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June 2020



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THE MESSENGER

FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK ...“Jesus In the Freezer!”

So, I had this crazy thought! I do declare sometimes, my thinking has me questioning my sanity! I thought about *Jesus in the freezer*. I'll circle back to this in a moment.

Think with me a bit. Maybe together we can connect the dots.

It's June! And, we have some tomato plants in the ground at our house. Maybe you do too! Ours are in some raised beds! If you are from my family, they are called *mater* plants; and, I can't wait for that first one to ripen!

That first *mater* and that first *mater* sandwich of the season is inspiring, rousing and downright soul-moving! And, it spawns the debate of Miracle Whip versus Duke's Mayonnaise...as to which is best to use on that very first and all the subsequent *mater* sandwich(es).

But, let's not forget the bread; and, this brings me to *Jesus in the freezer*. When I was a boy, my paternal grandmother, Miss Florence was a bread baker from way back!

A *mater* sandwich with Miss Florence's bread, thickly sliced, slathered with Miracle Whip; and, it's not blasphemous to prefer Miracle Whip over Duke's, was the best summer treat ever! To me it was even better than Popsicles!

It was a curiosity to watch Mamaw make bread! She kneaded it by hand, compassionately warming the dough with her rhythmic motions; and then she'd mix this stuff in the dough that came out of the freezer.

It was called yeast! Of all things, Mamaw kept yeast in the freezer!

I would ask her why she kept that stuff in the freezer; and, she would say that it slept in there. It was dormant, inactive in the freezer...sleeping!

But with moisture and the warmth of kneading from Mamaw's hands and her compassionate love for bread baking, the yeast would automatically wake up, come alive and expand the dough.

Yeast reminds me of Jesus. After all, it was Christ himself who had a quite meaningful chat with us about yeast a whole bunch of years ago.

“He told them still another parable: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough (Matthew 13:33 NIV).’”

He was talking about his kingdom. But if we delve a wee bit deeper, we can understand that he is really talking about us!

All human beings are predisposed to waking up and reaching out to others. It is our natural inclination to be nurtured and to nurture.

We must cultivate these inclinations to be whole, to be granted a spacious life, to allow the dough of satisfaction to rise as we experience and expand the love of Christ. If we fail to do this, if we fail to use the Yeast (Christ), it's the same as leaving Jesus in the freezer!

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....continued inside

PASTORS DESK continued

All of that potential is available; and, it will never lose its potency! But if we leave Jesus in the freezer, this love will never expand.

In other words, it is prudent and just to have aspirations. What do aspirations look like?

I aspire to help others in their suffering! I aspire to live a less worry-filled life! I aspire to not fall into a state of indifference.

I aspire to not become a victim of self-deception! I aspire to help my teenage nephew free himself from addiction; and, I pledge to sit with him and be present.

I aspire to model and teach compassion. I aspire to let go of my grudges. I aspire to free myself from the prison of isolation and indifference.

I aspire to keep more of my opinions to myself. I aspire to love, heal and sow seeds of peace.

It would not hurt one single bit if all of us sat down and made a wish list of aspirations. And, we need to note that at any time, we are free to take Jesus out of the freezer, off the shelf, out from the backburner, etc., and allow him to help us work through, knead and expand our lives.

With Christ, the news is always beyond good! Through faith as tiny as a mustard seed or as small as a grain of yeast, he can allow us to employ compassion and warmth by sharing the love of Christ; and, it will never lose its potency!

Jesus will join us within our aspirations and lift us into spacious living. "However, as it is written: 'What no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, and what no human mind has conceived' the things God has prepared for those who love him (1 Corinthians 2:9 NIV)."

"The *May I* Prayer"

Lord, may I be free of anger.

May I be free of fear.

May I be free of worry.

May I not fall into a state of indifference.

May I not be caught up in the extremes of craving.

May I not fall victim to aversion or hatred.

Finally, Lord may I be free of suffering; and, at all cost not be the root of it.

Written by Jimmy Howard

"Fatherhood!"

This is 1963.

Deep within the canyon-ed aisles of a supermarket comes what sounds like a small-scale bus wreck followed by an air raid. If you follow the running box-boy armed with mop and broom, you would come upon a young father, his three-year-old son, an upturned shopping cart, and a good part of the pickles shelf---all in a heap on the floor.

The child, who sits on a plastic bag of ripe tomatoes, is experiencing what might nicely be described as *significant fluid loss*. Tears, mixed with mucus from a runny nose, mixed with blood from a small forehead abrasion, mixed with saliva drooling from a mouth that is wide open and making a noise that would drive a dog under a bed. The kid has also wet his pants and will likely throw up before this little tragedy reaches bottom. He has that *stand back, here it comes* look of a child in *pre-urp* condition. The small lake of pickle juice surrounding the child doesn't make rescue any easier for the supermarket 911 squad arriving on the scene.

The child is not hurt. And the father has had some experience with the uselessness of the *stop-crying-or-I-will-smack-you-syndrome*; and, he has remained amazingly quiet and still in the face of this catastrophe.

The father is calm because he is thinking about running away. Now. Just walking away, getting into a car, driving away somewhere down South, changing his name, getting a job as a paperboy or a cook in an all-night diner. Something---anything---that does not involve contact with three-year-olds.

Oh sure, someday he may find all of this amusing, but in the most private part of his heart he is sorry he has children, sorry he married, sorry he grew up, and, above all, sorry that this particular son cannot be traded in for a model that works. He will not and cannot say these things to anybody, ever, but they are there and they are not funny.

The box-boy and the manager and the accumulated spectators are terribly sympathetic and consoling. Later, the father sits in his car in the parking lot holding the sobbing child in his arms until the child sleeps. He drives home and carries

The box-boy and the manager and the accumulated spectators are terribly sympathetic and consoling. Later, the father sits in his car in the parking lot holding the sobbing child in his arms until the child sleeps. He drives home and carries the child up to his crib and tucks him in. The father looks at the sleeping child for a long time. The father does not run away from home.

This is 1976.

Same man paces the living room, carelessly cursing and weeping by turns. In his hand is what's left of a letter that has been crumpled into a ball and then uncrumpled again several times. The letter is from his sixteen-year-old son (same son.). The pride of his father's eye---or until today's mail.

The son says he hates him and never wants to see him again. The son is going to run away from home, because of the terrible father. The son thinks the father is a failure as a parent. The son thinks the father is a jerk. What the father thinks of the son right now is somewhat incoherent, but it isn't nice.

Outside the house it is a lovely day, the first day of spring. But inside the house it is more like Apocalypse Now. This is the first day of the next stage of fatherhood. He may laugh about this too one day, but today all that is felt is anguish.

He really is a good man and a fine father! The evidence of that is overwhelming. And the son is quality goods as well. Just like his father, they say.

"Why did this happen to me?" the father shouts at the ceiling. Well, he had a son! But wisdom comes later. Today one has to stand there like a jackass in a hailstorm and take it.

This is 1988.

Same man. Same son. The son is twenty-eight now, married and has a three-year-old son of his own, a home, a career, and all the rest. The father is fifty.

Three mornings a week they go out jogging together around 6:00 A.M. As they cross the street, the son looks both ways, with a hand on his father's elbow to hold him back from the danger of oncoming cars, protecting him from harm. They are laughing as they run on up the hill into the morning. And when they sprint toward home, the son doesn't run ahead but alongside his father at his pace.

They love each other a lot! Anyone can see it!

They are very care-full of each other---they have been through a lot together, but it's alright now.

One of their favorite stories is about *once upon a time in a supermarket..... This story could be now.*

This story could be now.

Robert Fulghum, *It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on*

...Continued Robert Fulghum, *It Was on Fire When I Lay Down on It.* (New York: Ivy Books, 1991.), 91-95



Congratulations to Michael Thuemmel and Sori Henriquez on the birth of their son, Sebastian Michael Thuemmel! He was born May 19th weighing 5lbs 11oz and is 18 inches long! His proud grandmother is Linda Thuemmel. Please keep them in prayer as they start on this new journey!!

GRADUATION SUNDAY

Join us Sunday June 7th online as we honor Trinity's 2020 High School and College graduates during the Blended Worship Service at 11:00am.

Congratulations to: Daniel Owings, Nick Putukian and Daniel Todd

FISH FRY



YES the Trinity United Methodist Men will still have their Fish Fry on

Saturday, June 20th with just a little change. This will begin at 3:00pm and will be a drive thru only. Due to the continued restrictions of Covid-19 and mandates set by the United Methodist Church they feel this is the way to proceed at this time. Please help us spread the word of the new time and procedure that will take place that day. It will be good to see your faces even if its just through the car window!

JUST A REMINDER: Trinity's 2020 Vacation Bible School has been canceled for now. Watch for further details of a possible reschedule.

***Mrs. Kat McClure has been moved to Pruitt Rehab. In Indian Trail. Please continue to pray for her fast recovery.

THE MESSENGER

Trinity United Methodist Church

6230 Beatties Ford Road
Charlotte, NC 28216



Church—704-399-1684

10am—Sunday School (online)

11am—Blended Worship Service (online)

answering Jesus' call to:

“FEED MY SHEEP”

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Charlotte, NC
Permit No. 770

Worship Helpers and Prayer Request

STREAMING

David Stroupe

MEDIA SHOUT

Malcolm Miller

TITHES and OFFERINGS

Needed Weekly—\$5,145.05

Received- \$2,422.56

A contribution has been made to the church budget in memory of Mrs. Nancy Brown by Hardware Distributors.



PRAYER LIST

Kenneth Alexander, Don Brown and Family, Curtis Buchanan, Deborah Evans, Chet Kidd, Perry McConnell, Mary Moore, Sheila Oates, David Stewart, Bennie Todd, Marcelina Velazquez.

RETIREMENT RESIDENTS

The Laurels-David Todd
North lake House— Mary Moore
Ranson Ridge— Perry McConnell

“Simmer on That”

Simmer on That is a live broadcast that I run periodically through the Trinity Facebook page. I feature conversations with community leaders, first responders, church folks and many others to find out how they are coping with Covid; and, also what advice they may have for us.

Also, from time to time I feature Bible studies and general information through these broadcasts. To join us in a broadcast, watch for the invitations that I will send out ahead of time on the Trinity Facebook page and through our phone tree.

To access the Trinity Facebook page, simply go on your Facebook home page and type *Trinity United Methodist Church* in the search window. A picture of our sanctuary will pop up and all you have to do is click on the link and then follow. You should be all set.

Jimmy Howard

*****In case of an emergency you can reach Rev. Howard by calling 704-458-8187, Ronna Privette @ 704-619-4647 or call the church office @ 704-399-1684 .**

