

Sunday August 26 through Sunday September 2

- Pastor Robert's sermon series *Entering the Kingdom of Heaven* will continue Sunday August 26th. This week's lesson will be on the good soil and will focusing on the practice of hope.
- UMYF will be meeting this evening at 5 pm.
- Garden Club will be meeting on Monday evening at 6 pm.
- Boy Scouts will be meeting at 7 pm on Monday.
- Girl Scouts will be meeting at 7 pm on Tuesday.
- Prayer Team will be meeting on Wednesday at 6 pm.
- Choir will be meeting Wednesday at 7 pm.



Sunday August 26

- 10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship
- 5:00 pm—UMYF

Monday August 27

- 6:00—Garden Club
- 7:00 pm—Boy Scouts

Tuesday August 28

- 7:00 pm— Girl Scouts

Wednesday August 29

- 6:00 pm—Prayer Team
- 7:00 pm—Choir Practice

Thursday August 30

No Scheduled Activities

Friday August 31

- 9:00 am—MEOC

Saturday September 1

No Scheduled Activities

Sunday September 2

- 10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School
- 11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship
- 5:00 pm—UMYF

The Practice of Hope
Matthew 13: 19 and 23

Romans 8:24-25 (NIV)

For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.



**FROM OUR
PASTOR**

What are the Good Works for which we were saved? How about belief in God, faith in Jesus Christ, and living with hope through the Holy Spirit. **Belief + Faith + Hope = God's Love.** Therefore the Good Works of Belief, Faith, and Hope prepare our hearts to be "Good Soil" which yields the fruit of Love.

Gardeners know that Good Soil has structure, drainage, and organic matter. In the Parable of the Sower the "path" is the heart's structure. The "rocky ground" is the heart's drainage. The "thorny ground" produces the heart's compost or organic matter.

All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory! Ergo, our paths begin like Adam and Eve. Satan deceives us and robs us of God's Grace, Love, and Mercy. We live on a steady diet of right and wrong; black and white; good and evil. The fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. How often do we stop to ask what is God doing? Didn't Jesus promise to be with us always? What is the Holy Spirit trying to show me as I face these troubles and persecution? Being able to ask God what God is doing in the midst of our suffering produces unexpected blessings. Receiving God's mercy transforms our judgements of good and evil into empathy?

We all have moments when we crave the comforts this world has to offer. Unfortunately, the comfort we get from physical things passes away long before they are consumed by rot, rust, and decay. But then something happens: It might be the death of a loved one, an accident, addiction, or medical diagnosis. In that moment life, peace, purpose and relationships reveal their true value.

I recall Bob Stevens standing to speak during a morning worship service. He thanked people for the cards, food, visits, and prayers. What he said next left the congregation speechless. "I am thankful for my cancer! Without it I would have never come to know how much God loves me. I hope you get that opportunity too." Bob had believed in Jesus for years. He practiced his faith through his gift of encouragement and wisdom. But on that day he spoke of the Hope he found in Jesus Christ. In the days and weeks that followed, Bob lived by Hope. He had good days and bad but to all his days he added God's patience.

Try adding God's patience to your judgement of good and evil, black and white, right and wrong. You will be amazed at the peace you receive that is beyond understanding!

What is the soil? It is my _____! (Matthew 13:19b)

What is the seed? It is God's _____!

What is the Good Soil? It is the heart and mind led by _____ in God's grace.

How does my heart become Good Soil? _____! (Matthew 6:9)

The Path: the evil one steals God's Grace? (Matthew 13:19) God's Kingdom _____. God's will be done on _____ as it is in _____. (Matthew 6:10)

The Rocky Ground: Problems and Persecution? (Matthew 13:20-21) _____ is Food for the body. Forgiveness is food for the _____. (Matthew 6: 11-12)

The Thorny Ground: Wealth and Physical Things. (Matthew 13: 22) Physical comfort is good but it cannot heal a _____ heart and mind.

What is the fruit? It is _____ of God, self, and neighbor.

Answers: Heart; Grace; Faith; Prayer; come; earth; heaven; daily bread; soul; wounded; Love