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The Pivot

On many occasions, both professionally or through a chance meeting, I have talked with people who shared individual 'Epiphanies' that resulted in breaking generational chains of inner and outer destruction. The destruction occurred due to drug use, educational deficits, failed relationships, broken family systems, or lack of a desire to move beyond an impoverished way of thinking and living. In this current dispensation, some people are searching for answers to the many problems plaguing humanity.

I think the faith community can fill this formless void. The church should be a fully functioning organism bent on being an active agent for change in the lives of those inside and outside of the church's walls. The church should not be where the elite meet to socialize and listen to a watered-down hermeneutic. Over 2000 years ago, Christ stated in Luke 4:18, "The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free (NASB Luke 4:18)".

I am always focused on the previous pericope whenever I seek to assist people in beginning the process of becoming fully human. A fully self-actualizing human being has realized that they are more than their current existential position. I seek to assist people in discovering and constantly uncovering their true identity by asking self-inquiring questions. Asking self-inquiring questions can cause a person to identify the need for a fresh start which is the beginning of "The Pivot."

Blessings,

*Jules Williams, Jr.
MA/CE, LCDC*

HONOR THE POOR



James 2:2-4, 6

Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man wearing shabby clothes also comes in. If you show special attention to the man wearing fine

clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you." But say to the poor man, "You stand there," or "Sit on the floor by my feet," have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts? . . . Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to

be rich in **faith?** 

WELCOME GUESTS

We welcome our guests who joined us in worship this past month. Brenda Mayfield, friend of David Durham and Kenneth Reaves; Fayteen, friend of David Durham and Kenneth Reaves; Leru Poenisch, Bill and Gail Royster's daughter; Liz Herrick, Bill and Gail Royster's daughter.

We Remember in Prayer

Prayers have the power to heal and change the lives of those who are hurting in body or mind or spirit. We ask that you would send up prayers for:

- The family of **Lars Royster**, who gained his wings on June 5, 2021.
- **Brother Moore**, as he seeks to get back up on his feet.
- **Olive Baer**, who has limited mobility.
- **Cheryl Jett**, who has back issues.
- **Bud Spooner**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Marjorie Meier**, who is living in a memory care facility.
- **Paula Haley**, who is living with Parkinson's disease.
- **Norma Johnson**, who has health issues.
- **Troy Daulley**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Elizabeth Lemm**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Sudie Ferguson**, who will be receiving physical therapy.
- **Gladys Barton**, who is recovering from an infection.
- **Jim Fairbanks**, who welcomes prayers.
- **Nicole Mackenzie**, who along with her family welcomes prayers.
- **John Rehling**, who is living with heart failure.
- **Tonie**, who is having tests and welcomes prayers.
- **Kevin**, who welcomes prayers during his illness.
- **Dee**, who welcomes prayers.

MANY THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE HELPED SO MUCH

- ❖ Thanks to our Evangelizers who have walked and talked, handed out materials, and told the story.
- ❖ Thanks to Gaye and others who have presented the Children’s Time in church. The presentations have been clever, meaningful, and appropriate for young and old. What a joy!
- ❖ Thanks to our musicians. Nia’s voice becomes more beautiful, her presentation more meaningful. And Jules III and Mustapha—they certainly have the beat. Our choir sings to us and leads us in singing old and new selections. They meet once a week to practice. Thanks to these devoted ones.
- ❖ Thanks to those who have searched for a worship space—Bill, Gail, David, Kenneth, Margaret, Vicky, Peter, Jules, Kim, and all others who have pursued the task!

News From The Open Arms Care Commission

Our guiding message from 2 Peter 1: 6— “. . . make every effort to add to your faith *goodness*, and to goodness, *knowledge*, and to knowledge *self-control* and . . . brotherly *kindness*, and to brotherly kindness . . . *love*.”

1. The Love Train, a Care Commission outreach activity for those who welcome and need joy and love, departs for Pearland on July 1 to see our beloved Olive Baer, our ninety-nine-year-old parishioner who now lives with her granddaughter. Anyone who would like to join us for this visit is asked to call Gaye Fairbanks, 281-779-9269, for information. We will sing, deliver gifts and good wishes, visit, and pray with her. Olive is our number 1 Open Arms angel! We hope to make another Love Train journey in late July for the Spring-Woodlands area.
2. Gail Royster has introduced a plan to show our faith and goodness to those who are homeless, making their living on street corners, or seemingly “crippled” by life. Gail has stuffed large plastic bags with snack-food and toiletries. She plans to keep her bags in her car and, as she travels, to hand a bag to one she sees that seems to be in need. She encourages Open Arms members to create similar packets and hand them out of their car windows to those who are suppressed or down and out. Do not include money. Gail has plastic bags for you to fill; she will have them available at worship Sunday.
3. Every third Monday of the month, I prepare dishes for some of Spring Heights neighbors who welcome home-cooked food. Our friend Gladys Phillips has identified appropriate recipients and delivers the food to them. If you would like to help with this mission, that would be most appreciated. A couple of pieces of fruit, or two vegetables, or maybe a cheese snack pack, or bread or rolls—anything that would complete a meal would be a great addition. No sugar or desserts because of some dietary limitations. E-mail Margaret Smith (magworths@att.net) if you can help. Thanks.

Jesus Tells Us What To Do:

He Gives Tasks Or Duties To The Disciples-- And To Us

This month In Bible Study, as we continue to work on modeling our lives after Christ, we studied four commissions Jesus gave the disciples either before or after the Crucifixion, and we discussed their use in our lives. The commissions are as follows: 1. Jesus told the disciples that he had a New Commandment for them—*Love one another*—that love identifies them as true disciples. 2. He delivered what became known as the Great Commission in which he told his band of followers to *make disciples of all nations*, teaching people to *obey everything Jesus had commanded*. 3. He asked them to *shun materialism* and to travel, teach, and heal with only the bare necessities. 4. And finally he gave the order to *care for others*—to feed his sheep spiritually and physically. These are not the only orders he left us with, but they are central to what he taught and what we need to do.

Our next unit will reflect on Rev. Williams' theme of "Stability During Unstable Times," a series on which he will be preaching. We will look at elements in the Bible which will help us focus on and learn about the subject. At present Bible Study at Open Arms is offered every other week on Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. for an hour to an hour and a half. July Bible Study will be on the 6th and the 20th. The session is virtual and is available to anyone who wishes to study the Great Book. Call the church office for information and /or links to our zoom sessions.

A NEW WAY TO READ THE BIBLE

Ever wish Bible Study could lighten up a bit? Provoke a laugh in the midst of serious thought? Part of an essay by a fifth grader in his analysis of the New Testament will give you a chance to smile.

JESUS, THE BIBLE STAR by Billy Thompson

After the Old Testament comes the New Testament. Jesus is the star of the New Testament. During his life, Jesus had many arguments with sinners like the Pharisees, and the Republicans. Jesus also had twelve opossums. The worst one was Judas Asparagus. Judas was so evil that they named a terrible vegetable after him.

Jesus was a great man. He healed many leopards and even preached to some Germans on the Mount, but the Democrats and all those other bad guys put Jesus on trial before Pontius the Pilot. Pilot didn't stick up for Jesus. He just washed his hands instead.

Anyways, Jesus died for our sins, then came back to life again. He went up to Heaven but will be back at the end of the Aluminum. His return is foretold in the book of Revolution.

THE WEDNESDAY FORUM: SO HERE WE ARE

At the OAUCC Wednesday zoom meeting at 7:00 p.m. members discuss matters of the church. We have a faithful cadre who comes and participates each week. Are you there with them, working on issues which address the life of this group? We are so privileged to have the opportunity to offer a new church that welcomes all and operates on the Christ-premise that we are all neighbors, loving others as we love ourselves. We must never make light of or neglect this blessing.

Open Arms' most profound problem is the need for a permanent meeting place from which we can minister and carry out Christ's work. We are outgrowing Pallotta's. Please help us find an appropriate house of worship. How to do that? Look everywhere. PRAY. Spread the word and get your friends to help. If you find a possible location, or you want further details, call David Durham at 713-542-9068 or Bill Royster at 281-386-6411. Let's all work together to find something appropriate. Maybe that's the message God has for us: we must be a unified fellowship, a people of faith, involved in a concerted effort to fulfill our greatest need.

Welcome to Carol Foss

An extravagant welcome to Carol Foss, a new member of Open Arms UCC. Carol is a native of North Tonawanda, New York, where she was a member of St. Paul's United Church of Christ where Carol was married to Harold Foss in 1959. The couple lived in Florida, and then they returned home to enjoy the beauty of the New York area. Two children blessed this marriage. Eventually, Carol changed her membership to her husband's church, First United Methodist Church of North Tonawanda.

Carol worked for McDonald's for twenty years in a variety of capacities, ranging from manager, salesperson, and dishwasher. McDonald's cherished Carol as the "go to" person and valued her as a faithful employee.

Carol moved to Texas in 2010, sometime after her husband passed away. She lives with her daughter and family in Montgomery, Texas. Carol is first cousin to Olive Baer, another Open Arms member. The cousins enjoy each other's companionship, and Carol has helped care for Olive during times of need. Even though Olive has now moved to Pearland, the two talk on the phone every day.

Finding a friendly and loving fellowship at Open Arms, Carol decided to move her membership from New York to OAUCC. You can find Carol's home address, telephone number, etc., in the January 2021 Open Arms Directory. Welcome, Carol!

Lit Wits: Those Who Are Readers Of “Great Reads”

The Lit Wits group meets every second Tuesday at 6:00 p.m. via zoom or at members’ homes to discuss the book of the month. We enjoyed meeting on June 8 to discuss *Home for Unwanted Girls*, a heart-wrenching story detailing the treatment of orphaned children in twentieth century Canada and the events and people that swirled around one of them in particular. Thank you to Brenda Ruegge for hosting, leading the interesting discussion, and providing drinks and brownies.

On July 13, 2021, Sue Krueger will host at her home, 27815 Geneva Hills Lane and on zoom, *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins. Another American author, Kristin Hannah, describes this book, “Extraordinary. It is a remarkable combination of joy and terror, infused always with the restorative power of a mother’s love and the endless human capacity of hope.”

For an evening’s supper, a very simple taco salad bar will be available. (Please know that you are not required to provide food when hosting.) Because we will also be zooming, let’s meet at 5:30 p.m. to fill our plates and then begin our discussion at 6:00 p.m.

For the next two months, on August 10 Linda Michalicek will be hosting, but the book for August is still being chosen. On September 14, Margaret Smith will host *The Four Winds* by Kristin Hannah.

Happy reading! Our reading group is open to all who love to read and “talk about” their reading. Please invite friends who love a good book!

Happy Birthday Wishes

- ❖ **Nia Williams - July 1**
- ❖ **Colton Sanders - July 7**
- ❖ **Jackson Sanders - July 7**

THE LAST WORD

FOR OPEN ARMS GARDENERS AND ALL OTHERS THAT EXPERIENCE GOD'S
CREATION AGAIN AND AGAIN.

FORSYTHIA by James Hearst



You said, take a few dry
sticks, cut the ends slantwise
to let in water, stick them
in the old silver cup on the
dresser in the spare room and
wait for the touch of Easter . . .
You said, winter breaks out in
flowers for the faithful and
today when I opened the door
the dry sticks spoke in little
yellow stars and I thought
of You.