

ACTION: Create something today – a poem, a photograph, a note – and give it away.



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Saturday, January 8, 2022 (by Lisa Trigg)

Ephesians 4:17-5:1

<https://tinyurl.com/yckw89ew>

PONDER: My grandson likes to imitate a rowdy animated character called Booba, who gets into all kinds of silly mischief with his friends. My grandson usually climbs all over the furniture grunting and exclaiming like Booba, and his adventure usually culminates in a wild jump off a bed or a couch into a soft pile of pillows. Thankfully my grandson has never jumped through a window or swung from a ceiling fan in a full-on impersonation of this furry white creature. Today's Scripture caused me to take a long pause when I read the last sentence: "Imitate God like dearly loved children." The child who holds a doll and sings a gentle song to it is imitating a loving parent. The child who has wild rowdy fun must also be imitating God. Today, I am considering if I know how to imitate God as I interact with the world. It is a challenge I will accept.

PRAYER: Dear God, thank you for showing us how to be loving persons in our interactions with everyone, through the example of Jesus. Amen.

ACTION: Compliment the next parent you see with their child, even if they are merely holding the child, because that is what God does for us constantly.

DAILY PRAYER MEDITATIONS

January 3-8, 2022

Monday, January 3, 2022 (by Marilyn Culler)

Job 42:10-17

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

PONDER: After Job's trials, God blessed him with more than he had when his trials began. Job's seven sons and three daughters were killed when a wind destroyed their house – that number is restored. The numbers seven and three both connote completeness in Hebrew literature, so Job's family was again complete. The beautiful daughters are named in these verses, with no mention of the sons' attributes. Jemimah means "dove," a symbol of peace. Keziah means an incense or fragrance – symbols the wise men brought to the baby Jesus. Keren-happuch is a jar for a dark eye cosmetic, symbolizing outward beauty. Peace, fragrance and beauty are fruits produced by people who persevere. As a new year begins, how will each of us persevere and produce good fruit?

PRAYER: Lord, may my life shine with your peace, fragrance and beauty. Amen.

ACTION: Make this day beautiful!

Tuesday, January 4, 2022 (by Jamie Douglas)

Acts 7:44-53

<https://tinyurl.com/yzcswhbx>

PONDER: There have been many times in my life where I longed for a clear, black and white understanding of God and His Plan. I have come to realize that I don't get to know it all and have the clear understanding of God and His Mysterious Ways. Life is gray, not black and white. The gray makes me uncomfortable and I realize by wanting clear direction in all matters, that I am trying to put God in a box. God cannot be put in a box and Stephen tries to help explain this as he faces the Sanhedrin. God does not need to live in an ark or in a temple. God transcends all containers and all of space and time. Stephen tries to help them understand that, with the life and death and resurrection of Christ, the Temple need not be a physical space/building, but one of Spirit which everyone has access to through their belief in the Son.

PRAY: Just as the Jewish leaders struggled with a concept of God being Spirit and transcending matter, I admit I sometimes struggle with the magnificent power of the Holy Spirit. Lord, help me understand and believe that I have access to you, through Christ, and that I am empowered with your Holy Spirit and can explode confined space to represent you in this world. In Christ, Amen.

ACT: What would it be like to really, really, really embrace the power of the Holy Spirit in your own life? Do you try and put God in a box to make it easier for you to understand Him? Can you allow for God and yourself (through the gift of the Holy Spirit) to exist beyond the boundaries of the Church building and be light and love in all the spaces and places you occupy and have influence?

Wednesday, January 5, 2022 (by Anita Edenfield)
John 1:10-18 <https://tinyurl.com/yckjzz8k>

PONDER: John the Baptist came before Jesus to prepare the world for the Son of Man. In order to prepare not only Jews, but Gentiles as well, John would need to reach people from a variety of histories and backgrounds. When John used the term “Word” to refer to Jesus, he was using a word that was meaningful for both Greeks and Jews. The term ‘word’ to Greeks meant spoken word and/or reason that governed the universe; to the Jewish people it spoke of God’s active part in the world. John knew that if you want to reach others you need to speak with a common language. Perhaps we could all communicate better if we would look for our commonalities instead of our differences.

PRAYER: Lord of All, who knows us regardless of what language we speak or where we come from, we praise you for your loving guidance in our lives. We ask that you show us how to speak a language common to us all: Love. We humbly ask that you open our ears so we can hear others, truly hear them! Open our hearts so we won’t miss out on the goodness we can experience when we speak commonly with others. Amen

ACTION: Speak from your heart and you will find others can hear you loud and clear regardless of differences between you! Love speaks more clearly than words alone.

Thursday, January 6, 2022 (by Teddy Shuck)
Matthew 2: 1-12 <https://tinyurl.com/2p8h6hef>

PONDER: Jesus faced problems from his birth. The three wise men from the east followed the star to Bethlehem and honored his birth. King Herod, as a Roman appointed King, was disturbed by the prophecy that Bethlehem was to be the site of the birth of a child who would be a new king from the Davidic line. This person would “govern and shepherd” the people of Israel. This really excited the people of Bethlehem. Herod was not at all supportive. The wise men were. Gentiles had an early effect on Jesus’ life. There is another thought to consider. Jesus, we know, is the light of the world. It is exciting to think about the way light played a real part in arrival of the wise men. The star, light, led them to the place of Jesus’ birth. Jesus brought the light of God with him into the world. Each time we light a candle, or an acolyte brings the light into a service, Jesus is making his presence known.

PRAYER: Thank you God for giving us Jesus. Thank you for loving us even though we are gentiles. Help us to remember that we are very lucky to have you in our lives. Amen.

ACT: Honor God for our lives and Jesus for wanting all of us to be blessed, gentiles and Jews. Think of what Jesus did for us any time a candle is lit.

Friday, January 7, 2022 (by Terry Noble)
Ephesians 4:17-5:1 <https://tinyurl.com/yckw89ew>

PONDER: In this letter to the church at Ephesus Paul is reminding the Christians that they must no longer live as they did before they chose to follow Jesus. In stark contrast to a list of sinful ways (licentiousness, greed, ignorance, hardness of heart), Paul says that living like this is to “have lost all sensitivity.” In response to vile and hurtful behaviors, Paul asks the Christians to be sensitive and to clothe themselves with a “new self, created according to the likeness of God.” We are given a glimpse of God as One who is Sensitive. How can we be more sensitive to the needs of others and more God- like in our engagement with all of God’s creation? Being sensitive may sound like a small thing at first, however, if we see it as reflecting the likeness of God, our gentleness and kindness becomes a powerful force for good!

PRAYER: Holy Creator God, clothe me in your likeness so that all may see your goodness in my life. Amen.

