

April 2020

Paula's Pondering

How do you feel about rules? Most of us don't really like them, but, as adults, we realize they are necessary to the smooth functioning of life. Rules are everywhere. Some of them are written down and enforced by punishment, such as don't run a red light. Others are simply known, even though nobody knows why they are a rule, such as don't wear white before Easter or after Labor Day.

Even the United Methodist Church has rules, set up by our founder, John Wesley. He gave us three simple rules to help guide us in life. The first one is do no harm. Simple, right? Except, while it's an easy rule to remember, it's not so easy to practice.

The big stuff is easy. We don't kill people. We don't steal from people. We don't cheat people. We're nice people - we would never do these kinds of things. And yet, we're not off the hook. Notice the rule is do NO harm. What about all those "little" things we do - sometimes without even thinking about it. The words we say when we're angry. The faces we make. The hand gesture when someone cuts us off in traffic. The Facebook post or the comments we make on it. Even the things we think about someone, but don't say.

Jesus said, "You have heard that is was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." What you think matters just as much as what you do. It doesn't seem fair. It seems like we should get points for restraining ourselves. But God sees the harm these thoughts do.

All of these are harmful because all of them diminish a person in some way. Even when we don't let the person know what we're feeling, we're

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diminishing them in our own minds and in the minds of anyone else we've told. And that's not ok.

So what hope have we if we can't even think bad thoughts? How do you control what comes out of your mouth, or even the look on your face, when you're angry? First we need to accept that those things do, indeed, cause harm, whether we meant for them to or not. Then we need to ask for God's help in controlling our impulses and our thoughts; and for God's forgiveness when we fail to do so. And finally, we need to consider how our words, our thoughts, and our actions affect those around us. Maybe you're just blowing off steam, but how does that affect those who got in the way? Maybe you need to apologize for causing them harm.

This month I hope you'll join me in trying to be more conscious of the harm we may be causing and attempting to minimize it.

Blessings,

Pastor Paula

Upcoming Events

- 4/4 Church Work Day
- 4/4 Easter Egg Hunt
- 4/5 Communion



Birthdays

April

- 4/4 Kelly Buhrle
- 4/7 Rick Bennett
- 4/12 Amanda Townsend
- 4/13 Larry Alberton
- 4/18 Rebecca Clark
- 4/19 Keith Buhrle
- 4/24 Angie Ring
- 4/30 Anne Fiene

Sunday

- 4/5 Creed: The Forgiveness of Sins Psalm 103:9-12
- 4/10 Tenebrae - Stations of the Cross (Good Friday)
- 4/12 Creed: The Resurrection of the Body John 11:25-26, 14:19
- 4/19 Consider the Lilies Matthew 6:25-33
- 4/26 Lost and Found Luke 15:1-10

Phone Prayer Chain

If you know of a member going to the hospital, have a need, a concern, or a joy, please call someone on the following list, starting at the top, if possible. Call any time, day or night. If the person you call is not at home, leave a message or call the next person on the list.

- Pat Townsend 373-3915 or 225-9459
- Rosemary Garten 427-5725 or 519-8500
- Carol Marcks 427-5725 or 560-5627
- Marilyn Berry 796-5789
- Lucille Bolen 560-5131
- Mary Branstad 796-9659 or 868-3752
- Ann Fiene 257-5214
- Jackie Leffingwell 257-1123
- Linda Roberts 650-5131 or 853-3398

Prayer Chain



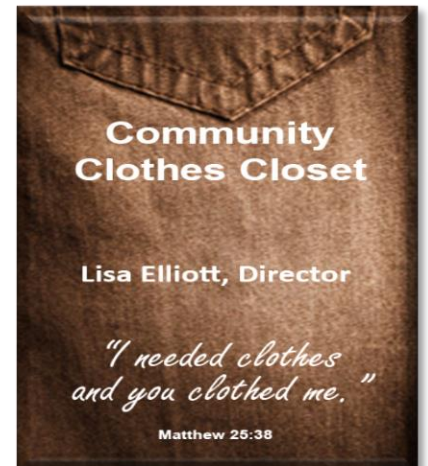
- Carol Buhrle 796-3630 or 225-8174
- Shirley Weaver 461-9224 or 716-1184
- Chris Pauley 571-3922
- Gayle Elliott 257-9655
- Arletta Cahill 600-9203
- Flora Costanza 914-8034
- Sandy Bower 373-5603
- Anna Inman (660) 232-1221
- Jackie McMenemy 461-7577

Bread Of Life Food Pantry

We are in need of the following items for the month of April:

- side dishes (Rice-A-Roni, instant potatoes, Mac-N-Cheese, etc.),
- bath tissue
 - pancake mix & syrup,

2020	FAMILIES	PEOPLE	ITEMS OUT	ITEMS IN
FEB	73	137	1908	817



UMW Minutes

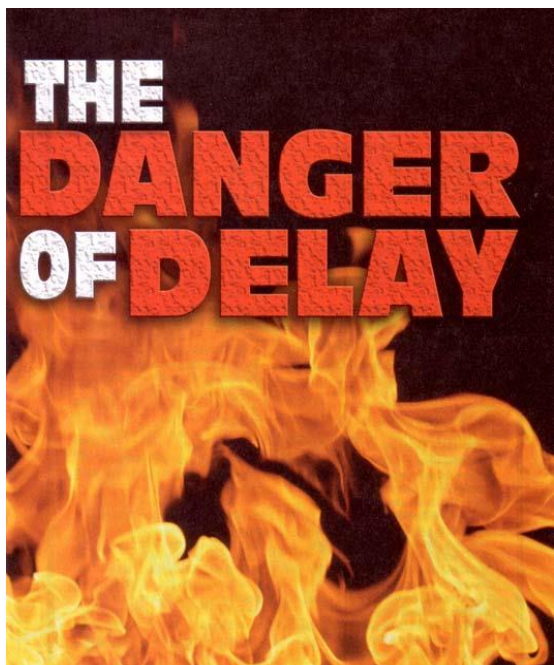
Seven (7) in attendance for the **March 4** meeting. Last meeting minutes and treasury report were approved. Treasury balance is \$2,669.05 following \$80 donation to Heifer International of \$1000 for the purchase of a four-animal Milk Menagerie.

Old Business: The annual St. Pat's Potato Bar is progressed well. People volunteered to donate most needed items, the potatoes were ordered, the church's outdoor sign announced the event, and the EXAMINER was given an article for printing. Linda provided a sign-up sheet for people to serve in certain jobs. She made a large pot of macaroni and cheese for children who do not like baked potatoes.

UMW members met at the church to decorate and set up the kitchen on Friday, March 13.

The meeting closed with a prayer by President Shirley Weaver.

Next Meeting is April 1, 2020.



The Danger of Delay

Hebrews 10:19-31

Grace is a word the Bible often uses in connection with salvation. The term speaks of God's merciful kindness, by which He not only turns souls to Christ but also keeps and strengthens them. In other words, it brings people to saving faith and then enables them to live righteously (Titus 2:11-12).

Unfortunately, some people who receive Christ try to use divine kindness as an excuse to cover their sins (Rom. 6:1-2). But if we've truly experienced God's saving grace, we should also be living in His sanctifying grace. As new creations in the Lord, we are no longer the people we were before coming to faith. We should turn from old patterns and instead nurture the new desires and ambitions that align with those of God's Holy Spirit, who indwells us.

Then there are some unbelievers who think it's okay to live as they please for a while before repenting of sin and turning to Christ for salvation. But it's dangerous to delay. The time to be saved is when you hear the gospel, feel the Spirit's conviction about sin, and understand that eternal consequences await those who reject the Savior's free gift. Turning a deaf ear insults the Spirit of grace and "trample[s] under foot the Son of God" (Heb. 10:29).

A proper understanding of grace includes a warning against these types of resistance. Paul expressed it this way to the Corinthian people: "We beg you not to accept this marvelous gift of God's kindness and then ignore it" (2 Cor. 6:1 NLT). Then, in the very next verse he added, "Indeed, the 'right time' is now. Today is the day of salvation."



God's Perspective on War

Romans 13:1–4

War is a very controversial subject in both the world and the church. Considering the broad spectrum of views and opinions, those who follow Christ would do well to search the Scriptures and ask, What does the Lord think about war?

In order to gain a proper understanding, we must first consider the condition of our fallen world. War is a natural consequence of sin. Some conflicts are fueled by evil intentions and desires, but others are a battle between right and wrong. God hates bloodshed, but if evil is not forcefully resisted, the wicked will prevail.

The Lord established government as a means of promoting good and restraining evil, and national authority comes directly from Him. But some rulers abuse their power and must be stopped. In such cases, God allows war for the sake of the innocent.

The Old Testament also includes instances when God used war for the sake of achieving His purposes. He commanded the Israelites to fight for possession of the land He'd promised them and to kill the inhabitants, who were extremely evil (Deut. 20:1; Deut. 20:17–18). In addition, He used war to judge and punish wicked nations (Jer. 25:12–14) and even to discipline His own people (Jer. 5:15–17).

As you think about this difficult subject, remember that God's goal is the destruction of wickedness, not people. In the final battle, Jesus will defeat sin and death, wars will cease, and righteousness will reign (Revelation 19:11–16). Until that day, we are left on earth to do our part in overcoming evil.

Unity in the Body

Ephesians 4:1–6

The church of Jesus Christ is truly unique: It is composed of people from countless backgrounds, who have a variety of opinions on many different topics—yet they are one in Christ. As believers indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we all belong to God's family and have a special relationship with one another. We are spiritual brothers and sisters who are called by our heavenly Father to live in harmony.

Unity in the church occurs when God's children live in submission to the Holy Spirit and let Him control their attitudes, emotions, words, and actions. When the Spirit rules each one, the goal becomes to please Him in our interactions with others instead of demanding our own way. This is necessary if we hope to “walk in a manner worthy of [our] calling” (Eph. 4:1).

Some Christians try to function independently because that's easier than living in humility, gentleness, and patience with fellow believers. But we need each other. The fellowship of believers is an important part of God's design for our spiritual growth.

Unity in the church requires a willingness to yield to each other for the sake of our spiritual family. This kind of self-sacrifice is fueled by genuine love, which unselfishly acts for the good of another (agape in Greek). It's the glue that keeps the body of Christ together and enables us to live in harmony (Col. 3:14). When we hold tightly to God's words and are knitted together in love, we honor Jesus Christ and have a strong defense against divisions and factions.

