

Connect

With Sunny Place Church of God

August, 2020

A Matter of the Heart

Here we are in the “dog days” of summer, the hot, sultry period of stagnation or lethargy caused by the oppressive heat and humidity. The phrase, “dog days” dates back to the Roman and Greek astrologers, and has to do with the rising of the Sirius star, nicknamed the Dog Star. Now a days, it can be hard to get ourselves motivated.

What is motivation? It is the general desire or willingness to do something. It's a human trait; it's what causes us to act or it can be the level of desire we have to do something. We can be motivated, lethargic or energetic. Of course, there is spiritual motivation revealed in scripture.

As I was praying, meditating and looking up scriptures for this article, I was focused on our human motivations; whether good, bad or truly ugly. There is such divisiveness and anger in society now that people's motives can be questioned. I seemed to be dwelling on the negative when the Holy Spirit woke me up and whispered loudly; change your focus to God. Right. I wasn't thinking about God's motivations so I used as reference the handout Pastor Pete gave us during our Study of God Revealed in the Scripture. The Apostle John made it clear, “God is love” His motivation is love for us – we are His handiwork. Let's look at scriptures that help us understand His love:

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.” 1 John 4:7-8

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8

Nothing can separate us from His love, “For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ

Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39

His motivation is an eternal, unending, unconditional, unbound love for His creation. Our God loves us so much; almost beyond our limited abilities to spiritually grasp. What should our response be?

“And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.” Deuteronomy 10:12

As a response to His love, our motivation is to return His love. God's intention is for each of us to live in a love relationship with Him. Our love must be true, our motives pure and from the heart. Nothing is hidden from God, He is omniscient, all knowing. There is no way we can deceive God.

“Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” Hebrews 4:13

“You are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O LORD.” Psalm 139:4

There is another response that God has placed on our hearts. He has placed a desire, a motivation for Him in our heart.

“I took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners I called you, I said “you are my servant; I have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for I am with you, do not be dismayed, for I am your God.” Isaiah 41:9-10

God called us and is calling us now. He placed this desire for Him in our hearts. It is our choice to accept His call, His knock on the door of our hearts to accept Him as our Lord and Savior. His call can be considered a “Spiritual catalyst” to

(Continued on next page)

MOTIVATION

pursue Him with all our heart's devotion.

What is God calling us for? His Atonement. "Because of our alienation from God, our only hope is in the atonement of Christ." Arlo Newell.

Since Adam and Eve, God's desire is for sinners to be reconciled to Him through the atoning, sacrificial work of Jesus Christ. The scriptures reveal the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus for the sin of the world. God's motivation is that every person choose His love, His gift of salvation. We can choose life over death.

"Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live.'" Ezekiel 33:11

"He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance." 2 Peter 3:9

What a patient, gracious God! His motivations are love, atonement through the redeeming grace of Jesus Christ, not wanting anyone to perish in a life of sin. We can trust in His Words, His promises and His mercies are renewed each day. Our responses can be accepting His gift of salvation through sincere repentance, love leading to the motive of obedience, serving, walking with Him with all our hearts and souls. The responses to God's motivations become a matter of the heart.

A matter of the heart

"The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance but the LORD looks at the heart." 1 Samuel 16:7

"Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me, and keep all my commandments always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!" Deuteronomy 5:29

"Create in me a pure heart, Oh God and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Psalm 51:10

The scriptures describe a person with a pure heart as

one whose motives are completely devoted to God. There is no deceit, no self-serving desires, no desire for sin. Being Spirit led, faithful, listening to His voice, obedient to His laws and commandments, accountable to God, imitating Jesus as a living sacrifice. There are two glorious promises for those walking with Jesus and pursuing a pure heart. They are

"And you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 1:11

Then after the rich welcome in heaven there is another promise from the Beatitudes;

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God." Matthew 5:8

Those two promises can be our motivation; a pure heart for the promise of an eternal life and to see God. What trustworthy promises!

God's motives are pure, loving, seeking each of us for His kingdom. As we examine His motives, each of us can look into our hearts to discern our motives. Do you sense that your motivations may need to be examined? Or purified?

The Psalms provide insight about examining our motives. We can pray and meditate for our Lord to convict our hearts if change is needed.

"Test me LORD, and try me, examine my heart and my mind" Psalm 26:2

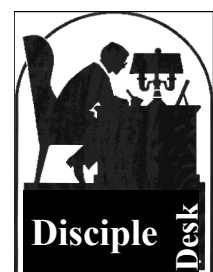
"Teach me your way Lord that I may rely on your faithfulness; give me an undivided heart that I may fear your name." Psalm 86:11

Is your motivation to pursue Jesus pure and your devotion undivided? Have you received Christ as the Lord of your life? Jesus wants a love relationship with you.

Having a pure heart like David can be our goal, our motivation as believers in Jesus Christ. To Him be the Glory He deserves, as these words are Spirit led.

Nona Koivula

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TLC

Together Loving Christ

Are you sharing in the exciting and spiritual blessings of studying God's Word and discovering how it applies to your contemporary life?

Join with us in our Adult Study Group at Sunny Place every Thursday at 7:00 p. m.

Grow in the Word!



Sunny Place Church is now reopening for Sunday Morning Services and Thursday Night Bible Study as of June 21st.

Some COVID safety restrictions will apply:

- A mask is required anytime you will be walking around. Once seated, in the sanctuary or at a class in the Fellowship hall, mask can be removed.
- Masks will be required if the congregation is asked to sing.
 - Sanctuary seating will be every other row
 - Please bring your own bibles.
 - Bible study classes in the fellowship hall, will have tables spread out, and can seat 4 at each table.
- Social distance will be important inside the building, so there will be no gathering in the Narthex, Sanctuary, hallways, etc.

Our Church has always been about connecting with God and one another in spirit. While many are ready to begin worship in a live setting, some are not. We will have zoom service available.

Our Sunday Morning Worship Services and Mid-Week meetings, are also being held on Zoom. Please contact us in order to have the invitations and links sent to you. The contact information is inside on the Church Events page.

Visit us at: www.SunnyPlaceChurch.org



901 E. Oak Street, Addison, IL 60101

Connecting Families With The Love Of Christ

Elders Minutes of Meeting held July 1, 2020

Attended by Pastor Pete Weber, Phyllis Clark, Tim Kasza and Nona Koivula

Prayer and Devotion “If the LORD delights in a man’s way, he makes his steps firm; though he stumble, he will not fall, for the LORD upholds him with his hand. I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread. They are always generous and lend freely; their children will be blessed. Turn from evil and do good; then you will dwell in the land forever. For the LORD loves the just and will not forsake his faithful ones. They will be protected forever, but the offspring of the wicked will be cut off; the righteous will inherit the land and dwell in it forever. The mouth of the righteous man utters wisdom, and his tongue speaks what is just. The law of his God is in his heart; his feet do not slip.” *Psalm 37:23-31*

Ministry Reports

Treasurer: Budgeted Bank Balance \$2,958.63 Giving for June \$11,294.62 Expenses \$11,136.72

Worship & Prayer: The Worship Ministry serves our Lord with an in-person Sunday worship at the Sunny Place sanctuary and using the Zoom platform. There were several meetings to insure a smooth, uninterrupted worship. The Elders are spiritually enriched by the Worship services. Pastor Pete explained our church will continue the Zoom service indefinitely because it reaches people who need to participate but are unable to attend church. It serves a great spiritual need.

Christian Education & Fellowship: There are two Bible studies; Thursday evening at church and zoom as well as Sunday morning at church and zoom. We discussed the possibility of a church outdoor picnic. There was a positive response with the suggestion that the picnic be held in Sept.

Pastoral Care & Encouragement: The ministry is mailing out cards. The greeters have commented about how everyone entering Sunny Place church on Sunday complies with the safe practices outlined in Pastor’s letter.

Outreach & Missions: The Outreach Ministry has two projects planned. An email was sent to our congregation asking for non-perishable food or money donations for an Elmhurst food pantry in need. There will be a senior drive through luncheon on Saturday July 11 similar to the first drive thru luncheon in June. The Missions Ministry prepared a 2020 budget which was reviewed. There was discussion about the Faith Promise information to be distributed to our congregation. We agreed to invite John and Gwen Johnson, to our church in August, and distribute the Faith Promise materials prior to the visit.

Stewardship & Support Services: After several floods in the older portion of the basement, it was decided to add a second sump pump to handle the excessive rain water. This second pump was installed a week ago and should be a solution to the problem. Tim Kasza recommended the work camp be cancelled this year due to the COVID 19. He wants to plan smaller groups working together on specific projects.

New and Old Business

The Elders will continue to remain in contact with the church family.

Next Elders meeting: Wednesday, August 5th

Sunny Place Church

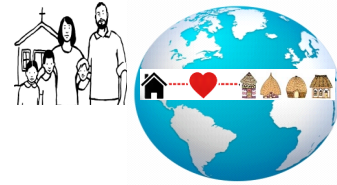
August, 2020



Save the date!

Sunday, September 13th **Church Picnic**

The World Next Door Love Thy Neighbor!



2020 Missions Sunday

Sunday, August 9th

Join us for:

Sunday Worship Service with
John & Gwen Johnson,
Regional Directors of
Africa and the Middle East

Our Sunday Worship Services, Thursday night Bible Studies and Meetings will be held at the scheduled times.

If you would like to join us for a service or study, via ZOOM, send an email with your name and contact information to sunnyplacecog@gmail.com to request a link to be sent to you.

You can also listen to the audio sermons, or watch the full video sessions of the services, within a few days afterwards, by selecting either version on: sunnyplacechurch.org/resources/audio-sermons.



Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.

“The Church of God
Revealed in Scripture”

Wednesday



7:00 p.m.

Designed especially for young adults and youths.

A Spirit led time of hanging out, sharing thoughts, prayer, encouragement, Scripture reading, and more.

7:00 p.m.

Tuesdays
TOGETHER

A time to share with others:
stories and answers
of how the Lord has
answered prayers in your life

THURSDAY

7:00 p.m.

“The Lessons of
the Kings”

A Study of the four books of the Kings.

Led by Pastor Pete