



e - Votion



Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Thank you for all of the well wishes in my recent episode with a meatloaf that didn't like me!!! I am much better, back at it, and thankful for the prayers! --Jane

Dear Friends,

Today I am reading Genesis 32:22-31:

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and likewise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved." The sun rose upon him as he passed Peniel, limping because of his hip.



It SEEMS like the crises around the world are multiplying at an alarming pace, filling news feeds with unnerving headlines and television broadcasts with depressing reports. It's ugly: human tragedy and unceasing violence at its worst.

I've seen cable news reports of bloody attacks in Gaza, with little hope for a permanent ceasefire after the breakdown of a temporary truce. I've seen analyses of the investigation into the Malaysian Air Flight that was shot down, including photos of some of the remains being returned home. I've seen ongoing reports of fighting in Syria, a suicide bomber in Libya, and Christians fleeing from Mosul. Wars are raging in Syria and Iraq; there is unrest in Ukraine; we see unrelenting conflict in Afghanistan; we hear of civil unrest in Libya and scattered warfare across Africa. And then there is horrific famine in South Sudan, tension between China and its neighbors, outbreak of Ebola virus in Africa that is rapidly spreading.

I want to see hope.

Maybe our world leaders see themselves like Jacob wrestling with the unknown man at Jabbok. They are definitely experiencing a tough struggle against fierce opponents. And the New York Times even said, "Rarely has a president been confronted with so many disparate foreign policy crises all at once." The problems are complex and solutions are not easy. Anne LaMott said last week, "Here's the problem: the world's nearly ruined and overwhelming. People are such handfuls. Plus, the parking's terrible. But hallelujah anyway."

The wrestling will continue.

Pick a country. Name a continent. Wrestling matches are exploding everywhere at an alarming pace. Jacob pushed against God, demanding to know with whom he was wrestling. And the world seems to be doing something similar. And I, for one, yearn for that blessing that will make us whole.

Escaping for a while into a movie or Yoga is tempting. But real life is never far away and what we need is hope that is lasting and real - hope that is incarnational and will enable us to shout out hallelujah in the midst of world chaos. As the wrestling match continues, we need something to cause us to rise up and shout out in our best voice: "Show me the hope!"

When you wrestle unseen opponents, it's hard to find the hope. In our Scripture, both Old and New Testament, we find reminders of God's incarnational presence. That alone may save us. I SURE HOPE SO. :)

PRAISES AND PRAYER CONCERNS:

Praise God that we have a new Sunday School class starting THIS SUNDAY AUGUST 3 in the room across from the print room. Designed primarily for college students and young adults, we are hopeful that many will come. INVITE those you know who might be looking for a SS class.

Praise God for the many, many ways we are touching others with God's love. :)

Praise God that Carrie Denny got a cancer free report from her doctor! Please pray for Carrie as she heals.

Praise God for the vision for ministry that Garland Thayer and a couple other people had 50 years ago in a community called Hyder's Gap Virginia. That vision led to a grant application and formation of a community club, which is now People Inc. People Inc is celebrating their 50th anniversary in August and Naming a BUILDING for Garland Thayer!!! :)

Please pray for:

Emily Wooten, who broke her leg in two places
Martha Hauff, in rehab in Erwin, and also experiencing chest pain.
Shirley Palmer, who is at home
Jane Eddy

CALENDAR:

Cardinal Park 5:30 today for picnic and First UMC night in the park. Pick up your free ticket at the gate.

7/31 12:30 Young at Heart One Acre Cafe

8/3-8/6 Sulphur Springs Camp Meeting

8/4 6 pm Parsonage Committee meets at the Parsonage
7 pm Worship Pillar meets

8/5 6 pm Trustees

8/6 Wednesday niter begins 5:30 Fellowship Hall

8/7 5 pm UMW Exec Committee
6 pm UMW General Meeting
6:30 Finance Committee

8/12 7 pm Pillar Chairs

Upcoming Sermon Series for THE BRANCH starts Sunday August 3

Extreme Makeover of the Spiritual Kind

8/3 From Laziness to Passion
8/10 From Pride to Humility
8/17 From Greed to Generosity
8/24 From Envy to Gratitude
8/31 From Lust to Love

HELP WANTED:

We need someone to do the bulletin for The Branch. Lisa Reis has been doing this and has gone back to school, so she is working two jobs (and we need her more for our youth than for this!). If you can help, please contact Jane!!! :)

We are looking for volunteers to help with our rapidly expanding children and youth ministries. If you have a passion for children/youth, please contact Brandy and Lisa. Help can be in the form of snack supper, transportation, etc.

"Preach the gospel at all times and when necessary use words."

St Francis of Assisi

Blessings,

Jane Taylor
First United Methodist Church
Johnson City TN