

From the Pastor's Desk – July 2019

Live Simply! This is a statement that has been heard many times throughout the years and its' intent is to remind us that simplicity in the way we live can be a great gift. I typed the words "live simply" into the search engine on my computer and was not surprised to find countless websites devoted to this theme, many of them having to do with spirituality.

As many of you know, Sue and I will be moving from our present home to a much smaller condo this summer. What this means is that we are busy packing, and in doing that are finding we need to make choices about some of the possessions we have, including clothes, kitchen gadgets, work and garden tools, furniture, and all the other things that homeowners accumulate over the years. This can be a difficult process, depending on how attached we are to certain items. As Sue has said more than once, "it's not the items themselves but the memories and emotions that are attached to those material items or pictures that make it so difficult to let go of them."

In those words, Sue has stated a great spiritual teaching which is that, ***attachment and living simply do not co-exist with each other comfortably***. It was Jesus who said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy; and where thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19). He also said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 18:3). And the apostle Paul writes in his letter: "I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength." (Philippians 4:11-13)

What these bible verses teach us is that when we learn to live simply and in the moment – without worrying about whether we will have enough of something or other, without constantly wanting, desiring, or grasping for more of whatever, without always needing to keep busy doing something just so we have something to do – maybe then we can also enjoy a life of simplicity. Not that we simply sit around and do nothing, which would not be good for us, but that we learn to accept what life sends our way without becoming overly attached to the outcome or needing to try to control the outcome.

Many people, maybe even most people, become overly attached to things, outcomes, and of course, people. There is a difference between healthy attachments and unhealthy attachments, and the primary difference may be the ability or inability to let go of something that is no longer serving us or others well. This applies to our attachment to certain people as well. Is there something or someone you are attached to that is causing you unnecessary stress or grief? Is there a situation you are in that you are determined will turn out the way you want it to which is raising unwelcome and unhealthy

feelings and emotions within you? Please understand I am not suggesting we walk or run away from every situation or every person who is causing us to feel distressed or anxious, but that we learn to let go of our need to always control the outcome and learn to simply live.

As Sue and I continue to pack, we will be taking some things with us, giving some things away, and some things will even go to the trash as it seems nobody wants or needs some of the items we have stashed away (and probably haven't used for many years). In other words, we are being given a wonderful opportunity to simplify our lives in some ways and I hope we are able to take advantage of that. I also hope all of us make time this summer to simplify and live simply so that we can enjoy life more.

In God's love always,
Pastor Dave



Summer Worship Schedule

During the summer months, the congregations of St. Mark's, Wellesley, St. James, Perth East and Zion, St. Agatha will join together for worship services. All services will begin at 10:00 a.m., and following is the schedule for these joint services.

- July 14th worship at Zion @ 10:00 a.m.
- July 21st worship at St. Mark's @ 10:00 a.m.
- July 28th worship at St. James @ 10:00 a.m.
- August 11th worship at Zion @ 10:00 a.m.
- August 18th worship at St. Mark's @ 10:00 a.m.
- August 25th worship at St. James @ 10:00 a.m.

August 4th, and September 1st will be Opportunity Sundays, allowing you the Opportunity to take your NVMA Passport and worship with another congregation in the NVMA area.

"A Potluck Picnic in the Park" will be held on August 18th following the 10:00am service at St. Mark's. The picnic is held in the shelter near the playground and baseball diamonds in Wellesley. If weather is unsuitable, the potluck will be in the church basement. The summer services at St. Mark's will be held in the church basement, with refreshments available before, during and after the service.

All are encouraged to attend these joint summer services, if possible, and support the other congregations in our shared ministry.

To simplify counting of offering, it would be appreciated if you give one monthly donation at your home church, however, if this does not work for you, feel free to leave your donation envelope at one of the other shared services you attend. These monthly donations can also be made with PAR (Pre-Authorized Remittances). Please speak with a council member for more information, and pick up a form in the narthex. Or ... You could mail one summer donation to St. Mark's.

Thank you! Sue

