



Imagine...

AAAHHHH.....

When your Boss is called "The Word" it helps to be a wordsmith. (The *World Book Encyclopedia Dictionary*, vol. 2 defines "wordsmith" as "a master of language." I like that.)

If you work with words, you have to be ready when inspiration comes. To that end, I have pen and paper close at hand. And I do mean close. I have note pads and pens in my purse and my car (no; I do not write while I drive. I pull into a parking lot!). I have note pads and pens in my kitchen, next to my favorite chair, on all four of my desks, and in the nightstand drawer. (When I was writing my doctoral project, God sent me suggestions in dreams. That pen and paper stayed on top of the nightstand for two years!) The contents of all these oddball pieces of paper will eventually be transformed into a sermon, or an illustration for a future sermon, and then discarded. But until that happens, they remain as originally written, awaiting God's further direction – which might take a while.

On Sunday, October 15, 2017 (a Laity Sunday), I heard a story that so moved me, I wrote it down on the front of my worship guide. I'm not sure if I heard it in a very fine Laity Sunday sermon, or on the radio, so I can't provide proper citation. I'm going to share it anyway.

There is a village in Africa that has an interesting method of dealing with citizens who act unjustly. The wrongdoer is made to stand in the middle of the village. The residents gather in a circle around the offender – and bombard him with affirmations. Not insults, not recriminations, not invectives, AFFIRMATIONS.

Imagine! How would our community be different if we practiced such a method? To use a current example, imagine someone being told they should wear a face covering. The instruction might sound something like this, "You are God's child and I love you and don't want to cause you harm, would you please wear your face mask?" And several others would join in with words of love and care. That's just one example, you can probably think of others. If we could do that...imagine the effect such actions might have on the behavior of the ones who wrong us. Imagine what the world would be like if we could practice affirmation instead of condemnation.

Actually, someone did imagine such a world. "*This is my commandment: love each other just as I have loved you*" (John 15:12, CEB). Jesus not only imagined it, he said, "Do it." Maybe that's why the church sign proclaimed: "Love is not what you *say*. Love is what you *do*." aaahhhh.....

Ann
Dr. Ann Hitt

The precious photo of two best friends, above, is from a video by Michael Cisneros, the proud Dad of one of the Little Dudes.

Go to our Facebook page or YouTube channel on Sunday at 9:30 a.m. and join us for worship!

Please be in prayer for...

All who are ill
All who mourn
Those who are fearful
Those who have lost their job
Our Church
Our country
The world
Yourself
Me

Even in these difficult times, our ministries continue, so we need your financial support. Please mail your gifts to the church address shown above. And thank you!