

The Parish VISITOR



"Be Transformed...By the renewing of your minds." - Romans 12:2 - NIV

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton St., Los Angeles, CA 90004-2298
The REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY, Pastor

cpchollywood.org

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FULLY *Persuaded*



your pastor writes

By REV. STEPHEN M. BAROLDY

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to all the readers of the *Parish Visitor*!

This month, we have the continuation of a series on Christ Presbyterian Church's Vision Statement. I pray this message will encourage us to go and do the same works Jesus did.

Fully Persuaded, John 17:17-18, originally given at CPC on Aug 18, 2019

Introduction: For the past several weeks we have been talking about mission. And we have been answering this question. What is our mission here at CPC?

We are called to continue the mission Jesus started while he walked on this earth. We have defined our part of Jesus' continuing mission this way. Our vision statement says, "Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood is an intentional, healing community; proclaiming and demonstrating the wholeness of life offered in Jesus Christ." This is our vision of who we aspire to be.

Now, fulfilling our mission takes faith. Why? Because faith activates the word of God. Another way to say it is faith actualizes the promises of God's word. Or

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**Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
is an intentional, healing community;
proclaiming and demonstrating the
wholeness of life offered in JESUS CHRIST.**

CPC Virtual Sunday Services

Due to the state and city's regulations related to COVID-19 pandemic and to help keep our community and city safe, CPC remains closed. We are now holding a virtual worship Service every Sunday at 11:00am, using Zoom. Service ends around 12:30pm.

The invitation for joining the service can be found at the events page on our website at **cpchollywood.org**.

You can join on your computer/laptop, or your smart phone, by clicking on the link. Or, you can dial in on your telephone using one of the numbers on the link. If you dial in, you will have audio only.

If this will be your first time joining a Zoom meeting and you are using a computer/laptop or smart phone, you will be prompted to download the free Zoom App. You can participate in the meeting with both video and audio, or you can just do audio by turning off your device camera.

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*"Sanctify them [my disciples] in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."
(John 17:17-18, ESV)*

faith pulls God's promises into our reality. So, this morning, I want to continue talking about faith.

Faith is being fully persuaded that God's word is true: And, I want to begin with John 17:17-18. Jesus' prayer in John, chapter 17, comes just hours before he is arrested and eventually crucified. In this prayer, Jesus prays for his disciples. He prays for both his disciples alive at the time, and for all future disciples.

As part of his prayer to God the Father, Jesus prays this in John 17:17-18. Jesus prays, *"Sanctify them [my disciples] in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."* (John 17:17-18, ESV)

Jesus prays, *"Sanctify them [my disciples] in the truth; your word is truth."* Jesus' prayer is that his disciples, both current and future, will be sanctified in the truth. To be "sanctified" means to be set apart. So, Jesus prays that his disciples will be set apart in the truth.

Now, there are two aspects to our being set apart in the truth. First, John 14:6 tells us "Jesus is the way, and the truth and the life." So, as Jesus' disciples, we are set apart in him. We are set apart from the world, from evil, and from the evil one, in him. This is key. First, we must be set apart through our faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Next, Jesus prays, *"Father, your word is truth."* So, we are also set apart by the truth of God's word. We are set apart because we have something the world doesn't have. We have the truth of God's word. And, as we study and believe God's word, and put God's word into action, we impart this truth to

the world around us. So, we are set apart in Jesus, and we are set apart through the truth of God's word.

Remember, we are in a spiritual battle. In John 10:10, Jesus says, *"the thief comes only to steal, and kill, and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it in abundance."* So, as we are set apart in truth, we are separated from the thief, and separated to abundant life. This is the truth we take into the world.

This is why we can never back off from the truth contained in God's word. This is why we must stand on the truth of God's word. The truth of God's word separates us from the world. It protects us from evil and the evil one.

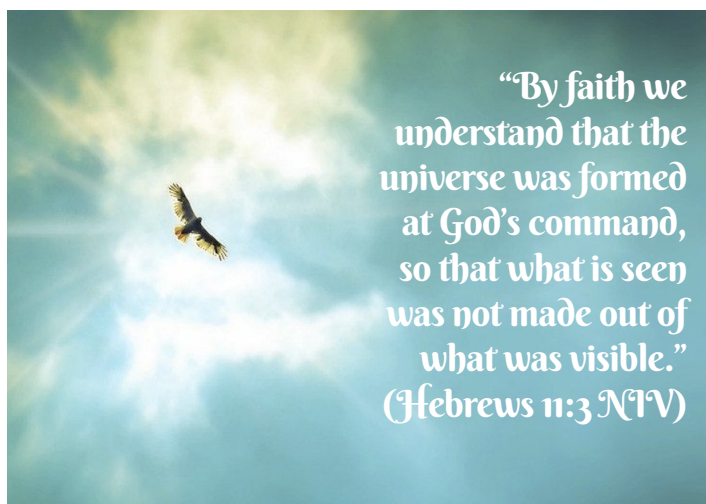
And then Jesus prays, *"As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."* Here, Jesus ties our being sanctified in the truth of God's word to our being sent into the world.

So, what are we to take with us as we go into the world? We take the truth of God's word. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we let God's word shape our words and our actions. We let God's word guide our encounters with the world. We let it guide our interaction with the world.

And, importantly, we don't make this critical mistake. We don't bring worldly truth into the church. Instead, we take the truth of God's word into the world. Amen! Worldly truth changes all the time. God's truth is eternal.

Now, in order to use God's word effectively, in order to be authentic, we need to have faith that God's word is true. Right? If we don't believe God's word is truth, why should anyone else believe it?

Now, as I pondered "faith" this past week, the words



“fully persuaded” kept ringing in my spirit. I like the definition that faith is being “fully persuaded” about something. Fully persuaded. If we are fully persuaded about something, then there is no doubt. If we are fully persuaded, there is no wavering.

For instance, are we fully persuaded that gravity is real? Being fully persuaded means we are willing to go out and walk around and not be concerned about floating off into space, right? Being fully persuaded that gravity is real means we will not go and jump off a tall building. Why? Because, we are fully persuaded the landing will be very unpleasant. We know what will happen.

Now, can we see gravity? No. Yet, we can see the effect of gravity? Likewise, can we always see the spiritual realm depicted in God’s word? No, but we can see its effect.

We do not see the kingdom of God with our physical eyes. Instead, we “see” the kingdom of God through our spiritual eyes. And here is the exciting part. When we are fully persuaded that God’s word about the kingdom of God is true, when we have faith that God’s word is true, and act on that faith, we can pull the reality of God’s kingdom into our reality.

Heb. 11:3 tells us, *“By faith, we understand.”* In other words, we understand spiritual things by faith. We don’t understand spiritual things with our physical senses, we first understand spiritual things in our spirit. And, then it goes to our mind from our spirit.

And here we are saying “By faith, we see.” We don’t initially see spiritual things with our physical eyes. We see spiritual things with our spiritual eyes, or through eyes of faith.

If we have faith, if we are fully persuaded, we will take the truth of God’s word into the world. We will act on God’s word and pull the reality of God’s kingdom in our spheres of influence. This is how we continue Jesus’ works here on earth.

What are Jesus works? Now, let’s bring this back to mission. Jesus tells us in John 14:12, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.”* (John 14:12, ESV)

Our vision is to be an intentional, healing community. To be an intentional healing community, to continue Jesus’ works on earth, we need to do the same works that Jesus did. Are you with me?

Now, what are these works Jesus did? In the gospel of Matthew, chapter 10, Jesus sends out the twelve disciples to do the works that he was doing. Matthew 10:1 tells us, *“And he [Jesus] called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.”*

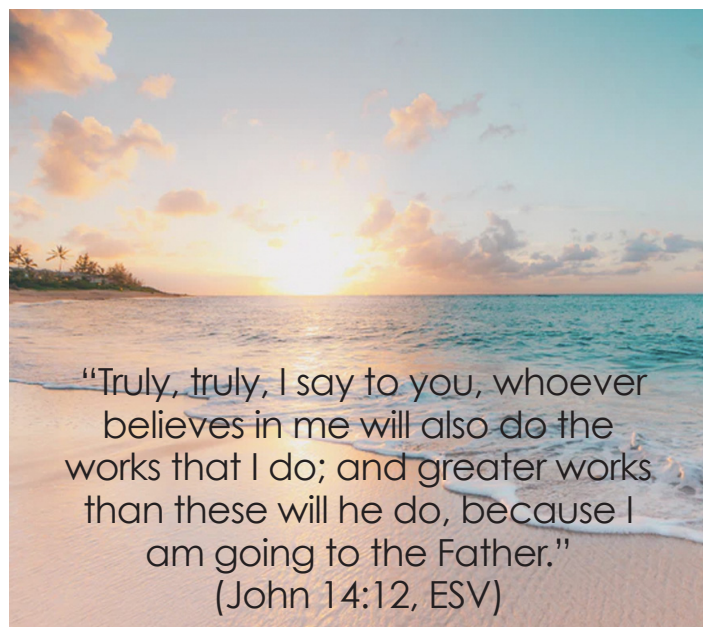
And then, Jesus tells them in verses 7-8, *“And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons. You received without paying; give without pay.”* (Matthew 10:7–8, ESV)

So first, Jesus calls his twelve disciples and gives his disciples authority. Authority over unclean spirits and authority to heal every disease and every affliction.

And then Jesus tells his disciples to go and do the works he was doing. Jesus says, *“And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.”*

Jesus sends the disciples with the mission to proclaim the

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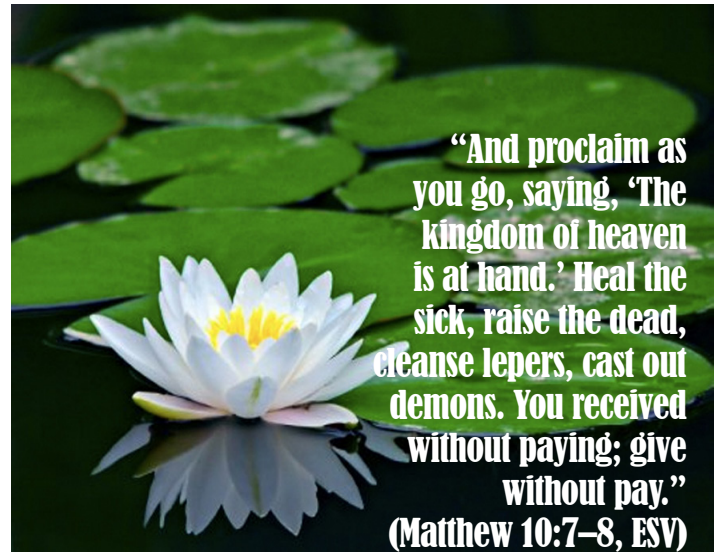
kingdom of God is at hand. And then to **demonstrate** the kingdom of God is at hand by healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers and casting out demons. That sounds like our vision statement, doesn't it? Our vision statement says we proclaim and demonstrate the wholeness of life offered in Jesus Christ.

So, what is Jesus doing in Matthew, chapter 10? Jesus is setting the disciples apart. Jesus is speaking the truth of his word to the disciples, and sending them into the world to act with his authority.

And this is before Jesus and the Father give Jesus' disciples the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The disciples are simply operating in the authority Jesus has given them. How much **more** can we do these works now that we have, not only Jesus' authority, but also the power of the Holy Spirit?

Yet, here is the key. Are we willing to be sanctified in the truth of God's word? Are we fully persuaded that Jesus' words are truth? Are we willing to speak to the mountain, or the obstacle, as we talked about last week? Will we take the risk of telling the mountain to be removed and cast into the sea? Will we believe and not doubt?

Let's close with Jesus' prayer. "[Father] sanctify them



[my disciples] in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world."
(John 17:17-18, ESV)

Amen!

See you next month,
Pastor Steve

FINANCIAL REPORT

**APRIL
2020**



	<u>APRIL 2020</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Receipts	\$ 15,773	\$ 42,849
Disbursements	\$ 9,035	\$ 48,063
Increase (Deficit)	\$ 6,737	(\$ 5,214)

Gift & Offering

Please help us continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and give hope to others.

Please consider sending a gift or donation to:

Christ Presbyterian Church of Hollywood
4011 Clinton Street
Los Angeles, CA 90004

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive them that trespass
against us.
And lead us not into temptation.
But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
The power, and the glory,
For ever and ever.
Amen.



In Our Thoughts & Prayers



Let us remember to keep in our prayers the church family and friends who are in need of God's healing touch: overall healing for Kimi Fujitani, Charles Ingram, Janet Nozaki, Frank Morimoto, Stella Kenner, Karen Koranye, Lashman Johal, Pastor Steve, Martin; healing of knee and wrist of Maria Cardenas and prayers for Marley, Hunter, Cousin Dari, and Aunt Laley; overall healing for Ron Jung; healing and God's blessings for Harumi Mayeda; strength to care for her Mom for Irene Mayeda; overall healing for Joan Janecek; healing of legs of Sherri Esaki; healing of back and leg pain for Yuri Sangen; healing of left foot and diabetes for Denise Albriton; overall healing and healing of cancer in nostril of Brian Albriton; prayers for Pastor Steve, his wife Simone and their daughters Nicole and Noelle and David and Alice; revival for CPC and neighborhood, our elders, Faro de Luz Church, outreach to community, unsaved relatives and friends, and protection against major disaster.

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wholeness of life offered by Jesus Christ."*

DATED MATERIAL

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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