



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Prayer: Dear God, Thank you for the advocates and trouble makers who bring justice, peace and action to our communities, who call out the leaders when they fail to act, and who stand with those in dire circumstances when they need the voices of others to rise up in solidarity. Make us all troublers in good conscience. Amen.

Action: Find out about living conditions in the Indiana Department of Correction, where the mission is stated as rehabilitation, not punishment. Contact your state legislators to let them know you care about those in prison.

Saturday, August 8, 2020

Genesis 37:5-11 Common English Bible <https://tinyurl.com/y25ocrax>

Ponder: “Tell them about the dream, Martin.” Without musical legend Mahalia Jackson, Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech during the 1963 March on Washington might never have happened. It was Jackson, a long-time friend and supporter of King, who prompted the civil rights leader to talk about his dream in a speech that continues to inspire and uplift justice and equality for all people. Just like Old Testament hero Joseph, whose dream interpretations caused some discord among those who didn't want to hear truth, King didn't back down when the truth was uncomfortable and the reward was within reach. Dreaming isn't a useless activity. Many great things have begun with a dream, the best ones being inspired by the love of God. Once the dream is shared, each of us must be active in turning that dream into reality. Today's activism to end racism, bigotry, prejudice and bias are a continuation of King's dream challenge. Resistance is futile.

Prayer: God of All People, Fill our heads with dreams that inspire us to create your heaven in our communities here on earth. Give us the courage to act, the strength to continue and the determination to succeed. Amen.

Action: Go online to the DePauw digital archives and listen to the speech presented by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., at the School of the Prophets recorded at Gobin Memorial Methodist Church on Sept. 5, 1960. The recording is in the DePauw Digital Library here <https://palni.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/av/id/23>

Monday, August 3, 2020

Romans 1:8-15 Common English Bible <https://tinyurl.com/yx1w9g4u>

A trip this summer to Philadelphia, Washington DC and Boston to visit some historical sites from our nation's early days was canceled before it even began. My family had been talking about this road trip for more than a year. When to go and what to see. Smithsonian, the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, Boston Common and Paul Revere's House were just a few possible spots on the list. Our trip, like the summer plans of many people, fell victim to the pandemic this year. So reading Paul's message about his plans to visit churches prompted a wry chuckle about plans going out the window. But I continue reading Paul's message, and his plans are about more than gassing up the donkey and hitting the rocky Roman roads. “What I mean is that we can mutually encourage each other while I am with you. We can be encouraged by the faithfulness we find in each other.” Well, we may be isolated these days, but I do feel the Gobin community is staying connected, whether it's through our Sunday broadcasts, social media, study groups via Zoom, and the many happenstance masked meet-ups at Kroger. It is so encouraging to stay connected and check in with one another, and to have conversations that drill into faith questions, and to continue seeking ways to help in the community at large. Let us echo Paul's thankfulness to God through Jesus. Even in the midst of struggle, we continue to encourage one another.

Prayer: Dear God, Help me to be patient when I don't want to wait, to be still when I want to be moving, to see the beauty around me when I want to gaze on new things and places. Thank you for this community. Amen.

Action: Participate in a Gobin Zoom meeting to stay faithfully connected. Check at the church office, website or newsletter to find out meeting information.

Tuesday, August 4, 2020

Acts 2:37-47 Common English Bible

<https://tinyurl.com/y497qhng>

Ponder: Peter gives us a snapshot of what community looks like in the early days of the church. People share their possessions, eat together and take care of those in need. Since first reading this description of church when I was a teenager, I've imagined that early Christian community of caring as the goal to achieve. The church I attended in my early teen years didn't resemble that community. In fact, a deacon Sunday school teacher scoffed at the idea of sharing belongings and housing as being "communist and hippie." That was in the '70s and a Cold War was in full force. In the many years since then, I've encountered some faith communities who have done their best to adopt the ideals of that early church. One small church in Greene County set up a "clothes closet" ministry in a vacant building to share gently used clothes and household items with anyone in need. A Putnam County ministry offers free home repairs to senior citizens. Many organizations in our communities today had their early starts in faith communities. It's another way to demonstrate God's goodness to everyone.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for the many people who get organized to help one another. Thank you for the many saints who also help on their own by giving of their own abundance, and of their last mites. May we always take care of each other as you take care of us. Amen.

Action: Pick a local helping agency and support it with a donation of time, talent, goods or cash.

Wednesday, August 5, 2020

Matthew 15:32-39 Common English Bible

<https://tinyurl.com/yxlu2hvb>

Ponder: Where and what to eat. One of the things we usually plan when taking even a short trip away from home is if and where we will stop to eat. Follow a prophet into a wilderness for a few days? Sure, if there's a Taco Bell or a Denny's nearby. I like to think these four thousand who followed Jesus, however, weren't only hungry for tummy food. They were hungry for the message of love and hope and truth that Jesus provided. So many people today still have that hunger. My mom had a wall hanging in her country kitchen listing a recipe I couldn't understand. The ingredients included a cupful of kindness, a tablespoon of cheer, a handful of friendship, a dash of joy, an abundance of faith. As a child I thought it was silly. I didn't realize it was a recipe for loaves and fishes.

Prayer: Dear God, I hunger for love and acceptance in this world through my own actions. But you have validated me through your son Jesus. I will accept your menu, and know the best nourishment comes from you. Amen.

Action: Bake some bread or cookies and take it to someone. Include a note of kindness and say a prayer for that person.

Thursday, August 6, 2020

Acts 17:10-15 Common English Bible

<https://tinyurl.com/y2875qma>

Ponder: Different versions of the same thing come to mind with today's Scripture. One group seems argumentative while the other seems to be fact-checking everything. Personalities collide and factions form. Sound familiar? How frustrating for those who are trying to share the message of Jesus, but who are faced with the barriers of prejudice and bias that people won't release. It took me a long time to realize there are many things I can't understand because they aren't my experience. When I look at things through the lens of Jesus, however, it's easier to be the person God wants me to be.

Prayer: Dear God, You lead me and guide me. Help me to hear the concerns of others. Keep my mouth closed when I should be listening. May the words I share uplift your love and guidance in all situations. Amen.

Friday, August 7, 2020

Acts 18:24-28 Common English Bible

<https://tinyurl.com/y22t7bk9>

Ponder: A local person who has long been an advocate for the disadvantaged recently launched a campaign to bring environmental relief to women in an Indiana prison. The women were locked down in hot cell blocks without air conditioning in summer heat. The air circulation was minimal even with fans. The correctional staff also suffered from the heat. The lock down was to enforce social distancing due to COVID-19, but it caused another, more immediate health emergency in the prison. This local leader and other advocates went to the state's highest authorities with a voice of reason, seeking compassion and a solution to the suffering. Petitions were signed. Phone calls made. Vigorous advocacy fell on deaf ears until finally, state leadership could no longer ignore the staff members in the prison who validated the problem. Too often, advocates for change and justice are called trouble makers. May we all be considered trouble makers.