

Mid-Week Reflection

July 11, 2018

Thoughts About Us/Me:

I am so not a fan of the excessive heat. I like the sunshine and the warmth...but the profound sustained heat and humidity gets to me. Part of it, I know is in this weather I am less active and that, science tells us, impacts our mood and adds to our feelings of despair. Physical activity is a mood lifter. How 'bout that? It's just tough to get out for a walk as the sun comes up. It is a beautiful time of day, but I'd rather sip my coffee and ponder than head out for a vigorous 30-40 minute walk. So, I don't do what I know I should do and I do what I know I should not...sit.

This is not a 21st century challenge. Those words may sound familiar. Paul laments a similar thought in his letter to the Romans. Romans 7:15 states, "I don't know what I'm doing, because I don't do what I want to do. Instead, I do the thing that I hate." Hmmm. Pretty much captures who we are, right?

That's why "spiritual discipline" and discipline of other types as well, is so important. It isn't easy. We do not naturally do what is good for us, or what certainly would be in the long run. We tend to seek instant gratification. And, we tend to be self-focused or immediate family focused. "Spiritual discipline," much like exercise requires a plan and prioritizing. Then, we can and will slowly begin to do what we want, what we know would ultimately benefit us and our community.

Sunday, I gave everyone in worship an assignment. You are not off the hook. The challenge is to name when and with whom (meaning a category) you would be willing to enter into a small covenant group. This is not necessarily a "study" group, but rather a group that would build trust and share joys and concerns. It would be a group that met regularly (however you define that) and would pray together and check in with one another and hold each other accountable for all that we know moves us closer to God and one another. (Worship, prayer, reading scripture, receiving communion, and acts of mercy.) This kind of group was what John Wesley understood was at the heart of growing our faith. I suggested you let me know by today...Wednesday. I hope many of you still will.

So far, I have heard from several folks and there are potentially 5 different types of groups that would be offered. What about you? When would you gather with 8 or so folks to pray and ponder and grow closer to God? After we have multiple opportunities...they will be posted and everyone will have the chance to sign up for a group or create a new one. I look to "kick these off the beginning of September when we all shift back into a "normal" (HA!) routine and the weather

cools. These groups are NOT to give you one more thing to do. These are to calm your spirits and restore your souls and help us CONNECT to one another and God. Again...I am convinced doing so will be transformational. (if you missed Sunday's sermon it is on-line www.shawneeheightsumc.org)

Coming Up:

*Youth are working to rebirth the youth room. Contact Halley Robinett to help her complete her Scout "Spirit Award." It will be beautiful and fun and a very usable space. Right now they are painting...

*Finance Team meets tonight at 6.

*Sunday we conclude "The Message Within: Thoughts from Kid's Books" with a look at "Where the Wild Things Are." The sermon is "Created Chaos." Scripture is Luke 8: 23-25

*"God and the Gay Christian" meets Monday, July 16th and again the 30th @ 7 10 attended our first gathering. More books have been ordered and will be available on Sunday. If you would like a copy let me know. All are welcome even if you were unable to attend the first time.

*Echoes Deadline is July 18th.

*I will be on vacation July 17-24. Do call the office if you have a concern or challenge. I have a colleague standing by for you.

*Don Stewart is leading worship and preaching on the 22nd.

What a blessing he is...and Josh Haywood is singing, I hate to miss it.

July 1st marked the beginning of my 4th year as your pastor. Time flies. Know it is an honor and privilege to serve you. With God's help I know we will continue to grow our faith and serve the needs of others. We do so by loving God and our neighbors. Those last two sentences...SHUMC mission statement. Let's live it.

Blessings and peace,
Barb

NO MID-WEEK on the 18th ...will be praying for you all.