

Sunday December 9 through Sunday December 16

- ◆ Pastor Burlingham continues his Advent Sermon Series focusing on The Way of the Redeemed.
- ◆ UMYF will meet at 5 this evening.
- ◆ At 7 pm, the Administrative Board will be meeting. All are welcome.
- ◆ UMYF will be hosting the meal for Methodist Men.
- ◆ Wednesday is the last day to turn in poinsettia orders to have them in the sanctuary by Sunday.
- ◆ Prayer Team will be meeting on Wednesday evening at 6 pm.
- ◆ Choir will be practicing at 7 pm Wednesday evening.
- ◆ Pastor Robert will be continuing his sermon series on the Third Sunday of Advent. Robert hopes to help us recognize the Seeds of Redemption.



“Maybe it wasn’t the message they wanted to hear, but now you’re sure they were listening.”

This WEEK at Trinity

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Sunday December 9

Second Sunday of Advent

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School

11:00 am—12:00 pm Morning Worship

5:00 pm—UMYF

7:00 pm—Administrative Board Meeting

Monday December 10

6:30 pm—UMM Meeting

7:00 pm—Boy Scouts

Tuesday December 11

7:00 pm—Girl Scouts

Wednesday December 12

6:00 pm—Prayer Team

7:00 pm—Choir Practice

Thursday December 13

No Scheduled Activities

Friday December 14

9:00 am—MEOC in Fellowship Hall

Saturday December 15

No Scheduled Activities

Sunday December 16

Third Sunday of Advent

10:00 am—10:45 am Sunday School

5:00 pm—UMYF

The Way of the Redeemed
Luke 3: 1-6

The Valley: If you see yourself _____ your neighbor, you will make her _____ of your life.

The Mountain: If you see yourself _____ above your neighbor, you will lord _____ him.

The Crooked Road: If you see your neighbor as yourself, _____ is Lord of your life.

Answers: beneath, lord; above, over; Jesus

Make straight the way of the Lord! Victims find it difficult to see Lord Jesus. Victims live in the valleys of life. They have been lorded over by neighbors to whom they have given power and authority. Victims submit to their taskmasters. They want to belong. Victims want to fit in. They go to self-destructive extremes to be part of a tribe. Think of a time you have played the victim. Such submission ends in slavery, not humility. The victim plays the role by acting out their shame and guilt. They show up in the tribe with a “poor me” or “fix me” disposition. Victims fight their taskmasters by blaming the very people they have given power and authority. They blame them for failing to fix them. Hear the Good News: God knows this is a human condition that can be healed by mercy, grace and love.

Victims identify with Jesus. They see the religious leaders, government authorities, and the people who shouted Crucify, Crucify as their victimizers. They form a tribe built around the common feeling of sympathy. Sympathy shares common blame. Victims have sympathy for Jesus. They are blind to see that Jesus fills the Valley of Suffering with empathy and compassion. The empathy and compassion transforms sympathy into Hope.

We see it in the news. Victims form a tribe based on sympathy. They harness the power and energy of their sympathy. They use blame to form a tribe. The tribe demands acceptance. When their demands are not met, they shift from being victims to victimizers. Here is a central truth Jesus teaches: With the judgement you judge, you shall be judged. The measure you give is the measure you receive. In other words, don't do something to your neighbor that you don't want them to do to you. Hear the Good News: God knows this is a human condition to be healed by mercy, grace and love.

Make straight the way of the Lord. Victimizers live on the mountain. They look down on the least of these. They sit on their high and mighty mountain and feed their ego. They indulge in what Paul calls the flesh. They live in Sin: Breaking God's commands gives them power. Refusing to turn and listen to God's still small voice gives them control. Their power and control demands authority. They have no need for love. The desire power, control, and authority. They lord over their neighbor.

Hopefully we see that the Mountain belongs in the Valley. How does the mountain get moved? All it requires is faith. Faith the size of a mustard seed fills the valley with the mountain. Faith sees neighbor as self and cries Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord; the one that has been the victim in the valley; the one that has stood on the mountain as a victimizer; the one that has experienced the power of empathy, compassion, mercy, and grace who always loves neighbor as self. Behold the Cross of Christ and see how The ONE made straight the way for victims and victimizers to be many members of One Body in unconditional love.

One in Christ,

Robert