



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Saturday, January 22, 2022 (by Lisa Trigg)

Luke 2:39-52

<https://tinyurl.com/5n7rcu5w>

PONDER: Today's gospel reading is the one brief exception in the Bible that allows a glimpse at the first thirty years of Jesus's life. It is the only canonical story we have about the years between Jesus's birth and his public ministry. It is the story of the 12-year-old Jesus staying behind in the Jerusalem temple, and how his parents panic when they realize Jesus is not in the group traveling back to Nazareth after the Feast of the Passover. This story can remind us that Jesus was a normal boy who experienced genuine human development — physically, mentally, morally, and spiritually. The story also hints at the emerging tension between Jesus's identity with God the Father and his willing obedience to his earthly parents. Jesus had to grow into who he was meant to be. And he did most of that growing in the obscure village of Nazareth. We can take comfort in knowing that no matter how hidden and obscure our lives might feel, either literally or figuratively, whether voluntary or involuntary, in that very hiddenness God is present, just as God was present with a 12-year-old Jewish boy in an obscure Palestinian village.

PRAYER: Dear God, keep me humble, not longing for greatness or recognition, but knowing that by being recognized always by you as your beloved child, I have received the greatest acknowledgment needed in my life. Amen.

ACTION: Smile and say kind words to any children you encounter today. Let them know they are seen by you, so they may know they are loved.

DAILY PRAYER MEDITATIONS

January 17-22, 2022

Monday, January 17, 2022 (by Marilyn Culler)

Romans 12:9-21

<https://tinyurl.com/4rf7svfj>

PONDER: Love comes into our lives in many beautiful ways. When love is genuine, whether giving or receiving, blessings follow. This passage provides a roadmap for the times of our lives when love doesn't come easily, when all seems lost, when we want to get revenge. Love changes us, and love changes those we encounter. When we return unkind actions with kindness and love, it disarms the offender and honors God who is love. Love will save the day, no matter what the world throws our way.

PRAYER: God, may I be love today in all situations, with all people. Amen.

ACTION: Tell someone you love them — someone you haven't told before, a friend, co-worker or maybe even a stranger.

Tuesday, January 18, 2022 (by Jamie Douglas)

1 Corinthians 1:3-17

<https://tinyurl.com/53ku5x6b>

PONDER: Divisions. Paul's letter to the church in Corinth addresses divisions among fledgling Christ followers. Paul has been informed that some believers had gotten off track by following the human leaders like Paul, Apollos, and Cephas. Paul admonishes the followers and implores them to be united. He asks, "Was Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?" I sometimes become discouraged when I think of how quickly the early church began to split and follow human leaders. How much has changed over the centuries? Theologies shift. Churches split, and split, and split. How can I remain connected to the one True Vine and not find myself getting off track? It seems to me important to remember that the leaders of our church are shepherds, but not Christ.

PRAY: Lord, search my heart and reveal the ways I have strayed from you. Convict me and help me keep my eyes on you and filter what I hear from others through your teachings and words. Remind me to use the life of Christ as a litmus test for how I live my life. In the name of your Son, Amen.

ACT: Have you gotten off track? Take some time this week to ask God to search your heart. Are you following God through Christ? Do you spend time in the Word and use Christ's teachings and character as your Truth detector?

Wednesday, January 19, 2022 (by Anita Edenfield)

Luke 5: 33-39 <https://tinyurl.com/4n7mfx5z>

PONDER: Jesus used wineskins for an analogy about the Jewish faith because they were something every person of that day could understand. Old wineskins represented the rigidity of the Jewish faith which had no elasticity and thus could not stretch to accept new wine - which represented the kingdom of God. Wineskins aren't a crucial part of our culture today, but elasticity is perhaps even more important to our faith now. Our culture is evolving and needs new wineskins that have the elasticity needed to accept anew the new kingdom of God. Is your wineskin of fait new or old?

PRAYER: God of Acceptance, help us to be elastic and able to welcome your kingdom in our culture of today. I pray that we open our hearts, minds, doors (and arms!) as you welcome us. Amen

ACTION: Open yourself to everyone in the same manner that God accepts us. He meets us where we are so how can we do no less?

Thursday, January 20, 2022 (by Teddy Shuck)

Psalms 19 <https://tinyurl.com/cjrdbzrn>

PONDER: Psalm 19 is so easy to read and then reread. The writer allows us to see the order of the universe. The sky praises God's handiwork for its brilliance and each day "spills"; information over to the next. The wonder of it all is there is no conversation needed. Each part of creation hears and know what it is to do. Throughout the world the message travels with no words. The sun has its special assignment to bring light to the world from one side of the sky to the other. In addition to being able to see God's instructions we can see the rewards in following them. The Psalmist admits he has made mistakes. He asks for help from God. If he asks for help, it is a good example for us to share with God our fears and to not be afraid to ask him for help.

PRAYER: God I see that everything in nature is ordered according to your will. Please help to put the same order in my life that I may show I am aware of your might and your love. Amen.

ACT: Listen to rules from God. See if they fit some of the things that face you today and ask God to show you how to follow the rules as easily as he has shown nature how to handle its daily tasks.

Friday, January 21, 2022 (by Terry Noble)

Romans 12:1-8 <https://tinyurl.com/mu8d5ac8>

PONDER: "For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned." This is a verse that is often quoted, especially when we feel someone is a bit too boastful. Let's take a deeper look at what Paul may mean by "the measure of faith that God has assigned." Could Paul be talking about those times when we start out on God's path, then become full of our own ambition and leave the 'measure' God has given us to pursue our own ideas? Staying within the measure of faith assigned by God requires frequent checks to be sure we are still on the path God has set. It's pretty easy to go off chasing after our goals and lose sight of the path God is unfolding before us. When this happens, we may begin to congratulate ourselves on how clever we are, forgetting that we depend on God for all things.

PRAYER: Creator God, keep me on YOUR path at all times, in all things, with all people. Amen.

ACTION: What are your goals for this day? Pray for God's Presence as you go about your "to-do" list, your plans, your responsibilities.