

Connect

With Sunny Place Church of God

May, 2022

Wholeness in the Life of the Christ-follower

WHOLENESS

Back when we were growing up, we had a toy called the Slinky that we would play with for hours. For those who remember this toy, it had what seemed like an endless amount of rings joined together, and they would work in unison to 'walk' down the stairs and perform other tricks. It was a simple, yet amazing invention. God's Creation is a little bit like the Slinky toy, if I can draw an analogy. It's obviously far more complex, but just like the slinky, He created many different 'parts' in this world that harmoniously work together for life to exist and thrive in a holistic way.

Just think about God's Creation for a moment. He created all of the elements essential for life on this earth. He created many different ecosystems that work together in harmony. Some of His creations that are essential for life on this earth aren't even on this planet! The 'ecosystems' that most fascinate me are the ones contained in the human body. Its complexity is mind boggling! The systems within the human body are fascinating and essential for our lives to exist in a whole and healthy way. God left nothing undone. He created a universe that is whole in that it works together to promote and sustain the life that we know. "And God saw that it was good" (Gen 1:25).

When it comes to God's creation of humankind, Scripture says, "The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life." (Gen 2:7) Scripture also says "Then God said, "Let **us** make man in **our** image, in **our** likeness, and let **them** rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, . . . male

and female he created **them**." (Gen 1:26-27). From the beginning of Creation, God clearly demonstrated that for life to be whole and complete (and good!) that all things must exist in unity, working together in community with Him and with one another. Genesis 2:7 demonstrates how the Triune God (Father, Son, Spirit) worked together to create man in His image, and that God made man and woman (them) to work alongside one another, to 'fill the earth and subdue it' (Gen 1:28).

In the beginning, God walked in the garden (of Eden) where He had placed Adam and Eve to live. And God spoke directly to Adam and Eve as well. Can you imagine that? We already know the story of the fall of man, when Adam and Eve decided to go against God's explicit instructions. They ate of the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, sinning against the holy God. It was at that time that mankind became separated from God, cursed by God, and the first 'sacrifice' occurred (death of an animal for God to make garments - Gen 3:21) that symbolized what would one day restore mankind to God and make us whole again; the sacrifice of God's Lamb, Jesus, the Christ.

How great is it that we live in the time of salvation! Jesus came to earth over 2000 years ago, giving His life as an atonement so that we might live (spiritually) and spend eternity with Him. So what does wholeness look like in the life of a follower of Christ? We have already been restored from our fallen position (to God) through faith in

(Continued on next page)

Christ, Jesus. Is there anything else we must 'do' to live a life of wholeness?

To answer that question, let's look at some Scriptures that reveal God's design for His children. The Bible is an amazing resource that fully and completely (and wholly!) reveals what our spiritual nature was designed to be, and IS through the power of God's Spirit.

Jesus calls us to be one with Him and with the Father, just as He and the Father are one (John 10:30, John 14:9, John 17:21).

To be whole, Jesus calls His followers to be *TELEIOS*, which means perfect or complete (Matthew 5:28, Eph 4:13, 1 Corinthians 2:6, Colossians 1:28, James 1:4).

To be perfect, we are to do what Jesus said in John 14:23 "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."

We are to walk in the Spirit and live out the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16 & 22). "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

We were created for faith AND works (Ephesians 2:10). "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works which;

We are to spend ample time in the Word (Matthew 4:4, James 4:8), put on the armor of God (Eph 6:10-18), and pray without ceasing (1 Thess 5:17-19)

We are to be the light and salt of the earth (Matthew 5:13-16), in order to glorify God and to give testimony to His transforming power.

To be whole as a body of believers, each of us is to live a life within the Church that edifies and builds up Christ's Church (1Corinthians 12:12-31). His Church is "made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body" ... but God has combined the members of the body to "follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts" (1 Corinthians 14:1)

The Church is the bride of Christ and "He makes us holy, cleansing us by the washing of water through the word, and to present us to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless." (Ephesians 5:26-27)

We are to live in unity with other believers. "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought." (1 Corinthians 1:10)

I could go on and on with examples of the wholeness that Christ designed for our lives. He's given us so many tools! (I challenge you to come up with your own list of scriptural references). To experience wholeness in our lives, God's word makes it clear we must be one with God (the Father, Spirit, Son), living within His purpose and design. We are to follow His will, live in community with Him, and with one another in the Church.

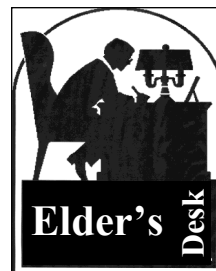
"His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." (1 Peter 2:13)

I leave you with the words of Jesus: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10)

Praying for wholeness in all of our lives.

In Christ,

Erik and Effie Wiechering



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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 Via Zoom every Thursday at 7:00 p. m.

Grow in the Word!



Sunny Place Church is open for Sunday Morning Services

We are happy to announce that the COVID-19 policy at Sunny Place has come to an end. The level of risk has lowered significantly to the point where we can allow masks to be optional. There will also be no social distancing limits or roped off pews.

We are grateful to God for taking us through this unusual and challenging ordeal. He has kept us safe and provided for us in many ways so that we could continue in worship and ministry throughout the entire fourteen plus months.

We will continue using Zoom for some waiting to finish getting vaccinated or transitioning to in-person activity. If not vaccinated and have not had COVID-19, we recommend you wear a mask. But the decision is up to you.

Our Sunday Morning Worship Services and Mid-Week meetings, are also being held on Zoom. Please send us an email with your name and contact information to: sunnyplacecog@gmail.com to request a link to be sent to you

Visit us at: www.SunnyPlaceChurch.org



901 E. Oak Street, Addison, IL 60101

Connecting Families With The Love Of Christ

Minutes of the Sunny Place Elders Retreat April 14, 2022

Attended by Pastor Pete Weber, Phyllis Clark, Erik Wiechering, Ted Gehman, Sam Jacob and Nona Koivula

Pastor began the meeting with prayer.

Pastor reviewed the Purpose, Mission, Structure of Ministries, the Essential Characteristics of the Body of Christ, the Functional activities of the Church, Vision and leadership.

The Purpose is found in Ephesians 1:9-10 "And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment – to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ."

The Mission is to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, through preaching and teaching for everyone and to minister within the church to integrate all into the Body of Christ. The Council of Elders and the Ministries are and must continue to be Christ-centered. The Ministry structure includes: Worship & Prayer, Outreach & Missions, CE & Fellowship, Pastoral Care & Encouragement, and Stewardship & Support. All Ministries fulfill His purpose by incorporating Biblical characteristics with the goals and objectives of the Body of Christ.

The essential characteristics of the Body of Christ must be Christ-centered, and sustained and supported by the Holy Scriptures. We see the functional activities of the church beautifully described in Acts 2:41-57. We want to make sure these pure, spiritual activities are experienced among us. Some of the key essential ones are devotion to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer. These words are engraved on the Communion table in the narthex. Looking only at numbers of people can be a distraction from our purpose. The spiritual understanding is from Acts 2:47 "Lord added to their numbers daily, those who were being saved."

Sunny Place Church is guided by the Holy Spirit for the Body of Christ to become:

Stronger through Worship

Warmer through Fellowship

Broader through Ministry Service

Deeper through Discipleship

Larger through Evangelism

The importance of Vision is found in Proverbs 29:8 "Where there is no vision, the people perish." The Vision for Sunny Place is for continued growth, which means people make a commitment to Christ, they are discipled develop as leaders, and with evangelism and outreach, people are brought into a commitment to Christ and the cycle repeats.

Elders must be intentional to develop leadership within the Body of Christ. Leadership is enabling/ helping those around you to succeed and thrive. There are some emerging opportunities that Pastor Pete mentioned, such as: a Natural Church Development survey, a Youth Ministry, Vacation Bible School, Laundry Love and the NICE Foundation. We will prayerfully consider these as the Spirit leads and resources us. Elders were challenged to work with ministry team leaders to review Ministry Team mission statements, and goals and objectives with their respective teams. We viewed two videos for our own leadership development, reviewed some final insights and thoughts, and the meeting was adjourned.



**Michaela McCurdy,
Projects and Disaster
Relief Specialist**

Michaela joined the incredible team at Global Strategy in the fall of 2020. Her original role was in researching the ever-growing prevalence of disasters and how Global Strategy can adopt holistic approaches to these crises. This research gave birth to new opportunities for empowering crisis mitigation globally, and in the fall of 2021, Michaela stepped into her current role with Global Strategy as the projects and disaster relief specialist. She is currently working on Ukraine Relief Impact program among other relief projects through Church of God Ministries with the Global Strategy Team.

Mission Fest Weekend

Saturday, April 30th
&
Sunday, May 1st

"A Heart for the Harvest"

Saturday Brunch:

Ukraine Disaster Relief Fundraiser
Michaela McCurdy

Sunday:

Faith Promise Worship Service
Michaela McCurdy
International Dinner following

Sunday, May 8th



**SECOND SATURDAY
SENIOR LUNCHION
MAY 14th, 11:30 A.M.**

**Come be our guest for food,
great speakers and activities.
Free event for Seniors 55+.
Space is limited so register
now at 630/398-2314**



May 18th, 6:00 p.m.
at the home of
Sam & Ann Jacob home

There will be games, food
brought and shared from the
group, worship music & prayer.
Please let them know if you
plan on attending.



Adult Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.

"Jesus' Teaching for the Blessed"

A Study of the Sermon on the Mount.

Led by Pastor Pete

Sunday Worship Services, 10:45 a.m.

In-person and on Zoom

7:00 p.m.



"Jesus and the Kingdom of God"

A Study of What Jesus said
about the Kingdom

Led by Pastor Pete

7:00 p.m. In Person and on Zoom

Our Sunday Worship Services, and Thursday night Bible Study 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, within a few days afterwards, by selecting either version on: sunnyplacechurch.org/resources/audio-sermons.