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Greetings,

I hope you find this devotional helpful in your daily journey.

Blessings, Pastor Dan

Reflection: The Cross

Greetings:

As we journey with Jesus to Jerusalem through our Lenten season, eventually we are confronted by the cross. Not only that, Jesus states, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their **cross** daily and follow me” (Luke 9:23). So what does that mean *for you*? Each of us has our own. (Not exactly a good promotional line for membership – get your cross here! I will even help put you on it!) However, the mystery of this statement must be understood in the context of Jesus’ statement of loving each other (John 13:34-35). In fact, Jesus highlights loving others as a mark of discipleship earlier on. So, the two statements are parts of the same coin. At times loving others means that we die to ourselves, hence we take up our cross. Parents who love their children innately know this. For instance, a child wakes up in the middle of the night complaining of not feeling well. The parent has a choice – ignore the child, or attend to the need even though the parent will lose sleep and may risk get-

ting ill. It is a moment in which one can choose to carry the cross, or not. All of us have these moments each day. How do we utilize the time we have – preoccupied with ourselves, or do we, like Jesus demonstrated, pour out our lives for those around us? I believe we start this journey in our homes, but eventually are called to go beyond our front doors as we mature in Christ. By this means, Jesus leads the way to bring healing to us and to those around us, by bearing the cross of love each day.

Peace, Pastor Dan

P.S. I hope this Holy Week is truly a blessed one for you! I invite you to take advantage of several opportunities. Tonight we continue our discussion stemming from the book *Embracing the Uncertain* at Fircrest; each week’s reflection is independent from the prior week, with a potluck at 6:15, and study @ 7:00 p.m. On Thursday at 7:00 p.m., @ Bethany, there will be a presentation of the Last Supper. Then on Friday, two services will be held: Fircrest @ 1:00 p.m., then at Bethany @ 7:00 p.m. All of this leads us up to the Sunday Easter celebrations!

Upcoming Dates

Monday: Bounty Food Bank: 9 am to Noon, Volunteers welcome.

Friday: *Bounty Food Bank* needs Volunteers every Friday for food pickup and storage help. Call 253-335-7860.

Next Sunday: Worship Service 11:00

Monthly

1st Saturday: Bethany Garden Club - 11:30 a.m.

2nd Thursday: Finance/Trustees - 6 p.m./7 p.m.

2nd Saturday: Food Bank Board Meeting - 10:30 a.m.

Food Bank Open - 1:00 p.m. ~ 3:00p.m.

April

18th - Maundy Thursday -7:00 p.m.

19th - Good Friday Service - 7:00 p.m.

21st - **Easter Sunday**

May

11th - Ad Council 11 a.m.

A FEW PERFORMERS NEEDED!

Once again The BAP (Bethany Art Players) will present "A Visit to the Last Supper: Words from the Disciples" and we are looking for people (men and women) to join the cast. NO experience required. Thirteen are needed and we have 10 so far. Interested? Feel free to let La Roy know. This year's performance takes place on Maundy Thursday, April 18, at 7 pm in the Fireside Room downstairs.

We also need a couple of readers for the Good Friday Service - April 19th- if you are willing, please let Pastor Dan know.

Bounty Food Bank Item of The Week: Tuna

This week, consider adding this item to your food bank donation. Also - We are always needing plastic bags - So, if you shop where they still give out plastic bags, the food bank would love to take them off your hands.

Please keep in your prayers...

Danielle - and family

Dee Baker

Laura Tippie

Liz Best

Gail Rocheleau

Mary Egeland

James & Jenifer Angus

Rev. Barbara Brown

Elaine & Jerry Ramsey

Anderson-Gammel family

Spring & her family

Judy Egan & her family

Please continue to keep our U. Methodist church in your prayers as we reflect on what occurred at the Conference in St. Louis.