being taken from us we can make it holy by doing it for love. We can make it holy by surrendering it to God.

In the surreal experience of the coronavirus, as days pile into weeks, we can feel as if something is being taken from us. This makes us angry and afraid. But, like Jesus, we have a choice to make. We can play the victim and say something is being taken from us. Or we can surrender our plans and purposes to God. We can lay down our lives and give them up for love, so that He can make them holy.

This takes some trust on our part. But the payoff is absolute peace to know that we are not random accidents or tragic failures. Things don’t just happen to us if we belong to God. Our days are in His hands and our lives can glorify our Heavenly Father.

The coronavirus doesn’t get to dictate the purpose and meaning of our lives. No one or nothing can take them from us - we can willingly lay them down into God’s hands.

It’s comforting to know the coronavirus is temporary - but our Father’s plans are eternal.

“Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”

A Story from Isolation

In 1832, French engineer Ferdinand Marie Lesseps was traveling in the Mediterranean when one of the passengers became sick and the ship was quarantined. Lesseps was an active man, so the confinement was terribly frustrating for him.

The many long hours aboard that isolated vessel, however, gave him time to read the memoirs of Charles le Pere, a man who had studied the feasibility of building a canal from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean.

That volume prompted Lesseps to devise in his own mind a detailed plan for the construction of the Suez Canal. When it was finally built under his leadership some 30 years later, it brought invaluable service to the world.

That quarantine had proven to be immensely profitable.

This time can be viewed as a gift or an curse. Always wanted to read the whole Bible? Is there a book that has been sitting on your shelf you have always wanted to read? Is there a hobby that you always wanted to do? Does your honey do list have things on it? This time can be a gift if we let it.