

## **All Church Worship Brainstorming for September and October Worship**

**Wednesday, August 23, 2017**

Ron & Vicki Zuker's house  
3503 Winnetaska, Norton Shores  
6:00 pm Cookout/Potluck Dinner  
7:00-9:00 pm Brainstorming for Worship

Please join us for a potluck dinner at 6:00 pm. Ron is grilling chicken. Bring a dish to pass. Weather permitting, we will eat outside to take advantage of the Zuker's wonderful view of Lake Michigan, and then move inside for the brainstorming.

RSVPs are helpful but not mandatory. Sign up at church, below, or contact the church office at 213-798-2181 or [lakeharbor@aol.com](mailto:lakeharbor@aol.com) or Vicki Zuker at 759-8848 or [zukerr@comcast.net](mailto:zukerr@comcast.net). Carpooling is encouraged. Please read the scripture and message synopses and preview the videos before we gather if at all possible.

**Vicki's directions from church:** Take Henry St. to Norton. Turn left (west) on Norton. It will curve & turn into Lincoln St. Go about one mile. Turn left onto Winnetaska. (It is a dirt road) One half mile down Winnetaska, take a sharp left at the first house. There will be a sign pointing to Zuker's. Follow it back another half mile to our house.

### **SERVING SUNDAYS - Missions Conference**

#### **Five Practices of Fruitful Living: Risk-Taking Mission and Service**

- *Definition:* All that we do to make a positive difference in the lives of others for the purposes of Christ, whether or not they will ever be part of the community of faith.
- Mission turns us outward.
- We serve God by serving others.
- Risk-taking mission and service takes us into ministries that push us out of our comfort zone, stretching us beyond the circle of relationships and practices that routinely define our faith commitments.

#### **Ideas for the series:**

- Use our mission and vision statements
  - The mission of Lake Harbor United Methodist Church is ***to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.***
  - The vision of Lake Harbor United Methodist Church is that all people may experience the love of Jesus. Our call then, is Love: ***welcoming all, empowered by Christ, sent forth to serve.***
- Use mission statements from each organization
- Show connection between personal and social holiness:
- Wesley's work with those in poverty, schools, hospitals
- Use Social Creed: <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/our-social-creed>
- UM Social Principles references:

### **The Family**

We believe the family to be the basic human community through which persons are nurtured and sustained in mutual love, responsibility, respect, and fidelity. We affirm the importance of loving parents for all children. We also understand the family as encompassing a wider range of options than that of the two-generational unit of parents and children (the nuclear family). We affirm shared responsibility for parenting where there are two parents and encourage social, economic, and religious efforts to maintain and strengthen relationships within families in order that every member may be assisted toward complete personhood.

### **Sexual Abuse**

Violent, disrespectful, or abusive sexual expressions do not confirm sexuality as God's good gift. We reject all sexual expressions that damage the humanity God has given us as birthright, and we affirm only that sexual expression that enhances that same humanity. We believe that sexual relations where one or both partners are exploitative, abusive, or promiscuous are beyond the parameters of acceptable Christian behavior and are ultimately destructive to individuals, families, and the social order. We deplore all forms of the commercialization and exploitation of sex, with their consequent cheapening and degradation of human personality. To lose freedom and be sold by someone else for sexual purposes is a form of slavery, and we denounce such business and support the abused and their right to freedom.

We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation or use of children by adults and encourage efforts to hold perpetrators legally and financially responsible. We call for the establishment of adequate protective services, guidance, and counseling opportunities for children thus abused.

### **Criminal Justice and Restorative Justice**

To protect all persons from encroachment upon their personal and property rights, governments have established mechanisms of law enforcement and courts. A wide array of sentencing options serves to express community outrage, incapacitate dangerous offenders, deter crime, and offer opportunities for rehabilitation. We support governmental measures designed to reduce and eliminate crime that are consistent with respect for the basic freedom of persons.

We reject all misuse of these mechanisms, including their use for the purpose of revenge or for persecuting or intimidating those whose race, appearance, lifestyle, economic condition, or beliefs differ from those in authority. We reject all careless, callous, or discriminatory enforcement of law that withholds justice from persons with disabilities and all those who do not speak the language of the country in which they are in contact with the law enforcement. We further support measures designed to remove the social conditions that lead to crime, and we encourage continued positive interaction between law enforcement officials and members of the community at large.

In the love of Christ, who came to save those who are lost and vulnerable, we urge the creation of a genuinely new system for the care and restoration of victims, offenders, criminal justice officials, and the community as a whole. Restorative justice grows out of biblical authority, which emphasizes a right relationship with God, self, and community. When such relationships are violated or broken through crime, opportunities are created to make things right.

Most criminal justice systems around the world are retributive. These retributive justice systems profess to hold the offender accountable to the state and use punishment as the equalizing tool for accountability. In contrast, restorative justice seeks to hold the offender accountable to the victimized person, and to the disrupted community. Through God's transforming power, restorative justice seeks to repair the damage, right the wrong, and bring healing to all involved, including the victim, the offender, the families, and the community. The Church is transformed when it responds to the claims of discipleship by becoming an agent of healing and systemic change.

### **Poverty**

In spite of general affluence in the industrialized nations, the majority of persons in the world live in poverty. In order to provide basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, and other necessities, ways must be found to share more equitably the resources of the world. Increasing technology, when accompanied by exploitative economic practices, impoverishes many persons and makes poverty self-perpetuating. Poverty due to natural catastrophes and environmental changes is growing and needs attention and support. Conflicts and war impoverish the population on all sides, and an important way to support the poor will be to work for peaceful solutions.

As a church, we are called to support the poor and challenge the rich. To begin to alleviate poverty, we support such policies as: adequate income maintenance, quality education, decent housing, job training, meaningful employment opportunities, adequate medical and hospital care, humanization and radical revisions of welfare programs, work for peace in conflict areas and efforts to protect creation's integrity. Since low wages are often a cause of poverty, employers should pay their employees a wage that does not require them to depend upon government subsidies such as food stamps or welfare for their livelihood.

Because we recognize that the long-term reduction of poverty must move beyond services to and employment for the poor, which can be taken away, we emphasize measures that build and maintain the wealth of poor people, including asset-building strategies such as individual development savings accounts, micro-enterprise development programs, programs enabling home ownership, and financial management training and counseling. We call upon churches to develop these and other ministries that promote asset-building among the poor. We are especially mindful of the Global South, where investment and micro-enterprise are especially needed. We urge support for policies that will encourage equitable economic growth in the Global South and around the world, providing a just opportunity for all.

Poverty most often has systemic causes, and therefore we do not hold poor people morally responsible for their economic state.

### **Guiding scriptures #1: Micah 6: 6-8 (NIV)**

<sup>6</sup>With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? <sup>7</sup>Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? <sup>8</sup>He has showed you all you people what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

**Guiding scripture #2:** Matthew 25: 31-46 (CEV) – key verse is highlighted

<sup>31</sup>When the Son of Man comes in his glory with all of his angels, he will sit on his royal throne.

<sup>32</sup>The people of all nations will be brought before him, and he will separate them, as shepherds separate their sheep from their goats.

<sup>33</sup>He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. <sup>34</sup>Then the king will say to those on his right, “My father has blessed you! Come and receive the kingdom that was prepared for you before the world was created. <sup>35</sup> £ When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me, <sup>36</sup>and when I was naked, you gave me clothes to wear. When I was sick, you took care of me, and when I was in jail, you visited me.”

<sup>37</sup>Then the ones who pleased the Lord will ask, “When did we give you something to eat or drink? <sup>38</sup>When did we welcome you as a stranger or give you clothes to wear <sup>39</sup>or visit you while you were sick or in jail?”

<sup>40</sup>The king will answer, “Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me.”

<sup>41</sup>Then the king will say to those on his left, “Get away from me! You are under God’s curse. Go into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels! <sup>42</sup>I was hungry, but you did not give me anything to eat, and I was thirsty, but you did not give me anything to drink. <sup>43</sup>I was a stranger, but you did not welcome me, and I was naked, but you did not give me any clothes to wear. I was sick and in jail, but you did not take care of me.”

<sup>44</sup>Then the people will ask, “Lord, when did we fail to help you when you were hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in jail?”

<sup>45</sup>The king will say to them, “Whenever you failed to help any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you failed to do it for me.”

<sup>46</sup>Then Jesus said, “Those people will be punished forever. But the ones who pleased God will have eternal life.”

**Other Scripture references:**

- Psalms name God as a “lover of justice” (99:4) and One who “loves righteousness” (33:5). There’s a consistent emphasis on caring for the widow and the orphan (the most vulnerable).
- Luke 4: 18-19 show Jesus’ commitment to serving others.
- “The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve.” Matthew 20:28.

**Images:** Serving hands. For more examples, go to

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/LHUMC/September%202017%20Missions>.

**Media:** Each mission organization may provide pictures and/or video.

- “Do Something.” One man passes up everyday opportunities to serve others, provoking thought about how choosing whether or not to “do something” affects us, others, and the Kingdom of God. Length: 2:07. Cost: \$20.00.  
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/10602/do-something>
- “Dirty Feet.” Feet represent where we go. This video asks us to consider where we might be willing to go for the sake of the Gospel. Length: 1:08. Cost: \$7.00.  
<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/54244/dirty-feet>

- “Free to Serve.” God has made us free. It is an in-explainable gift, yet it comes with great responsibility. Based on Galatians 5:13. Length: 2:02. Cost: We own it. Last used 6/26/13. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/42652/free-to-serve>
- “Broken Down.” This video is about missed opportunities to be the hands and feet of God through service to others. Length: 3:30. Cost \$15.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/3498/broken-down>
- “Holy Hears a Who!” God has a mission for every believer, but very few stop to hear Him speak. Length: 2:25. Cost: \$12.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/37668/holy-hears-a-who>
- “Family Outing.” We get so stuck in the day-to-day routine we lose track of the important things God has called us to do, such as, loving your neighbor as yourself, serving others, respecting authority, and living in truth. Length: 4:31. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/295/family-outing>
- “Beyond These Walls.” This is what church is really about. Length: 1:47. Cost: \$19.99. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/60562/beyond-these-walls>
- “You Are a Servant.” Part of the Hard Truth series. Length: 1:33. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/58620/you-are-a-servant>
- “Serviceitis.” Length: Funny video about serving others. Length 1:07. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/37493/serviceitis>
- “Self Serving.” Do we live a selfish life or do we live that is willing to serve others around us? Length: 2:18. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/34758/self-serving>

**Music:** Give Me Your Eyes (Brandon Heath), Here I Am, Lord (UMH 593), Do Something (Matthew West)

**Discussion points:**

**September 10, 2017: “Faith Works”**

Family Promise of the Lakeshore &  
Kids’ Food Basket

*Scripture:* James 2: 14-18 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>14</sup>My friends, what good is it to say you have faith, when you don’t do anything to show that you really do have faith? Can that kind of faith save you?

<sup>15</sup>If you know someone who doesn’t have any clothes or food, <sup>16</sup>you shouldn’t just say, “I hope all goes well for you. I hope you will be warm and have plenty to eat.” What good is it to say this, unless you do something to help? <sup>17</sup>Faith that doesn’t lead us to do good deeds is all alone and dead!

<sup>18</sup>Suppose someone disagrees and says, “It is possible to have faith without doing kind deeds.”

I would answer, “Prove that you have faith without doing kind deeds, and I will prove that I have faith by doing them.”

*Synopsis:* The connection between our words and actions matter, especially when it comes to our walk with Christ. Faith is more than what we say we believe; faith is also about how we live what we believe. In our Wesleyan heritage, this is called personal holiness and social holiness – loving God with heart and life.

Visuals:

Media:

Resource: <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/sermon-faith-that-works-james-2>

Activity: KFB - use "Girl in the Yellow Dress" book

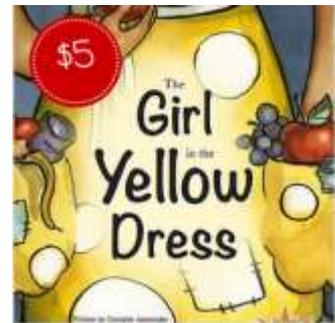
Music:

UMSP - Family, Poverty

Hospitality:

"Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it for me." Matthew 25:40.

For FP and KFB: Churches offer their space – both for families in need and offer time to transport, feed, care for, and get to know families (host churches and helping churches) and a place to prepare meals (Central UMC).



Building communities, strengthening lives...**Family Promise of the Lakeshore**,

established in November of 2009, is dedicated to helping moms and dads find and keep secure housing for their children. While in the program families learn life skills that help improve their chance for success. Family Promise offers local churches the opportunity to put their mission goals into action locally, helping people in the community in which they live. <http://www.fp-lakeshore.org/>

### **Kids' Food Basket**

Our mission: empowering communities to attack childhood hunger so that young people can learn and live well. Childhood hunger denies dignity, robs kids of their energy, and undermines our community's stability. <http://www.kidsfoodbasket.org/>

- "Kids' Food Basket: When I Grow Up I Want to Be" Length: 1:35. Cost: Free.
- "Life of a Sack Supper" Length 1:41. Cost: Free.

### **Discussion points:**

**September 17, 2017: "Justice for All"**

**70x7 & Hope Project**

*Scripture:* Micah 6: 6-8 (NIV) is shown on page 3

*Scripture:* Matthew 18: 21-35 (New Living Translation) **or** Luke 4: 18-19, below

<sup>21</sup>Then Peter came to him and asked, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times?"

<sup>22</sup>"No, not seven times," Jesus replied, "but seventy times seven!"

<sup>23</sup>"Therefore, the Kingdom of Heaven can be compared to a king who decided to bring his accounts up to date with servants who had borrowed money from him. <sup>24</sup>In the process, one of his debtors was brought in who owed him millions of dollars. <sup>25</sup>He couldn't pay, so his master ordered that he be sold—along with his wife, his children, and everything he owned—to pay the debt.

<sup>26</sup>"But the man fell down before his master and begged him, 'Please, be patient with me, and I will pay it all.' <sup>27</sup>Then his master was filled with pity for him, and he released him and forgave his debt.

<sup>28</sup>“But when the man left the king, he went to a fellow servant who owed him a few thousand dollars. He grabbed him by the throat and demanded instant payment.

<sup>29</sup>“His fellow servant fell down before him and begged for a little more time. ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it,’ he pleaded. <sup>30</sup>But his creditor wouldn’t wait. He had the man arrested and put in prison until the debt could be paid in full.

<sup>31</sup>“When some of the other servants saw this, they were very upset. They went to the king and told him everything that had happened. <sup>32</sup>Then the king called in the man he had forgiven and said, ‘You evil servant! I forgave you that tremendous debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>Shouldn’t you have mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had mercy on you?’ <sup>34</sup>Then the angry king sent the man to prison to be tortured until he had paid his entire debt.

<sup>35</sup>“That’s what my heavenly Father will do to you if you refuse to forgive your brothers and sisters from your heart.”

*Scripture:* Luke 4: 18-19 (The Message)

<sup>18</sup>God’s Spirit is on me; he’s chosen me to preach the Message of good news to the poor, sent me to announce pardon to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to set the burdened and battered free, <sup>19</sup>to announce, “This is God’s year to act!”

*Synopsis:* Throughout Scripture, God is described as One who loves justice and righteousness, which is defined as caring for the most vulnerable. Jesus constantly broke social boundaries and reached out to those who were written off by others in order to show the depth of God’s love. Risk-taking mission and service in Christ’s name calls us to places and situations that challenge our comfort zones and ultimately transform us.

*Visuals:*

*Media:*

*Activity:*

*Music:*

*UMSP - Criminal Justice & Restorative Justice, Sexual Abuse*

**70 x 7:**

**Our Vision:** 70x7 Muskegon will be a core contributing organization to Muskegon’s declining incarceration rates and increasing economic growth as second chances empower returning citizens to secure financial sustainability and help grow a vibrant community.

**Our Mission:** 70x7 Muskegon offers Christ-centered programs and collaborative services to overcome employment barriers of reentry and recovery.

- “Former Felons Rehabilitate with Special Program with Police” and more can be found on their website at <https://www.70x7muskegon.org/>.

**The Hope Project:** <http://www.hopeprojectusa.org/> Our mission is to raise awareness of human trafficking and to bring restoration and healing from its effects. The Hope Project is in the process of opening a home in West Michigan for girls, 11 through 17 years old, who have been removed from sex trafficking. The Hope Project will provide residential and non-residential treatment programs. The programs will utilize a holistic approach to rehabilitation by providing comprehensive services to address the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of recovery.

- Media available at <http://www.hopeprojectusa.org/Get-Informed>

**Discussion points:** 1) “Love, incarnate in ministries of compassion, mercy, and justice, bears witness to the living Christ.” - Bishop Robert Schnase. 2) The down-and-out see in Christ as much love for them as in the up-and-coming.

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## September 24, 2017: “God’s Family Plan”

Mission for Area People  
& Kids Belong

*Scripture:* Matthew 25: 31-46 (v. 40) is shown on page 4

*Scripture:* John 21: 15-17 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>15</sup>When Jesus and his disciples had finished eating, he asked, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than the others do?”

Simon Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, you know I do!”

“Then feed my lambs,” Jesus said.

<sup>16</sup>Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter answered, “Yes, Lord, you know I love you!”

“Then take care of my sheep,” Jesus told him.

<sup>17</sup>Jesus asked a third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?”

Peter was hurt because Jesus had asked him three times if he loved him. So he told Jesus, “Lord, you know everything. You know I love you.”

Jesus replied, “Feed my sheep.”

*Scripture:* Psalm (care for widow and orphan) 146???

*Synopsis:* All of us are part of God’s creation, created in God’s own image. We are connected to one another and called to care for each other as the larger family of God. Jesus is clear that caring for those in need is a way that we show our love for him, and it’s also true that we show our love for God by giving and serving others without expecting anything in return.

*Visuals:*

**FYI: Wedding on Sept. 23**

*Media:*

*Activity:*

*Music:*

UMSP - Poverty, Family

**Mission for Area People** is a faith-based organization providing Muskegon County residents with resources to meet basic needs, promote self-sufficiency, and improve quality of life. NOTE: MAP celebrates its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year.

<https://missionforareapeople.org/>

**Kids Belong** Kids belong in families: Our vision is to be a collaboration of churches meeting the needs of foster children, foster and adoptive families, and child welfare organizations. We will be a link between those who want or need help and those who can or know how to help. The Church will be known as the first place to call to meet the needs of children in the foster care system. <http://www.kidsbelong.com/>

- For an April 17, 2017 interview, filmed at LHUMC, go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=36BhtUna-lw> Length: 20:42. Cost: Free.

**Discussion points:**

**October 1, 2017: “If You Build It...”**

**World Communion  
CROP Walk in Muskegon**

*Scripture:* Luke 13: 18-21 (Today’s English Version)

Jesus asked, “What is the Kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it with?

<sup>19</sup>It is like this. A man takes a mustard seed and plants it in his field. The plant grows and becomes a tree, and the birds make their nests in its branches.”

<sup>20</sup>Again Jesus asked, “What shall I compare the Kingdom of God with? <sup>21</sup>It is like this. A woman takes some yeast and mixes it with a bushel of flour until the whole batch of dough rises.”

*Synopsis:* Jesus describes the Kingdom of God with images that start our small (a seed and a bit of yeast) and then become larger. As we consider how we’re a part of building God’s Kingdom here and now, we recognize that our actions and offering make a difference and change the world.

*Visuals:*

*Media:*

- “Your Kingdom Come.” Length: 1:06. Cost: \$14.99. The Kingdom of God is closer than we think. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/39633/your-kingdom-come>
- “Basic Training.” It’s not enough to read in the Bible what we’re supposed to do. We actually have to go out and do it to be Kingdom Workers. Length: 1:07. Cost: \$20.00. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/33428/basic-training>

*Activity:* Holy Communion, **Kingdom assignment** - give away \$5-10 to every person to use for the building up of God’s Kingdom

*Music:* Build Your Kingdom Here

*UMSP -*

**Charge Conference @ Community UMC**

**Process of how we begin a new mission project/opportunity:**

- Awareness of need
- Perceiving God’s call to do something
- Feeling unworthy and/or inadequate
- Courageous response
- Using spiritual gifts and resources
- Opening ourselves to suffering
- Making a difference
- Discovering meaning and purpose
- Inviting others

We value contact, engagement, and long-term relationships.

How do we measure lives changed?

**Discussion points:**

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## first: putting GOD first in living and giving

**Ideas for the series:** Resources include first program kit and shiny gods: finding freedom from things that distract us by Mike Slaughter

*"Why do we exist as a church? For one reason: The church isn't a community designed just for us to make ourselves better; the Holy Spirit will make us better as we submit to the Lordship of Jesus. We exist to be the hands and feet of Jesus in order to accomplish God's purpose on earth. Our fiscal responsibility is truly the act of worship that God desires. We don't 'go to church'; we are the church!"*

<https://www.cokesbury.com/forms/ProductDetail.aspx?pid=1141529>

shiny gods promo. Length: 1:01. Cost: Free. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dfannwZGSZA>

**Images:** gold, silver, "stuff"

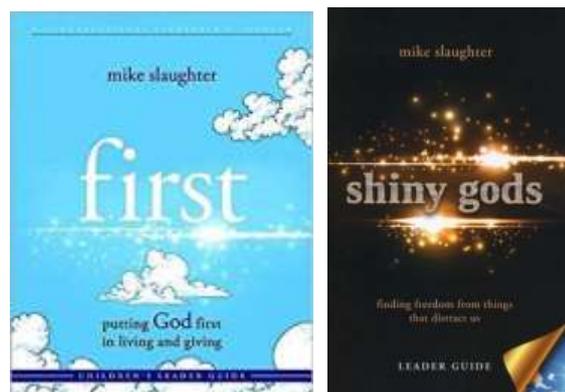
**Visuals:** For inspiration images for all off October, visit

<https://www.dropbox.com/home/LHUMC/October%202016%20Stewardship>

John Wesley said, "The last part of a man to be converted is his wallet."

Do we have a story from someone who's willing to share how they've moved to greater trust in God and tithing?

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## October 8, 2017: "Naming Our Idols"

**Scripture #1:** Exodus 20: 22-24, 32:2-4 (Today's English Version)

<sup>20:22</sup>The Lord commanded Moses to tell the Israelites: "You have seen how I, the Lord, have spoken to you from heaven.

<sup>23</sup>Do not make for yourselves gods of silver or gold to be worshiped in addition to me. <sup>24</sup>Make an altar of earth for me, and on it sacrifice your sheep and your cattle as offerings to be completely burned and as fellowship offerings. In every place that I set aside for you to worship me, I will come to you and bless you.

<sup>32:2</sup>Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold earrings which your wives, your sons, and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me."

<sup>3</sup>So all the people took off their gold earrings and brought them to Aaron. <sup>4</sup>He took the earrings, melted them, poured the gold into a mold, and made a gold bull-calf.

The people said, "Israel, this is our god, who led us out of Egypt!"

**Scripture #2:** 2 Kings 17: 38-41 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>38</sup>And remember the solemn agreement between us.

I will say it again: Do not worship any god <sup>39</sup>except me. I am the Lord your God, and I will rescue you from all your enemies.

<sup>40</sup>But the people living in Israel ignored that command and kept on following their old customs. <sup>41</sup>They did worship the Lord, but they also worshiped their own idols. Their descendants did the same thing.

**Scripture #3:** Luke 10: 27 (New International Version)

<sup>27</sup>He answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

*Synopsis:* We may not think that we worship idols at all, but anything or anyone that receives the energy and resources that should belong to God first is an idol. When we worship the gift that God has given instead of the Giver (God), we begin to become the center rather than putting God at the center. How do we turn back to true worship that honors God first?

*Resource:* From Mike Slaughter, the author

- Examples of idols – sports, relationships, food, sex, material possessions, political traditions, our family <http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3889/naming-our-idols> (excerpt from the book)
- Interview <http://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/4071/qa-with-mike-slaughter-author-of-shiny-gods>

*Visuals:*

*FYI:* Wedding on October 7

*Media:*

- “Idol Worship.” Length: 1:35. Cost: We own it. Last used 2/5/17. When you think of worshiping idols, what comes to your mind? Golden calves? Giant statues? Here’s a sobering look from The Skit Guys at what we often look like when we bow down to our own idols. <https://skitguys.com/videos/item/idol-worship>
- “Spoken Word: Counterfeit Gods.” Jefferson Bethke talks in rhyme about how everyone has gods. Length: 5:21. Cost: Free. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkZg1ZflpJs>
- “Johnny.” Length: 5:22. Cost: \$20.00. How do you invest your time? Through simple acts of service and love, Johnny begins to feel the “weight of idolatry” lifting as God redirects him toward the kingdom investments of time and service. <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/65630/deidox-johnny>

*Activity:* Name how do we spend time, money. “NAME THAT IDOL” Game Show.

*Music:*

**Discussion points:**



## **October 15, 2017: “Money, Work, and Debt”**

*Scripture:* Deuteronomy 28: 12-14 (Today’s English Version)

<sup>12</sup>He will send rain in season from his rich storehouse in the sky and bless all your work, so that you will lend to many nations, but you will not have to borrow from any.

<sup>13</sup>The Lord your God will make you the leader among the nations and not a follower; you will always prosper and never fail if you obey faithfully all his commands that I am giving you today. <sup>14</sup>But you must never disobey them in any way, or worship and serve other gods.

*Synopsis:* Part of our purpose on earth is to care for God’s good creation and to create with the gifts that God has given to us. Meaningful work is about using our gifts and looking at the outcome we produce, not the income we receive. Indebtedness is not God’s intention for us, nor is it an effective witness to who God calls us to be because it keeps us from true freedom and joy.

*Visuals:*

FYI: Wedding on October 14

Media:

Activity:

Music:

**Discussion points:**

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## **October 22, 2017: “Earn-Save-Give”**

*Scripture #1: 2 Corinthians 9: 6-12 (New Living Translation)*

<sup>6</sup>Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop.

<sup>7</sup>You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. “For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.” <sup>8</sup>And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others. <sup>9</sup>As the Scriptures say,

“They share freely and give generously to the poor.

Their good deeds will be remembered forever.”

<sup>10</sup>For God is the one who provides seed for the farmer and then bread to eat. In the same way, he will provide and increase your resources and then produce a great harvest of generosity in you.

<sup>11</sup>Yes, you will be enriched in every way so that you can always be generous. And when we take your gifts to those who need them, they will thank God. <sup>12</sup>So two good things will result from this ministry of giving—the needs of the believers in Jerusalem will be met, and they will joyfully express their thanks to God.

*Scripture #2: Mark 6: 34-43 (New Living Translation)*

<sup>34</sup>Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things.

<sup>35</sup>Late in the afternoon his disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. <sup>36</sup>Send the crowds away so they can go to the nearby farms and villages and buy something to eat.”

<sup>37</sup>But Jesus said, “You feed them.”

“With what?” they asked. “We'd have to work for months to earn enough money to buy food for all these people!”

<sup>38</sup>“How much bread do you have?” he asked. “Go and find out.”

They came back and reported, “We have five loaves of bread and two fish.”

<sup>39</sup>Then Jesus told the disciples to have the people sit down in groups on the green grass. <sup>40</sup>So they sat down in groups of fifty or a hundred.

<sup>41</sup>Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he kept giving the bread to the disciples so they could distribute it to the people. He also divided the fish for everyone to share. <sup>42</sup>They all ate as much as they wanted, <sup>43</sup>and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish. <sup>44</sup>A total of 5,000 men and their families were fed from those loaves!

*Synopsis: John Wesley encouraged people to “earn all you can, save all you can, and give all you can” as a way to serve God and others well. Earning means using what God has given us to make more. Saving is a part of God's plan so that we're prepared for*

whatever comes. Giving is a spiritual discipline that reminds us of God's generosity and our call to respond to God's gifts to us.

*Visuals:*

*Media:*

*Activity:* Make a budget. Live simply. Set goals for doing good with time and money. (10-10-80 PLAN)

*Music:*

**Discussion points:**

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## **October 29, 2017: "Heart Giving"**

*Scripture #1:* Matthew 7: 7-12 (New Living Translation)

<sup>7</sup>"Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you.

<sup>8</sup>For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened.

<sup>9</sup>"You parents—if your children ask for a loaf of bread, do you give them a stone instead? <sup>10</sup>Or if they ask for a fish, do you give them a snake? Of course not! <sup>11</sup>So if you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.

### **The Golden Rule**

<sup>12</sup>"Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you. This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the

*Scripture #2:* Romans 12: 1-2 (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>1</sup>Dear friends, God is good. So I beg you to offer your bodies to him as a living sacrifice, pure and pleasing. That's the most sensible way to serve God.

<sup>2</sup>Don't be like the people of this world, but let God change the way you think. Then you will know how to do everything that is good and pleasing to him.

*Synopsis:* God's desire is that we give willingly and joyfully knowing that we're sharing God's gifts with others. Generosity is a witness to the world of God's goodness and grace. Ultimately, God calls us to giving that costs us something and makes us better understand what it means to sacrifice for the sake of others in Jesus' name.

*Visuals:*

*Media:*

*Activity:* Faith Commitment Sunday - offering our Faith Commitments of prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness for 2018

*Music:*

*Loosely related article:* "Imagine a World: A Sermon on Isaiah 2: 1-5 and Luke 17: 20-21" by Walter Breuggemann <http://leohartshorn.blogspot.com/2008/11/imagine-world-sermon-on-isaiah-21-5-and.html> and song - John Lennon's "Imagine"

**Discussion points:**