

The Two Wolves Inside

When I run across a meme or post that I like on Facebook, I save it to a collection of folders. One of those folders is titled “Being a Pastor Again.” I started that folder when I decided to go back into pastoral ministry upon my military retirement but long before I knew I would be coming to Lake Lotawana Community UMC. I was looking through that folder for some inspiration on a topic for this week’s newsletter, and I saw a meme that ties in with the sermon series I’ve been preaching on the requirements for being a disciple of Jesus Christ. (In case I have not mentioned it, I tend to avoid using the word “Christian” when referring to believers and prefer to say, “disciple of Jesus Christ.” My reasoning is somewhat complex, so that will be my topic for next week’s newsletter.) The meme was a short parable of sorts, and it goes like this.



“An old Cherokee told his grandson, ‘My son, there is a battle between two wolves inside us all. One is Evil. It is anger, jealousy, greed, resentment, inferiority, lies, and ego. The other is Good. It is joy, peace, love, hope, humility, kindness, empathy, and truth.’ The boy thought about it, and asked, ‘Grandfather, which wolf wins?’ The old man quietly replied, ‘The one you feed.’”

How true. In my sermons over the past five Sundays I have stressed inner virtue as disciples of Jesus Christ—the character traits we should show daily, and the person we are when no one is looking. And I have given you the scriptural basis for those requirements in the prophetic teaching that Christ has fulfilled through his life, death, and resurrection. Hopefully, you heard how similar the two wolves in the parable are to what you find in Galatians 5, where Paul lays out the works of the flesh (the evil wolf) in verses 16-21—characteristics like anger, resentment, jealousy, greed, ego, etc. Paul then contrasts those characteristics with the fruit of the Spirit (the good wolf) in verses 22-26 which show our faith in Christ extended to others—love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Which set of characteristics do you and I show each day? Which one “wins” in that inner struggle we all endure? It will be the set of characteristics that gets our spiritual attention—our inner thoughts and emotions—and thus what people see day in and day out in our behavior and our words. The ancient Greek virtue philosophers like Aristotle called that spiritual attention *habituation*. The philosophical concept is simple; **we are what we practice**. If we practice a useful skill, talent, character trait, or habit, we get better at displaying them. Unfortunately, the same is true for negative skills, talents, characteristics, and habits.

We are called by our Lord and Savior to habituate or continually practice the fruits of the Holy Spirit that are within us and thus not give room for the works of the flesh. That is how a collection of disciples of Jesus Christ we call a congregation differs from other societal groups and civic clubs. We are disciples of Jesus Christ 24/7/365 as the saying goes, and not just for a couple of hours on Sunday morning. Our continual practice of grace and mercy to others is how our world, or at least our little part of it, gets better—a topic I share on Sunday morning. Hope to see you in church!

Pastor Tom





Collecting Now through September 6th

Place your unused Rx and Reading eyeglasses in the basket found in our Connect Area



The Merida Foundation will give these glasses to the poor, visually impaired Mayan people living in the rural villages in the state of Yucatan.

Through Festival of Sharing in Missouri, various Christian denominations and non-profit organizations have joined forces to respond to poverty, hunger and injustice throughout the world by providing funding and resource goods.

LLCUMC has participated in this project for many years and this year we will be accepting donations to purchase "new" twin, full, queen and king size blankets or quilts to be given to agencies in Missouri. The blankets will be given to domestic violence victims, foster children, homeless individuals, and victims of disasters throughout the state. Donations will be accepted through August 9th. If you write a check, please write a separate one (do not include with your normal giving) and in the memo or on your giving envelope, please indicate "Blankets". Let's cover the State of Missouri with our love by providing blankets of warmth to those in need.

August 2020

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
2 Services 8:00 & 10:00	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Services 8:00 & 10:00	10	11	12	13	14	15
16 Services 8:00 & 10:00	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Services 8:00 & 10:00	24	25	26	27	28	29

2020 ELECTRONICS / METALS RECYCLING

LAKE LOTAWANA COMMUNITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

28901 NE COLBERN ROAD LAKE LOTAWANA, MO 64086

SAT, SEPT 12th 9:00 AM - Noon

Computers - TVs

Large & Small Appliances

Car/Boat Batteries & MORE

We accept almost anything with a cord or battery. As small as a cell phone to as large as a refrigerator- and everything in between! It does not matter what condition it is in or if it works or not.

Our recycling vendor - Midwest Recycling Center will collect fees on some of the electronics and appliances.

- TVs & CRT monitors - \$5 to \$50 each See fee schedule llcumc.org
- All computer equipment, accessories, and cables
- Medical, dental, and laboratory equipment - no biohazards!
- All telephones, cell phones, PDA's, digital cameras, and related items
- Batteries (except alkaline batteries)
- All appliances - small and large Items with freon - \$10.00 each
- AV equipment, speakers, etc.
- Lawn and garden equipment (gas and oil must be drained prior to drop off)

**DRIVE-THRU
DROP-OFF** See complete list
and fee schedule
at llcumc.org



Inviting Seamstresses to Join Our Efforts



The Lee's Summit based Mask Brigade, a group of dedicated volunteers, has been sewing cloth face masks since late March to donate to area hospitals, first responders, medical and dental offices, health clinics and nursing homes. Over 22,000 have been distributed so far!

As back-to-school plans begin to take shape, we are already receiving requests from individual schools to donate cloth face masks for students. If you are interested in joining our efforts, please contact me at sendmail2me@comcast.net or 816 210-4048. Pre-cut masks, sewing supplies, and sewing instructions will be provided.

We thank you very much - Elaine Raymond



On Going: Les Case, Wade Davis, Roger Grable, Richard Fuerst, Winnie Fuerst, Harvey Geary, Michael Hatfield, Nancy Rowe

Strength and Healing: Ken McDaniel

Comfort and Peace: Wife and Family of Jim Sneed

Missions: Africa Chicks for Change, Hillcrest Transitional Housing, Harvester's Food Bank, Lazarus Ministries, Tarsney Lake Families, Congregation de Mellier, Heart and Soul Children's Learning Center

Please contact the office to update or add prayer requests