



A Lighthouse of HOPE...reaching, caring, teaching & sharing; united to reflect God's Love to ALL.

Winchester United Methodist Church

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Dear Sisters and Brothers In Christ,

Good morning and greetings to each of you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I hope this letter finds you all staying well, and that you and your family are being sustained each day in the Presence and Peace of our Lord and Savior.

Thought For The Day

When you read this letter, the reality has probably dawned on you that Summer 2021 is over, and the Autumn Season is here, having officially arrived just a few days ago. Autumn in Illinois Farm Country, as you very well know, is “harvest season”. Jesus used the harvest theme on quite a few, occasions, as he preached and taught in the rural Galilee area. *“Unless a grain of wheat dies, it remains just that, a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.”* This is your basic, AG 055 Level analogy: the seed, when planted and cultivated, “dies” and grows into a crop of wheat or barley for Jesus, or corn and soybeans for us. The deeper level of teaching, however, is the “target” for Jesus’ analogy: in God terms, says Jesus, God is able to bring life out of death. The Medal of Honor soldier isn’t thinking of a “medal” when he jumps instinctively on an enemy grenade. He is thinking of saving the lives of his buddies. Parents who are living their worst nightmare—son or daughter killed in a car accident—decides to donate their child’s organs so another child or adult can have life. The Son of Man, as we are taught, came not to be served, but rather to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. There is no greater love, Faith believes, than the love that sacrifices a life for another. We see this fully in the Cross of Jesus: “In the cross of Christ I glory, towering ‘ore the wrecks of time”, goes a familiar hymn of the Church.

Jesus believed in the correlation of the “sowing and harvesting” principle. His God-directed calling and mission was to preach the imminent coming of God’s reign or Kingdom. God’s Kingdom would be based on justice, forgiveness, mercy, love and service to others. Jesus challenged his hearers (who became followers) to use their God-given time and lives to “share the Good News” with others. This is done by “sowing seeds of love”. In the parable of the sower, the farmer sows the seed indiscriminately. He sows generously, abundantly, liberally because that is the nature of God’s redeeming love: to love all, indiscriminately and unconditionally without limitations. When the Gospel seed falls into “good ground” (willing and obedient listeners and followers), it produces thirty, sixty, a hundred-fold. Everywhere he preached and taught, he saw people with various needs, people who were like “sheep without a shepherd”. I believe he saw into the most inner depths of their lives and he saw people who were hungry for meaning, for peace, for love and redemption, in short, for God. The harvest is great but the laborers are few; pray that the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers. So as followers of Jesus, our calling and mission (if we choose to accept it), is to sow the seed of the Gospel, in word and deed.

Christ commissions us to be those laborers, who in the everyday, ordinary of life, sow seeds of hope, love, kindness, joy, thanksgiving, gratitude, humility, acceptance, hospitality, and generosity. When we live this way, Christ's Way, our lives have a ripple effect of faith on those near and far, and we bear the fruits that reveal the Peaceable Kingdom of God. As we read in the Book of James: "*And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.*" There's a harvest happening, and you and I are a part of it.

Reminders

The WUMC In Person Worship is at 9:00am this Sunday, with Sunday School at 10:05am. *The Worship Broadcast, taped on a delayed feed, will be available Monday afternoon (You Tube or winchesterilumc.org).* Also this Sunday, WUMC and MUMC will have a combined, Fall Charge Conference Session via the ZOOM Format at 1:00pm. Charge Conference leaders will be able to link in and participate either from home or in person at the Church Office. The UM Men will have a Benefit Cookout on Saturday, October 2 with all proceeds going to the Hoots Memorial Family Education Fund. A bake sale coordinated by our Sunday School Department will be included too.

Closing

I am especially remembering all those in the Farming Community in my daily prayers, as our farmers are bringing in the 2021 Harvest. We are praying for a safe and abundant harvest. Those of us with some age on us are aware of how fast time goes: planting time turns to harvest time, and children go from Kindergarten to being a College graduate in what seems to be a blink of the eye. Time is the great gift of God, and peace is achieved when we leave behind the "small stuff" worries, the pettiness of small thinking, and past regrets. The way to peace, Gandhi once wrote, is to "lose yourself" in helping and serving others. Let's be resolute about giving God our best selves, as we go out daily, as sowing the seeds of faith, hope, love and peace. Be kind, pray for all, trust God in all your ways, love like Jesus loved, keep hope in your heart, and by all means, KEEP FAITH!

In Christ's Love and Service,


Rev. Robin Lyons

*I want to Thank you
for remembering WUMC
in your prayers & with
your gifts & offerings.
Have a great weekend!*