

Union and Sutherland's River Presbyterian Churches

Thorburn and Sutherland's River, NS

*Modelling faith in our communities one
conversation at a time*

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Sutherland's River



Thorburn

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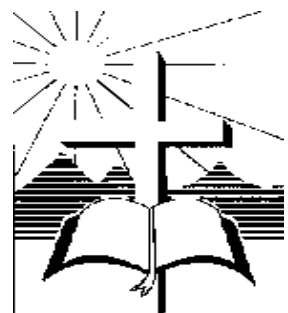
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A Word on Discipleship

One of the principal themes of Christian life - along with Faith, Evangelism, Mission and Stewardship - is Discipleship: the obligation for every follower of Jesus to deepen and strengthen our understanding of what it is to be a Christian. This is a continual process of reading and study that results in comfort when we pray; calm and healing when we visit and a degree of authority when we answer those who look to us with questions. In the end, Discipleship is what Jesus engaged in with his followers on the road during his all-too-brief period of ministry on the way to the cross in preparation for their ministry.

Recently, the Church of Scotland developed a short course of group study in Discipleship that opens with this question: When have you followed someone or something and ended up somewhere that surprised you?

So, here is a brief outline of something to think about on Discipleship between waking and sleeping as you wait for the end of 'Stay the Blazes Home'. 😊

1. Think about a time when your relationship with others shaped your journey of faith.
2. Share with a friend or a member of your family a story about a time when you were taught or discovered something that changed the way you see God.
3. Tell someone about something that Jesus said or did that you find easy or natural to apply in your life.
4. Talk about something that Jesus said or did that you find challenging to apply in your own life. ...and finally,
5. How do you notice other people following Jesus in their everyday life?
6. What have you learned from this set of questions and thinking that other people should know? What will you take with you in moving on from here?

A Word on Discipleship (con't)

Prayer: *God of our past, present and future, you journey with each of us through the heights and depths of our lives. You are present in every moment; in our learning and our growing; in our succeeding and our failing; in our giving and receiving; our questioning and our wondering. Receive our prayer Lord and help us to live life in all its fullness as your disciples. May we love you more as we hear your voice and share your love with each other. Holy Spirit who dwells within, guide us, and give us peace and strength as we exercise our call to discipleship. Amen*

Rev. Greg Dickson

True Happiness



Generally speaking, people want to be happy.

But what is happiness, anyway? Is it related to status, money, or an all-expenses paid vacation? What about a lollipop while watching the sunset?

I want to share four “ingredients of true happiness” according to John Calvin, a towering figure in Christian thought from the 1500’s. I value his insight not only because he was smart, but because he endured an avalanche of personal suffering. I just think it is wise to listen to people like that because it guards us against being too naïve or simplistic in our thinking.

In Psalm 85, God’s people are praying for renewal and restoration. They cry out to God that his glory “may dwell in our land” (verse 9). It then goes on to talk about the beauty and power of these four virtues co-existing: “Mercy and truth shall meet together; righteousness and peace shall kiss each other. Truth shall spring out of the earth; and righteousness shall look down from heaven” (verses 10-11, Calvin’s translation).

Mercy. Truth. Righteousness. Peace.

Calvin pays very close attention to these four virtues. He writes: “nothing can contribute more effectually to the promotion of a happy life, than that these four virtues should flourish and rule supreme.”

He doesn’t mention happy hour, a weekend getaway or negative test results—as nice as those things may be.

Calvin says that true happiness is achieved when mercy, truth, righteousness and peace flourish and rule supreme. Mercy when there is so much hate. Truth when there is so much deception. Righteousness when there is so much evil. Peace when there is so much violence.

Our society seems to gravitate toward quick fixes and Band-Aid solutions. So maybe we need to aim higher.

And maybe we can learn from someone who committed his life to keeping his eyes fixed on God while enduring an avalanche of pain. According to Calvin, true happiness is achieved when mercy, truth, righteousness and peace flourish and rule supreme.

In a world like ours—and at a time like this—wouldn’t that be beautiful?

By Matthew Ruttan

Thought Provoking Prayer from Mother Teresa



People are often unreasonable and self-centered.

Forgive them anyway.

If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives.

Be kind anyway.

If you are honest, people may cheat you.

Be honest anyway.

If you find happiness, people may be jealous.

Be happy anyway.

The good you do today, may be forgotten tomorrow.

Do good anyway.

Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.

Give the best anyway.

For you see, in the end, it is between you and God. It was never between you and them anyway.

Evelyn McKay's Sunday School Class 1961



Back Row: Mary Reeves, Carolyn Kawolski, Lee Dempster, Gail Jordan

Front Row: Marcella Reid, Diane Lorge, Margaret Haley

Photographs of the Church



Above are two historical photos of Union Church. The picture on the right where the roof is light grey has noted on the back that it was recorded in the 1940's. The one on the left, where the roof is black, has no information recorded but is believed to be one of the oldest recorded pictures of Union Church. It was found inside an old Bible discovered under the staircase to the balcony during renovations to replace the old spiral staircase. It can be seen that the photo was taken prior to installation of power poles which are clearly seen in the 1940 something photo. In each photo the large structure to the rear of the church is visible. This served as a Church Hall prior to the basement being installed in the early 1950's and was referred to as the Vestry. It was used for Sunday School, Session Meetings and many other Church functions. A magnifying glass will also clearly show a white picket fence around the church building. It is also interesting to note that there is no entry from the side where the ramp is now, and the road between Church and manse is level with the building. The depression between the road and church was most likely a result of excavation to gain access to basement during construction. It is also a mystery as to who is standing in front and one would assume it to be the Minister of the time. Looks as if his dog is waiting patiently up towards the manse.

Submitted by Paul MacLellan

Church Update, Summer 2020

Hello everyone! Our hot, humid, dry summer is rolling along in spite of the restrictions in our daily lives (which were put in place to keep us safe). I hope we all learned its better not to wait for a crisis to discover what is important in our lives.

Our church is alive and well after being closed for a couple of months. Our Sunday morning services have resumed; however, with no choir but we can all hum along with Karen as she plays the hymns. We welcome and thank all those who have returned to worship with us and hopefully, before too much longer, we will all be worshipping together again. Stay safe and be healthy.

Submitted by Gail Jordan
