



MILLVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

THE DOVE DECEMBER 2016

Patience & Opportunity

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”

Galatians 5:22-23, NIV

In our continuing discussion of the Fruit of the Spirit we find ourselves at forbearance, a word whose full definition, especially in biblical terms, is surprisingly weighty and can speak to our hearts. I remember growing up when this passage came up in a series or lesson I often heard the word forbearance exchanged out for patience. Those teachers and leaders probably went this way because patience is a far more frequently heard and understood word that forbearance. Now that I've looked into the Fruit of the Spirit far more closely for this series I will never again substitute any other alternative. In fact, I am deeply thankful for God's forbearance being a part of my life and having the ability to practice it toward others.

According to the dictionary, the primary definition of forbearance is, "a refraining from the enforcement of something (as a debt, right, or obligation) that is due" (Merriam-Webster Online). For those who are learning English, they define it as, "the quality of someone who is patient and able to deal with a difficult person or situation without becoming angry" (Merriam-Webster Online). I would have never thought I would find encouragement and feel uplifted after reading the dictionary, but after reading about this word I couldn't help but feel the joy of the Lord. This Fruit of the Spirit, in fact much of our relationship with God, is captured in these two definitions. Thanks to the infinite grace and

mercy of our God, He has refrained from enforcing the fullness of our debt and obligation owed to Him by us. That payment was made and relationship was restored between us and God through Jesus Christ. The good news doesn't end there because God's forbearance in our lives allows us to also be forbearing to others!

We who are spared the full consequence of our sinful and broken former selves are able, and even encouraged, to extend it to those around us. Especially, as Merriam-Webster puts it, to the difficult people and situations in our lives which tempt us to respond with fear, anger, retaliation, and other similar things. The reactions and lashing out of our former selves don't bear fruit for us, others, and especially God. Through the dwelling of the Spirit in us we are able to be pulled out of the vicious cycles and consequences of the world and people around us. Romans 2:3-4 says this,

"So when you, a mere human being, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?" (NIV)

In this season of Advent we use many titles to describe the coming Messiah, but one of my favorites has always been Prince of Peace. I love how contradictory it is; it holds seemingly opposing ideas together that can only be done by God. Prince, a title of authority and power that is either won or maintained by exercising that power over others in direct, even violent ways sometimes. Then you have peace, God's Peace, that which transcends all things. Our refuge and foundation in all the twists and turns in life. We

are the ambassadors and representatives of the Prince of Peace in our lives and the world around us.

We live in a world desperate for true peace. Chaos, disorder, divides, even pain and violence are rampant in our world and not even the Church is spared. In this face of such uncertainty and anxiety, what are we to do? Philippians 4:5 tells us this, "Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near" (NIV). Our current reality is what it is, we can't escape it or pretend things are anything else. The Good News that needs to permeate our being and radiate out to all who come across us in this Advent season is that the Lord is truly near! That's what Jesus is doing, what about us?

Our call isn't to be the strongest, or the loudest, or the powerful. The only force at our disposal is the Holy Spirit, which works beyond our expectations and limitations. Our victory is in the gentleness of the Lord, the battle has already been won by the Prince of Peace. The spoils of that victory are free to all, if only the lost would hear and us, HIS CHILDREN, would be humble and bold enough to share it. May we prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord who has changed the world, changed our lives, and is getting ready to do it all over again.

Advent Blessings,
Pastor Brad

THE STRENGTH OF OUR CHURCH PART 2

In the November Dove, several initiatives were mentioned that addressed our apparently declining financial situation. Included were (1) reaching out to nearby communities to make them aware of the worship experience available in our church, and (2) asking our District Superintendent for a reduction in the apportionment we send to the district/conference to fund their mission support and administrative costs.

We are committed to our outreach effort and have a number of activities planned. However, the Administrative council has decided not to pursue apportionment reduction, considering that action to be premature and not likely to be approved at this time. It may be necessary in the future, depending on our circumstances.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday Night Potluck Dinner

December 4, 4:00 PM at Wesley Hall.
Bring a dish to pass and invite a friend to share in the fellowship.

UMW Ladies Luncheon

Wednesday, December 7, 11:30 AM at Cottage Café. The luncheon will be "off the menu" and separate checks will be provided. Everyone is welcome. (See sign-up sheet on table at back of church)

Community Christmas Singalong With Barb

Saturday, December 10, 6:00 PM at Wesley Hall. Come join in the fun as we remember the sacred and secular music of Christmas. There will be lots of singing, light refreshments, prizes and special musical presentations. Please bring a canned food item for the Food Bank! Bring a dessert to share (No cookies or snacks please). Join in the fun and bring a friend! Everyone is welcome.

Aging Faithfully

CHRISTMAS IS COMING!

Join us for another wonderful concert of Christmas music by the AARP Chorus. They are coming to Wesley Hall on Tuesday, December 13 at 11:00 AM. Stay after for a slice or two of PIZZA. Bring a friend & get in the holiday spirit!

Christmas Program

Saturday, December 17, 7:00 PM
In the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve Service

Saturday, December 24, 7:00 PM
In the Sanctuary

Christmas Day Service

Sunday Worship, December 25,
9:00 AM in Sanctuary

FOOD BANK

It is Holiday time. We are shopping for gifts, great food and, somehow, are forgetting about our neighbors who need help feeding their families. In the past 6 weeks we have collected less than 6 small bags of food for the food bank. We have always been the little church with the big heart. It is my prayer that we will continue to be just that. **YOU CAN HELP** by buying an extra can of whatever you are having and donating it to the **FOOD BANK** mission. Leave it in the Sanctuary and it will get to those in need. I know everyone is busy, so this is just a reminder. Thank you in advance for your generosity in any way you can help in providing for the **FOOD BANK**. If you have any questions regarding this ministry, contact Marianne Smith. Thank you and God Bless, Marianne

MEMORIAL BRICKS

It is time to order memorial bricks. I have requests for two bricks, and need a minimum of seven to place an order. Now is the time, if you have thought you would like to honor or memorialize someone with a brick in our walkway. The cost per brick is \$60. Please pickup an order form in the church or Wesley Hall. You may also see Joe Skinner or Marilyn Ferry for help. Joe's phone # 302-732-9684.

RECIPE CORNER

Carrot-Spice Cake with Caramel Frosting

Charlotte Dunn

1 pkg. (18-1/4 oz.) spice cake mix
1 pkg. (3/4 oz.) instant vanilla
pudding mix

4 eggs

3/4 cup water

1/2 cup sour cream

1/4 cup canola oil

1 cup shredded carrots

1 can (8 oz.) unsweetened crushed
pineapple, drained

1/2 cup flaked coconut

1/2 cup chopped pecans

1/4 cup raisins

FROSTING:

1 cup butter, softened

1 pkg. (8 oz.) cream cheese, softened

6 cups confectioners' sugar

1/2 cup caramel ice cream topping

1 to 2 Tbsp. 2% milk

In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, pudding mix, eggs, water, sour cream and oil; beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes. Fold in the carrots, pineapple, coconut, pecans and raisins just until blended. Pour into two greased and floured 9 in. round baking pans. Bake at 350 for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely. For frosting, in a large bowl, beat butter and cream cheese until fluffy. Add the confectioners' sugar, ice cream topping and enough milk to achieve desired consistency. Spread frosting between layers and over the top and sides of cake. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 12 servings