

Recycling: An Act of Prayer for the Environment

DEVOTIONALS : 30 October ~ 5 November 2022

Serving directly increases our faith. Through serving, God gave me a front row seat to seeing Him change people's lives.

What it Means to Serve in a Local Church?

A local church comprises of people coming together and worshipping the Lord. This is done in a variety of ways. Of course, attending the service to participate in singing and listening intently to the sermon is an act of worship. But there are so many other ways to worship the Lord in the church by means of serving. Serving at a church can either be at the church building itself, whether on Sundays or during the week, or it can be in ways that are outside of the church building.

1. Serving allows us to experience His power firsthand.

Watching God work in someone else's life increases our faith. In John 2:1-11, Jesus performs His first miracle at a wedding in Cana by turning the water into wine. Other than Mary, Jesus' mother, only the servers at the wedding witnessed this miracle. The wedding attendees received the benefit of the new wine, and the wedding party saved face because of the miracle, but it was the servers who had the first opportunity to witness Jesus' power. Serving allows us to experience His power firsthand and that naturally produces faith in us.

2. Serving helps us see and experience what we're made for.

Through serving, I have learned that my fullest joy comes from serving others. Ephesians 2:10 tells us why: "... we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for us to do."

You have been gifted by God, and you are incredibly valuable to Him and the church. Ephesians 4 goes on to explain how important each individual is to the church. Instead of trying to look, speak, and act the same, we are called to train each other up using the gifts, skills, and abilities God has given us. When we do, we'll find "we're all moving steadily and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ" (Ephesians 4:7-13, MSG).

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God also uses our serving, and those we serve with, to reveal our gifts to us. 1 Peter 4:10 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." When we are operating in our gifting to serve God and others, we experience the kind of joy we were made for!

3. Serving draws us into authentic community.

If I had to choose one word to describe how serving has affected my life, it would be "community." Not long after reporting to first duty station in the Navy, I was invited to a home for 4th of July celebration; my first 4th of July away from family and home. Years later, I would be stationed again with them. I consider them family. God has used the people I serve with to encourage me, pray for me, and teach me. My relationship with Jesus and others has flourished as a result.



In John 17, Jesus prayed for God to protect us so we would be one as He and the Father are one. This oneness is best experienced in and through participation in the church — by serving and loving one another well.

4. Serving requires obedience and redirects our focus to Jesus.

The simplest way to follow Jesus is by doing what He did. In Matthew 20:28, Jesus tells us He came to serve, not be served. By being obedient to follow Jesus in this way, we get to know Him on a new level because we experience firsthand His love for others.

When we begin to care for and serve others, God redirects our focus.

When we begin to care for and serve others, God redirects our focus. A friend once said, says “I can’t think of a better way to diminish the significance of my problems than to get the focus off of myself and to place it on others.”

For many people, serving in the local church brings so much joy that there isn’t even a question of whether it is necessary to serve or not. But some, whether it be from shyness, busyness, or any number of reasons, may not be as quick to jump in and help. To answer whether it is necessary to serve in the local church, we need to ask ourselves the following question:

What does it mean to serve the local church? Serving the local church means to help the body of Christ as a way to glorify God, not ourselves. In this act of worship, we spread the love of Jesus to those around us. Serving the local church takes many different forms, though the Bible helps specify areas that we could serve in by defining our spiritual gifts (1 Peter 4:10).

Is serving in the local church necessary? Serving in the local church is necessary in regards to helping in the church body. If no one contributes in helping to keep the church running, it will fall apart. We are called in 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 to be one of the members of the body, and during our sanctification in Jesus, we are to serve like him.

Sunday morning is, of course, the busiest day of the week for churches! This means there are many opportunities to serve around the building and with people. Some ways to serve at church on Sunday morning can include:

- Childcare
- Liturgist
- Greeters
- Ushers
- Communion stewards
- AV tech
- Worship team
- Teacher
- Fellowship hour
- Cleaning up after the service

All of these are important to keep the church running well. However, if you are not able to serve on Sunday mornings, there are many other opportunities to serve during the other six days of the week.

Believing the lie that the church doesn’t need you will rob you of the joys God designed for you to experience through serving. Take a risk and get involved. God will honor that step of faith and grow it into so much more!

PRAYER CONCERNS ~ **HOW CAN WE PRAY FOR YOU TODAY?**

- **As we prepare for our Charge Conference, the Leadership and Nomination Committee will be reaching out to fill leadership positions for all committees and boards. Fifth Ave. United Methodist Church, is seeking fresh, creative and innovative leadership. Please recognize God’s call for you to serve your church. You may not think you have the gift, talent, and/or time to serve, but all are called to work in the kingdom. Good is calling you; inviting you to step forward and serve God’s church and God’s people. Will you say. “Yes?” We need you!**

- **Mr. Ralph Hensel** has decided to discontinue chemotherapy. He and Ms. Bonnie look to the hills which comes all their strength; from their God who made heaven and earth. He and Ms. Bonnie continue to have a positive outlook and are grateful for the cards, prayers and phone calls. Continue to pray! Cards and notes for can be mailed to Mr. Ralph and Mrs. Bonnie Hensel, 629 Highland View Drive, West Bend, WI 53095.
- **Ms. Biancha Martinelli** is asking for prayers and care for her best friend, **Ms. Kelsie Landers** as she attends to the care and welfare of her parents, Mr. Tracy & Ms. Kim Aloha, who are gradually recovering from a traumatic car accident. Your words and prayer for strength and courage for this extensive season of rehabilitation and recovery is greatly appreciated. Please send your cards and notes of care to: Mr. Derrick and Mrs. Kelsie Landers, 26W035 Astor Place, Wheaton, IL 60187.
- **Ms. Linda Green**, sister of Mrs. Debra Matthies, thank you for your continued prayers for strength and courage as her cancer has returned and has metastasized. Pleased send her your cards and notes of support and faith. Her mailing address is: Ms. Linda Green, 2920 Donahue Ferry Road, Pineville, LA 71360.
- **Ms. Jeanne Schacht** passed away on Oct. 7, 2022. A Celebration of Life Service was held on Saturday. October 15, 2022. Card or notes of condolences may be sent to her daughter, Debbie Schacht, at N110 W17051 Ashbury Lane #1, Germantown, WI 53022.
- **Ms. Nancy Whitson** is still admitted at The Pavilion at Glacier Valley. She requests your prayers and support as she continues to journey with health concerns. Please send cards and notes of encouragement to: Mrs. Nancy Whitson, 922 Hickory Street, West Bend, WI 53095
- **Rev. Jean Bartlett** passed away on Oct. 7. A Memorial service will be held on Saturday, October 29, 2022 at 11:00am at Waupun United Methodist Church, 199 E. Jefferson St. in Waupun. Condolences can be sent to: Rev. Jon Bartlett, 813 Seymour St., Waupun, WI 53963. Email address: bihojon@gmail.com
- **Ms. Sandy Wamser** has been diagnosed with Epilepsy. She is thankful to finally have a diagnosis. Her medical team is working to find the correct treatment. She can't stop thanking her church family for all your love, prayers and support. Special prayers for Mr. Pat as he cares for Ms. Sandy and traveling graces to and from St. Luke's Hospital. Cards and notes can be sent to: Mr. Pat and Mrs. Sandy Wamser, 3742 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095.
- The Family of the late **Roger Ethan Sacia** would like to express their sincere gratitude to everyone who has shown them kindness in prayers, thoughts, and deeds during their time of bereavement. Your prayers, visits, phone calls, consolation, food, flowers, and other gestures of compassion and love have been uplifting. May God richly bless each of you. Ms. Nobi will be residing in Madison, WI. Cards of condolences and support can be mailed to Mrs. Nobi Sacia, 1626 Jefferson Street, Madison WI 53711.
- We extend our deepest and heartfelt condolences to **Ms. Barb Groth** on the unexpected passing of her beloved son, Russell Groth on September 10, 2022. Ms. Barb, the mother-son bond is something truly special and I know just how close you were with Mr. Russell. We are all here for you during this time and want to express our deepest condolences for your loss. Letter and notes of sympathies can be mailed to: Mrs. Barb Groth, 729 Mitter Circle, West Bend, WI 53095
- **Mr. Dick Simmons**, diagnosed with acute leukemia has discontinued with chemotherapy. John 11:25 reads: Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. The sting of death has been removed for the Christian believer by Jesus our Lord. Mr. Dick, Ms. Shirley and family, we are sending you love, support and prayers during this difficult time. Cards, notes filled with prayers and support can be mailed to: Mr. Dick and Mrs. Shirley Simmons, 2908 Valley Avenue, West Bend, WI 53095.
- Lord, we ask you to plant seeds of courage and hope in **Ms. Lora Santiago**, daughter of Mr. Peter and Ms. Katie Glaser, as melanoma cancer has been found in her leg despite having immunotherapy. Your seeds of love and care through cards and notes can be mailed to: Ms. Lora Santiago, C/O Ms. Katie Glaser, N166 W21211 Glencoe Lane, Jackson, WI 53037.
- **Mr. Chuck Rogge** is still on a journey of healing. He is grateful for the cards and notes of support. Please continue to flood the mailbox with love and support to: Mr. Chuck and Mrs. Sue Rogge, 5011 Hwy. P, West Bend, WI 53095
- **Mr. Len McGinnis, Jr.**, continues to quietly face medical challenges. Your cards and notes of support and well wishes for Mr. Len and Mrs. Shelia McGinnis can be mailed to: 1230 Vogt Drive, West Bend, WI 53095

- **Bro. Bob Krell**, prayers for strength and continued healing. Please mail cards and notes of prayer and encouragement to: Bro. Bob and Mrs. Jean Krell, 804 Lenora Drive, West Bend, WI 53090
- Many of our **church family members and friends** are experiencing health concerns. Please join me in praying for their healing and restoration: “loving God, I pray that you will comfort us in our suffering, lend skill to the hands of the healers, and bless the means used for to cure. Give each of us such confidence in the power of your grace, that even when we are afraid, I may put my whole trust in you; through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.”
- **Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf**, continued prayers for healing and strength as she continues to struggle with illness. You can send emails of prayers and support to: alankempf33@gmail.com; or cards and notes to Mrs. Janice Liepert-Kempf, 414B. South Pleasantview Road, Plymouth, WI 53073; phone number: 920.838.1830.

Prayer: O, Heavenly Father, give me a heart like the heart of Jesus, a heart more ready to serve than be served, a heart moved by compassion towards the weak and oppressed, a heart set upon the coming of your kingdom in the world of men and women.

I pray right now, O God, for all the people to whom Jesus gave special concern and care when he was on earth:

- For those needing food or drink or clothes;
- For the sick and all those who are wasted by disease;
- For the blind;
- For the disabled;
- For people suffering from life-shattering diseases like leprosy in Jesus’ time and COVID and HIV/AIDS in ours;
- For prisoners;
- For those oppressed by any injustice, and for refugees and asylum seekers’
- For the homeless, and all the lost sheep of our society;
- For all victims of sexual exploitation and abuse;
- For the lonely;
- For all single parents;
- For the worried and anxious;
- For those who are living faithful lives in obscurity;
- For those who are fighting bravely for unpopular causes;
- For all those who are working diligently for you throughout your world

Grant, O Father, that your loving kindness in giving me so much may not make me less sensitive to the needs of others less fortunate, but rather move me to lay their burdens on my own heart. If I should experience any adversity, help me to tolerate on my own sorrows, as if I were not alone in the world of suffering; but rather help me to take time to serve, with compassion, those who need my help. Let the power of my Lord Jesus Christ be strong within me and his peace invade my spirit. Amen.

Pastor Clarissa & Bro. Martin