



grow. pray. serve.

Reveille UMC Weekly Guide

April 26 - May 2, 2021

Sermon by Lead Pastor Pete Moon

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

Sermon Title: "A New Faith"

Notes from sermon on 4/25:

To pray for this week:

Family Focus Question

Name an enemy of your community. What would you think if Jesus went to his or her house to have dinner?

Questions for Small Groups

1. Why do you think Zacchaeus was so excited?
2. Would you have sacrificed your dignity and climbed a tree to see Jesus? Why or why not?
3. For these months, Jesus has come to your house to visit you through our worship. How has your life changed and what will you do differently?

Monday, April 26: Read Luke 19:1-10

Tax collectors were among the most hated people in Jerusalem. They were considered traitors – agents of the Roman occupation who turned against their own people to collect and extort money from them, almost always skimming off the top and becoming wealthy in the process. Zacchaeus was not just a tax collector, but a *chief* tax collector. His fellow Jews avoided him like the plague.

But one day, something drastically changed. Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, so he risked public humiliation by climbing a tree, just to catch a glimpse. Jesus did something even more shocking. He went into the tax collector's house to break bread. The result was revolutionary, showing the world for millennia to come the power and possibility of repentance and renewal in the presence of unconditional love and grace.

Jesus brought a spirit of newness, hope, and revival upon Zacchaeus's soul and can do the same for us. What are we willing to let go in order to find the joy of a new identity and faith?

Tuesday, April 27: Read Matthew 9:14-17

When we hold too fast to old habits, traditions, and identities, we can prevent ourselves and others from finding renewal and rebirth. John the Baptist's disciples criticized Jesus and his disciples for not following their own traditions. Jesus pretty much called them "old wineskins" unable to accept the "new wine" he was bringing to the world. What old habits, beliefs, and mindsets are standing in our way of our ability to receive the new blessings, ideas, energy, and possibilities God is trying to bring us? In what exciting new directions might God be calling Reveille in the upcoming year? Will we be able to receive these ideas with integrity and grow with God in a new way?

Wednesday, April 28: Read Luke 18:18-30

The birth of something new necessitates the death of something old. On Monday, we read how Zacchaeus was willing to give up his dignity and financial wealth in order to receive the new blessings of Christ. Today we read of the rich young man who was not able to do this. Jesus's words to the young man...and us...may seem unreasonably harsh to our modern, upper-middle-class ears. We want Christianity to simply add to our lives; we don't want to have to actually give up anything. Plenty of people, however, can give testimony to the radical transformation that takes place when we completely surrender to God. What is standing in our way from completely saying "yes" to a new life with Christ? What might be possible if we let it go?

Thursday, April 29: Read Revelation 3:14-22

So often, we pride ourselves in not being "as bad" as someone else. Sure, we don't give as much as we could, but we know plenty of people who don't give away anything. We've let our attendance slip at church, but how many families do we only see at Christmas and Easter? We drink too much, but we're not as bad as our friend's spouse. Today's scripture from Revelation should blast a hole through our self-satisfaction, as God describes being spiritually "lukewarm" as distasteful and delusional. All of us have areas of our life that leave us "wretched, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked" compared to what we could be with a new life in Christ.

Friday, April 30: Lamentations 3:19-24

We often avoid the book of Lamentations because – well, you know – the title. We do so at our own expense, however, because often we need to acknowledge and connect to the pain of the past in order to find our path forward. We also need to avoid idealizing the past and rewriting history when things get tough in the present, tempting us to backslide on our progress and go back to the "good old days." Today's passage has a powerful message: by remembering the pain of the past, we can have even more hope for today and our future for two reasons: gratitude for God's delivery and the knowledge that God's love and compassion are "new every morning." What pain might we need to acknowledge today? What morning ritual do we need to adopt to remember that God's love and compassion are new every morning?

Saturday, May 1: Scripture Memorization: Lamentations 3:22-23

"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, or his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness."

Sunday, May 2: Let us prepare our hearts and minds for worship in praying our Prayer of Common Confession: *Almighty God, we confess that for many of us, our faith has become dry. All too often, we are the old wineskins, fearful of what the new wine might do to us. By your grace, visit our lives and homes as you did with Zacchaeus. Remind us of your love, your grace, and the constant opportunity of new life. As you do, enable us, by that same grace, to live out what we believe with confidence, clarity, and integrity for we ask it all in Jesus' name. AMEN.*