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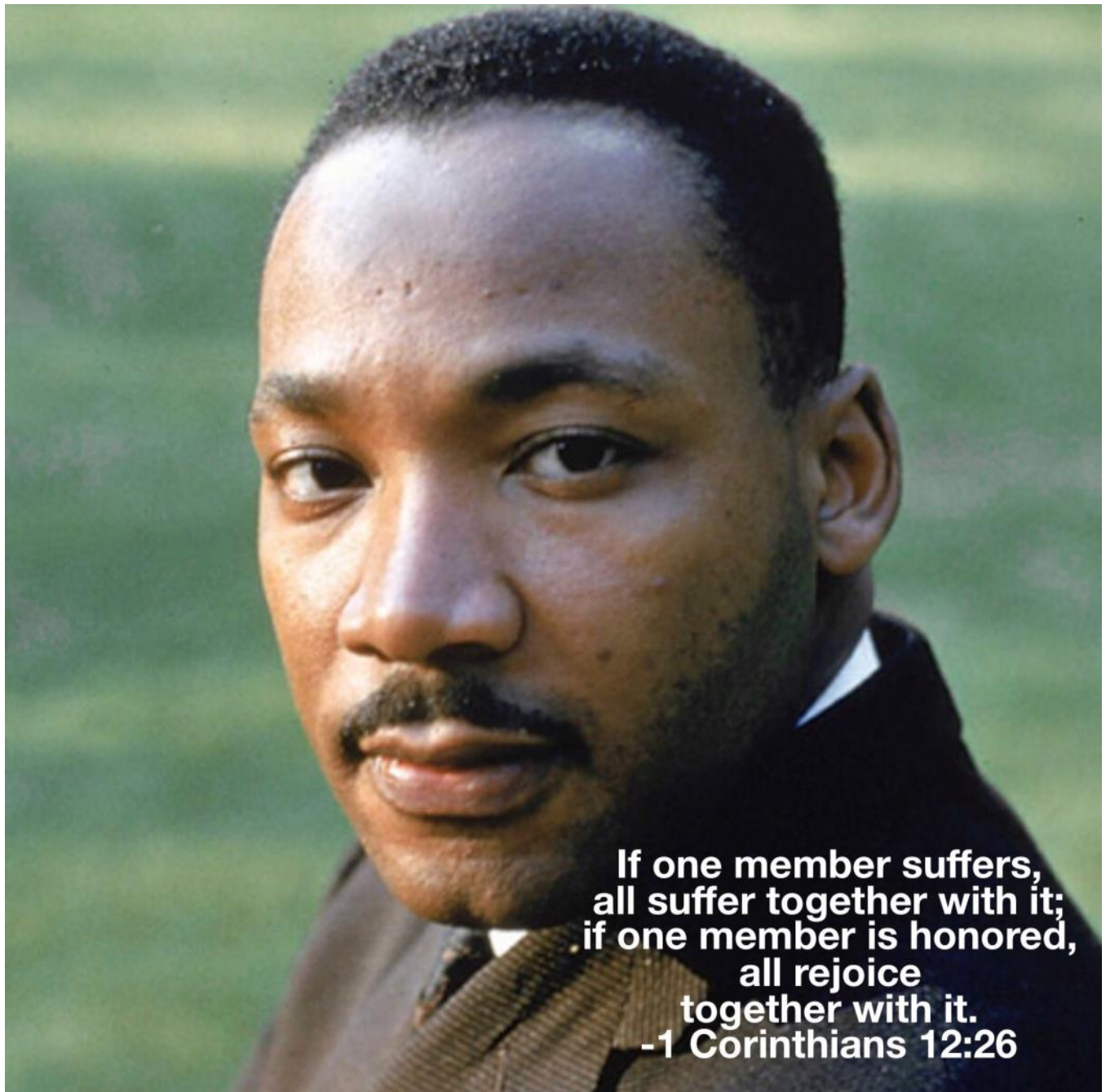


PLACENTIA
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

WELLspring

Articles of Inspiration and Transformation

January 15, 2018



If one member suffers,
all suffer together with it;
if one member is honored,
all rejoice
together with it.
-1 Corinthians 12:26

“I am sending you this poem I have composed over the years. I thought it might be something that would be appropriate for the Wellspring. I was inspired to write the first verse as I was going thru a difficult time when I was in college. The second verse was inspired by a sermon given by our interim minister, Paul Reeves. The third verse just seemed like a good ending. If you choose to publish it in the Wellspring, please do not put my name on it. I prefer to remain anonymous.”

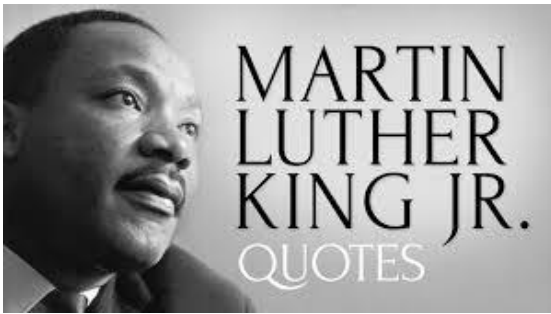
Prayer Poem for Day's Beginning

I give myself to You today
Guide all I think and do and say,
And keep me in your wondrous grace
Till I shall see You face to face.

Holy Spirit help me know,
The very way that I must go,
Probe the corners of my heart
Sweep them clean, a fresh new start

I thank you for your love of all
I thank you for your special call
May your love be spread with haste
That all may know your power and grace





"Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that." Sermons from his book *Strength to Love*, 1963

"The true neighbor will risk his position, his prestige and even his life for the welfare of others." *Strength to Love*, 1963

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." "Letter from Birmingham Jail," 1963

The church must be reminded that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, and never its tool. If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority." *Strength to Love*, 1963

"I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. That is why right, temporarily defeated, is stronger than evil triumphant." Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, 1964

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy." *Strength to Love*, 1963

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." "I Have a Dream" speech, 1963

"Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it." *Strength to Love*, 1963

"I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for the law." "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," 1963

"True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice." "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," 1963



e•piph•a•ny (noun)

Epiphany is a feast of the church that happened on January 6. It symbolizes the manifestation of Christ to the nations as recounted in the gospel narrative found in Matthew 2:1-12. There were Magi who travelled a great distance to visit the son of God in Jesus Christ. Tradition says that Jesus was close to three years old when this event actually occurred. The word used in the text to describe these mysterious visitors is the word Magi. It is difficult to determine the details surrounding this happening or even what a Magi was. Many believe they were astrologers or philosophers or simply sage thinkers from different cultures. Some believe they came from Persia. Today there is enhanced thinking that these three came from modern day Yemen. In this area of the world the three gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh are plentiful. Details aside the meaning in the story is most memorable.

What I find striking in this event is vast openness of Gods graciousness. There is no nation, race, class, or even community that can claim to know God exclusively. This story blasts open all that we think we know in order to accomplish three things that begin with these three letters: E, G, R.

Expand our notions of who God is for and with. It is God whom is with and for all people without borders. I was given a card by a church member at Christmas that read, “We build too many walls and not enough bridges.” This is epiphany.

Generosity toward all people. For some reason, our competitive and anxious culture closes in on folks. We could all use a little generosity in our lives. We might be able to breath and sleep a bit better. Epiphany.

Relationships that heal and laugh and have time to enjoy simply being alive. B-e-i-n-g h-e-r-e. I am awed that PPC is learning to go into the neighborhood in new ways, much like the three mysterious wise men who were following a star to a far-off place. The far-off place here at PPC is just across the street and down a few blocks. Epiphany.

Those three letters E, G, and R form an acronym we have all used in difficult moments with difficult people—*extra grace required*. To expand our horizons with generosity and in new relationships does summon a strong dose of *extra grace required*. We could all use a little EGR and we can all extend a bit more EGR. That is a simple epiphany.

By the way, an epiphany is transformational, which is what this issue of articles is meant to be – Stories of transformation.

Tobin



When we hear the words “I have a Dream...” from Dr. Rev. Martin Luther King, a good number of ideas and images come to mind. Some of those images and ideas are related to a sense of promise. Yes, a sense of living with the promise that one day America will wholly embrace its greater and nobler ideals of incorporating every person from every background and stage in life as an irreplaceable member of this wonderful nation.

Good words make us imagine a better and possible world for all of us. Jesus also said very good words filled with life-giving and life empowering promise. Because according to Jesus, living our lives to the fullest is not only possible but also available to every single human being. He has promised “My purpose is to give life in all its fullness” (John 10:10 New Living Translation)

Are you enjoying that kind of life? If you are not, what is preventing you to do so? Jesus says that it is available and possible to all. I have been learning to appreciate and practice this kind of lifestyle for a long time now. It is one step at the time, but one step forward all the time. Of course, there are some challenges, potential setbacks, and roadblocks but the moment that you embrace this type of life there is no turning back. You are on your way to being fully human and fully alive. Do not mind small or big setbacks, they are part of learning how to remain fully alive.

Placentia Presbyterian Church will continue to flourish if each one of us keeps growing and flourishing. The dream is big and the chances to achieve it are real and possible. Jesus has said that he will build His Church and that the gates of death will not prevail against it (Matthew 16:18) It is a sure win and a victorious outcome already in the making.

Alfredo Delgado has a saying that goes like this: “If you bury your dreams, you will bury many people with it.” Are you burying your hopes or dreaming boldly with God’s help?

Sisters and Brothers let’s keep Dreaming Relationally, Relevantly and Boldly in God’s Love, In Christ Name and In the Spirit Strength. Amen!

Alfredo Delgado



MINDY PLICK

“The faith of a 10-year-old is what I long for.”

For the past few weeks, my husband, Len, has been spending a great deal of time in his music studio (well, garage) writing a song with our 10-year-old son, Joshua. Even though Len is a licensed music therapist and songwriter, Joshua has been the one leading these songwriting sessions. Before they begin, Joshua goes out to the garage to set-up their instruments. He plugs-in his keyboard and sets it up on its stand, sets-out Len's guitar, and then he arranges two chairs- one for Daddy and one for Joshua. When everything is ready, Len and Joshua sit in their chairs together and work on their song, sometimes for as long as an hour or two at a time. Although this is their special time together, sometimes I get to hear little bits of the music they have been creating together, and it is beautiful. Joshua leads by playing a note on his keyboard, and then Len, listening to Joshua's note, plays a melody of notes around each of Joshua's notes. Joshua plays another note, and then Len fills-in the spaces around that note. It continues like this, both making eye contact with each other, listening, trusting, being patient and creating beautiful music.

A couple of weeks after Len and Joshua had begun writing this song together, Joshua told my mom about it. After explaining to her about how he plays the keyboard, Daddy plays the guitar, and they create music together, she asked him, “Joshua, what is the song about?” He thought for a moment and then replied, “I don't know yet, Grammy. I haven't received the words yet. When I receive them, I'll know.”

This faith of a 10-year-old is what I long for.

On September 12, 1962, Martin Luther King, Jr. gave a speech in New York City commemorating the centennial of the Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. In that speech, King said, “Faith is taking the first step, even when you don't see the whole staircase.” He based this off Hebrews 11:1 where it was written, “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” We can learn about faith from a 1st Century Christian, we can learn about faith from a great civil rights leader from 1962, and we can also learn about faith from a 10-year-old child today.

Friends, as we begin this new year, may we be encouraged. We don't need to know all of the words to our song just yet. When we receive them, we'll know what our song is about. May we open our hearts and listen to the notes around us- to our partners, our children, our friends, our coworkers, our neighbors... to God. And as we listen to their notes, let us take steps of faith and fill-in those spaces with our own notes. Let's write this song together. We may not know what our song is about quite yet, but that's alright. We don't need to know just yet, because our loving God knows.

Mindy



“If I had it to do again, I’d ask more questions and interrupt fewer answers.” – Robert Brault

Can questions lead to transformation? There are two sides to the value of a question.

Do we practice the art of asking good questions?

Are we open to exploring our answer to tough questions?

Effective youth ministry depends heavily on the act of questioning. It is important for leaders and mentors to ask students significant questions. Through their answers students can share authentic insights into who they are and what is important to them. Just a few weeks ago I asked a probing question to two students while on a hike. I asked, “if you could go back to any time in history, when would you go and why?”. I was expecting to learn what moments in human history were interesting to them, yet the answer was way more profound. One student’s answer was, “I would go back as early as I could to find my adopted family, to find my real family” ... Wow, to that student, looking at the past makes them think about something completely different than any other person. That was a look into their identity, into what is important to them.

- Jesus was no stranger to the power of the question. You can almost feel the weight behind this question:
- If you love those who love you, what reward will you get?
- Do you believe that I am able to do this?
- Why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?
- Do you understand what I have done for you?

Jesus knew that asking the right questions could lead to real transformation in the lives of others.

What about when we are not even open to letting the questions be asked? Think about your family history and honestly explore what questions weren’t allowed? Maybe they were about broken relationships, family tragedies, deep emotions, or moral failings. Why were these questions off limits? What about where you are right now in your life, in your family? What questions aren’t allowed? What things aren’t talked about? More specifically, what questions are we not letting the younger generations ask about their history and identity? We are doing them a huge disservice if we are not open to their questions. Don’t be afraid to explore the answers to tough questions. The answer may be difficult, sad, embarrassing, or emotional. Yet, through significant questions comes insight and transformation.

The Youth Ministry’s next mid-week series is titled: Can I Ask That? We are going to explore some of the most significant and difficult questions facing Christian teens today. For example:

Can I trust the Bible?

Can I be a Christian and believe in evolution?

Is Jesus really the only way to God?

How can I follow a God who would let Christians do such bad things?

We want to be a Youth Group that will always encourage questions. I hope to instill that there is nothing wrong with questions and doubt, yet there is danger in staying silent.

Please pray as we try to ask the right questions, be open to difficult questions, and always leave space for the answers.

Reprinted from Christianity Today

In his superb biography of Francis Schaeffer, *An Authentic Life*, Colin Duriez tells us that Schaeffer was known for his kindness. In *Escape from Reason*, Schaeffer recounts meeting a young man who attended one of his lectures. He lovingly describes him as having a “good-looking, sensitive face, long curly hair, sandals on his feet and ... wearing blue jeans.” Schaeffer greeted him the next day, provoking this response: “Sir, that was a beautiful greeting. Why do you greet me like that?” The great evangelist and apologist replied, “Because I know who you are—I know that you are made in the image of God.” He goes on: “We then had a tremendous conversation.”

Greetings matter. Jesus knew this:

And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? (Matt. 5:47)

Character is largely formed through manners, even by how we acknowledge the presence of others. Virtues and vices begin small and grow larger through habits. Virtues and vices may take over, making us a saint or a devil. Who, having read C. S. Lewis’s “The Weight of Glory,” could forget this?

It is a serious thing to live in a society of possible gods and goddesses, to remember that the dullest and most uninteresting person you talk to may one day be a creature which, if you saw it now, you would be strongly tempted to worship, or else a horror and a corruption such as you now meet, if at all, only in a nightmare. All day long we are, in some degree helping each other to one or the other of these destinations. It is in the light of these overwhelming possibilities, it is with the awe and the circumspection proper to them, that we should conduct all of our dealings with one another, all friendships, all loves, all play, all politics. There are no ordinary people. You have never talked to a mere mortal. Nations, cultures, arts, civilizations—these are mortal, and their life is to ours as the life of a gnat. But it is immortals whom we joke with, work with, marry, snub, and exploit—immortal horrors or everlasting splendors.

Even in seemingly small ways, we contribute to each other’s destiny through our speech and our silence. As we begin a new year, a time in which we re-evaluate many of our habits, we might ponder this: How might one develop good habits in greeting these immortal beings? Here are some reminders I find helpful.

Throughout the day, we can pronounce a silent blessing on many we encounter. I often pray, “May God bless you and keep you, make his face shine upon you, and give you peace.” The Bible is packed with blessings and benedictions for our discovery and use. Thinking and praying this way opens us up to greeting people with heartfelt good wishes and without fear.

In a Western cultural context, we may not greet everyone we see with words, but we can at least acknowledge them with brief eye contact or a smile. I must discipline myself to do this, but I am improving. Of course, I am often lost in thought (which means I have lost my car, my keys, my phone, my briefcase, my textbooks, and more), and may not notice my fellow immortals. If so, shame on me. Being a philosopher is no excuse for being aloof or rude.

Other settings call for more involvement, as when we meet our waiter, checker, or barista. These are immortals, not mere functionaries or means to our ends. The German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, had it right in one of his formulations of the categorical imperative:

Always act in such a way that you treat Humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of another as an end in itself and never merely as a means.

One need not exchange names to recognize a person as valuable in their own right or a center of irreplaceable worth. A sincere “hello” and a smile may be enough. Perhaps one could say something complimentary to the person but without being too personal. Too many busy, multitasking clods barely acknowledge the humanity of their servers, especially in settings of rapid delivery, such as Starbucks.

When being introduced to an image-bearer of God, kindness leads us to make eye contact, smile, and offer appropriate touch, which is usually a handshake. Those from non-American cultures will have different sensibilities, and this should be kept in mind. (In some cultures, it is forbidden for men to touch women in public.) I have found that after being introduced or introducing yourself, saying something kind (but not silly) will tend to put people at ease.

We often recoil in the presence of those radically different from us. But we should not be allergic to human beings. We may be rankled by their tattoos, piercings, body odor, gaseous perfume, tattered and putrid clothes worn by the homeless, immodest dress, or whatever is your particular point of offense. But they are all, like us, made in God’s image. Therefore, we should *put ourselves out* to demonstrate love in action.

We may not give money to someone begging on the street, but we can acknowledge him or offer him some bottled water or even stop and talk (if safe). I try to offer roadside solicitors a bottle of water, a handshake, well wishes, and the promise of prayer. (I do so immediately after.) I ask them their names. They have names, you know—and histories and tragedies. If possible, we should *greet them*, even if we cannot—then and there—restore them to their rightful place in society. I know a man who hands out umbrellas to homeless folks caught in the rain.

It seems like a small thing, but it really isn’t. How we greet—or fail to greet—others says much about our character. But in the power of the Holy Spirit, we may practice the presence of people by acknowledging and recognizing them for who they are: creatures made in God’s image.

Douglas R. Groothuis is professor of philosophy at Denver Seminary. He is the author of Walking through Twilight: A Wife’s Illness, a Philosopher’s Lament (InterVarsity Press), publishing November 2017.





DINNER, WORSHIP & DIALOGUE

2017 VILLAGE DATES

18 TH OCTOBER	RACISM
22 ND OCTOBER	» FALL FESTIVAL «
15 TH NOVEMBER	HUMAN TRAFFICKING
20 TH DECEMBER	REFUGEE RESPONSE

17TH JANUARY
21ST FEBRUARY
21ST MARCH
18TH APRIL
16TH MAY

2018 TOPICS
CLIMATE CHANGE
ENNEAGRAM
FAITHFUL RESISTANCE
SEXISM
LGBTQI

6:30PM-8:15PM
CHILDREN'S BREAKOUT PROGRAM BIRTH-6TH GRADE
WWW.PPC.CHURCH
849 BRADFORD AVE PLACENTIA, CA



The ministry of the Nitro coffee bar is twofold:

1. Provides a destination for visitors (with their free coffee card) to connect with members of our church on a personal basis guiding them to involvement and possible future membership in our congregation.
2. Proceeds of the Nitro Bar are donated to the Youth Scholarship Fund of PPC to allow children and youth to attend church activities they cannot afford on their own.

The PPC Nitro Bar partners with and serves Solid City City Coffee. Solid City Coffee is a social enterprise ministry of Solidarity that uses quality, ethically sourced, direct trade specialty coffee to support hope and healing for girls who have survived sex trafficking in São Paulo, Brazil. A portion of the proceeds of every bag of coffee goes to support Casa Liberdade, which will be the first ever aftercare house for survivors of sex trafficking in São Paulo, Brazil.

Solid City also works in conjunction with the Solid Enterprise team of Solidarity to provide job training and discipleship for youth right here in our neighborhood. They believe that through business urban youth can be empowered to bring renewal to their communities.

The PPC Nitro Bar supports this mission of Solidarity by purchasing and serving Solid City Coffee.

The proceeds of the Nitro Bar are used to fund Scholarships for children and youth to participate in various PPC activities and camps they cannot afford on their own.

Please support this ministry and enjoy a refreshing, silky, creamy, stout-like Nitro Cold Brew coffee with the knowledge that you are supporting local children and youth and other at-risk populations both locally and internationally.





PLACENTIA

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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Loving people to *LIFE*: Relational. Relevant. Bold.

