

The Good News

March 2022

Our Lenten Journey



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Inward Journey

by Pastor Jacob Eun

When I am at a hospital as a chaplain, I get to meet different people. To name a few, nurses, physical therapists, occupational therapists, transporters, doctors, pharmacists, securities, environmental services, child life specialists, gaming specialists, music therapists, therapy dogs, and the list goes on and on. Patients alone share diverse backgrounds.

One day, I was called to a psychiatric behavioral unit for a patient who struggled with a history of anxiety, psychosis, bipolar disorder, and mania episodes. My visit had not been much productive but was filled with racial slurs and calling names to a point where I had to stop and step out of the patient room. He was suffering from hyperreligiosity, which is a psychiatric disturbance in which a person experiences intense religious beliefs or episodes that interfere with normal functioning.

I knew all his berating insults were not really about me but him and his struggles inside of his head. But it was still an attack and I was hurt. He was not aware of his aggressive, abusive words. He was not capable of self-awareness and socialization. Then this encounter pushed me to ask: What is the point of providing spiritual care to someone who is incapable of self-aware? Isn't it just a waste of time?

I struggled with this question. If patients are not capable of carrying a conversation, what is the point of my visit? As we entered into the season of Lent, this experience invited me to reflect myself. I was reminded of my younger self when I was completely caught up with my religiosity to a point that I became judgmental of others and valued myself based on my actions. I hurt many people emotionally and spiritually through my stubbornness, rigidity, and religiosity. I was a hypocrite who thought knowing and following the Christian doctrinal beliefs were more important than embodying love and embracing everyone. I saw bits of me in him.

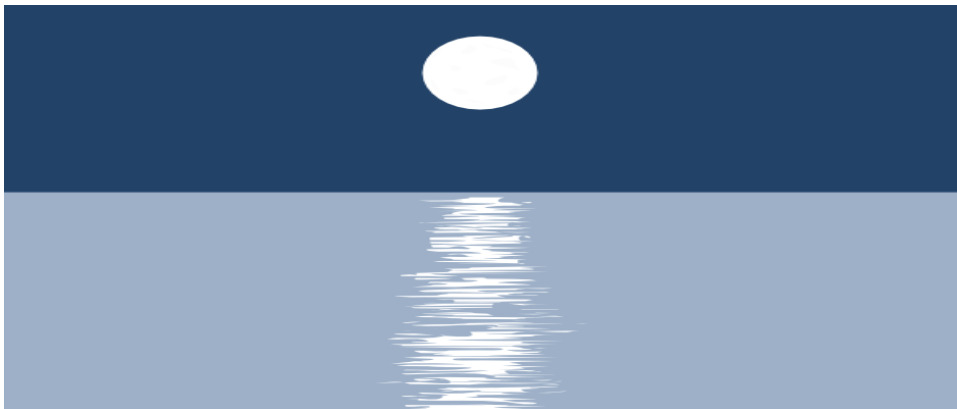
This is where I realized the meaning of empathy. He still needs help and care. I learned to see him from different perspectives, and this will answer my question of what is the point of caring for him? What if his loved ones saw that he was visited by a chaplain who talked with him and prayed for him? What if he saw the chart or remembers when his intermittent manic behaviors disappear for a while and realizes that I

tried? From a perspective of the hospital, the care we provide is a wholistic and interdisciplinary one that includes emotional and spiritual aspects. Patients are more than just their diagnosis and medications they take but are spiritual, emotional beings. My parents would be proud that I am caring for patients like him and offered grace. My church would be also proud that I am offering our love to others who are not easy to love. And I'm certain that this is what God would have wanted me to do.

As we embarked a 40 day Lenten journey, let us ask God to open the eyes of our hearts to see God in every person we may encounter. To some people, we react with anger. Some people grow jealousy inside of us. To some people, hatred or unforgiveness is what we feel. But may we reflect on our own sins and may God "forgive our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

The journey of separating ourselves from sin is indeed a difficult one, involving deep commitment and a sense of loss and grief. We will experience confusion, resistance, and temptations along the process of separation. It is hard to let go of what once gave us pleasure and comfort. but "let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1ff).

If you decide to fast from food or social media, it is through our loss, grief, and suffering that we will be able to have a bit better understanding of Jesus' agony and death and others who are suffering. The more we relate to Jesus and others in their pain, the more we understand them and realize how precious his blood is to us.



New Sermon Series

From Ashes to Beauty, Jesus Our Healer

Many of us are familiar with the phrase "beauty from ashes." It evokes a sense of comeback, of a phoenix rising from destruction, or of finding something good in exchange for sin. It speaks of a new life and new identity, restored from old into new. In our Lenten season, we are going to look at women who were suffering from their own sins and struggles, how Jesus restored them, and how they rose from the ashes and renewed as new.

3.6 Caught in Adultery

The first story is the woman caught in adultery. Here, the woman was misused and abused by almost all men around her except Jesus. Although she was not without sin, Jesus takes her ashes and turns into something beautiful.

3.13 Stealing the Healing

The second story is about a woman who suffered for 12 years from her illness. But her faith is what made her even the hem of Jesus' garment, hoping the healing would come to pass. Jesus placed in the midst of a large crowd, pushed against by many people, notices her touching of the garment.

3.20 Being and Doing

We have a sister, Martha and Mary, who present us a puzzling dilemma concerning the work of the kingdom. Jesus' answer helps us set our priorities. We are called to have the worship of Mary and the work of Martha in the correct balance.

3.27 For 18 Years

The fourth story is about a woman who had been crippled for 18 years. Other people criticized Jesus for healing this woman on Sabbath day. Through her

story, we will learn the true meaning of Sabbath and how Jesus restores not only her wellbeing but also people's view on Sabbath.

4.3 Woman by the Well

The fifth story is about a woman by the well. It is one of the most iconic encounters that Jesus had. She struggles with relationship problems especially with men. Jesus by restoring her reveals who he truly is and what true worship means.

4.10 Palm Sunday Anointing Jesus

No male disciple foresaw the death of Jesus but only one woman did. She anoints Jesus with a jar of perfume. She helps us prepare on this day of Jesus' triumph entry to Jerusalem that after all, Jesus will die for us, becoming the ashes on our behalf.

Holy Week and Easter

4.14 Maundy Thursday at 7pm

To remember Jesus' loving acts, we will share the bread and juice as well as include the washing of hands. May we be reminded of his unconditional love.

4.15 Good Friday at 7pm

The night Jesus was in agony and died is called Good Friday. How can one's death be called good?

4.17 Easter Sunday

Jesus rose from the ashes! Our healer and redeemer! We will celebrate the gift of new life and eternal life that Jesus gives to us on Easter Sunday.

A Prayer for Ukraine

(Church of England)

God of peace and justice,
we pray for the people of Ukraine today.
We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons.
We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow,
that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them.
We pray for those with power over war or peace,
for wisdom, discernment and compassion
to guide their decisions.

Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at risk and in fear,
that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen.





Ukraine Relief

United Methodists and others wishing to provide humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian people in the wake of the Russian invasion of their country may contribute to **Advance #982450, UMCOR International Disaster Response and Recovery**. This fund will provide direct assistance to those in Ukraine as well as assistance to Ukrainians fleeing to neighboring countries.

Gifts to support the people of Ukraine can be made in the following ways:

- Online at <https://umcmmission.org/advance-project/982450>
- By toll free telephone: 888-252-6174
- By check with "Advance #982450-Ukraine" written on the memo line, either mailed and addressed to Global Ministries/UMCOR, GPO, P.O. Box 9068, New York, NY, 10087-9068 or given at or through any United Methodist church

One hundred percent of all Advance contributions go to the designated cause.

Global Methodist Church

As the pandemic continues and other reasons, The United Methodist Church decided to postpone its General Conference to 2024 on the 50-year stance on human sexuality. I know the postponement of the General Conference is not an easy decision but it ensures the full, fair, and safe participation of United Methodists from around the world and hear everyone's voice.

And at the same time, it breaks my heart to hear the news that The Global Methodist Church has announced. The Global Methodist Church will officially launch on May 1, 2022, separated from The United Methodist Church. The GMC is theologically more conservative Methodist clergy and laity who decided to conserve their traditional stance on human sexuality by leaving the denomination.

Their language baffles me in so many ways as if I am not a true Methodist, heir of the Wesleyan theology, and follower of Christ. Their language about themselves includes: next Methodism, a truly Wesleyan future, spreading Christian holiness, true to our roots, and so forth.

I once held a deeply conservative theology on human sexuality and had no doubt that my stance reflected God's will evident throughout the Bible. My theological stance is of the centrist: coexistence in harmony as one church. We need to remember at this critical juncture what we stand for and not what we are against. Ironically, John Wesley was a centrist after all. In his "Character of a Methodist" he said, that he believed that Christians could be united by a few essential doctrines and have differing opinions on less important things, "but as to all opinions which do not strike at the root of Christianity, we think and let think".

So let this news be another reminder of our calling and what we have done throughout the past: love and love more.

Shred Day

Our Shred Day is back! The date is Saturday, April 2. We will keep you updated with time and more details as we move forward. We are truly grateful for all of your prayers, donations, and sponsors in the past years to make this event successful. We ask for your continuous support this year as well.

We need local businesses to help sponsor the event by donating \$20 to reserve the truck. In exchange, we will advertise their business on all of the promotional flyers! These flyers will be posted all over town, online, and at the event itself. We can also provide a donation letter for tax purposes.

We accept donations of \$10-15 a box to be shredded. And we are mindful of your health and safety during this pandemic. People can put boxes of papers in the trunk, drive up, and stay in their car. Masked volunteers will unload and shred for you. People can watch their documents being shredded to make sure.

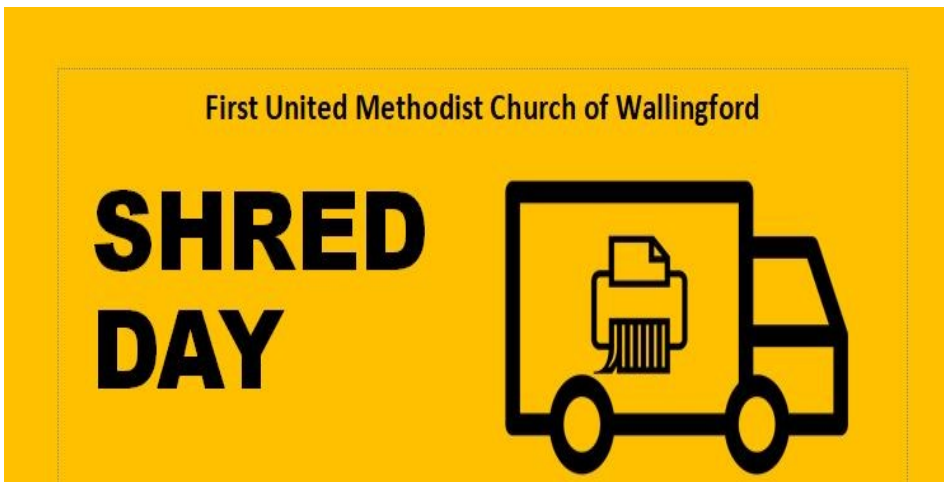
If you have any questions, feel free to contact Kagee and Steve or leave a message to church's phone number or email. Thank you in advance for your support.

Mark Your Calendar

3.2 (Wed)	Ash Wednesday	7:00pm
4.2 (Sat)	Shred Day	
4.10 (Sun)	Palm Sunday	
4.14 (Thu)	Maundy Thursday	7:00pm
4.15 (Fri)	Good Friday	7:00pm
4.17 (Sun)	Easter Sunday	

Happy Birthday (March)

1 Phil Wargo	5 Joan Charbonneau	10 Ronald Perrin
11 Jamie Holuba	17 Melissa Perzanowski	
18 Clifford Satton	25 Erin Marston & Lisa Barr	
27 Susan Coale	29 Jessica Poach	



The First United Methodist Church of Wallingford

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For any questions, comments, or changes,

please contact us at 203.269.9100

or fumc.wallingford@gmail.com

Announcements

Welcome

1. To schedule a time with Pastor Jacob, you can call 203-615-3214 or email at pastor.fumc@gmail.com.
2. Connect with us online. Search First United Methodist Church of Wallingford on Facebook and like our page! Or go on our website www.fumc-wallingford.org

Announcements

1. We have a new mailing address (P.O. Box 6089, Wallingford, CT 06492)
2. We are looking for one to three volunteers for our mini orchestra who will play during our worship service. Please let Pastor Jacob know if you know someone who is interested.

Support Our Ministries

1. You can support our church by shopping with scrip cards (ask Diane) and shopping at smile. amazon.com (with scrip cards you purchase) by selecting Wallingford United Methodist Church as your charitable organization.
2. We are grateful for your generous gifts contributed through our online website or mail that enabled us to serve faithfully our church family and our wider community. Here are three ways you can give:

Online: www.fumc-wallingford.org/give

Mail your gift to P.O. Box 6089, Wallingford, CT 06492

Or drop at church (941 Old Rock Hill Road, Wallingford, CT 06492)