

Scripture and Message Synopses February 9 - April 6, 2014

January 13, 2014

The brainstorming will be held at David and Karen Booth's house in Norton Shores. We will have a potluck dinner at 6:00 pm. Karen is making meatloaf. Please bring a dish to share. Brainstorming is from 7:00-9:00 pm. RSVP's are helpful but not necessary. RSVP to Karen Booth or sign up at church.

The message series, "**Blessed!**" is based on the Beatitudes. The series will run for nine weeks. We will only work on February 9 through March 2 at this brainstorming. We will work on the remaining weeks, which are during Lent, at the next brainstorming.

February 9, 2014: "Blessed!"

5th Sunday after Epiphany

Synopsis: An overview of the Beatitudes reminds us that they are not prescribed behaviors that we are to have in order to be blessed, but that through grace, God blessed us at those times when we feel anything but blessed!

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibilities to begin the series:

- "Matthew 5" by Smirk. Length: 1:38. Cost: \$17.00. Synopsis: The Sermon on the Mount is the summary of the OT and all that Christ stood for. It is an excellent summary of the Kingdom of God ethics he practiced. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/14183/matthew-5>.
- "Matthew 5:3-12" by Visual Scripture. Length; 1:23. Cost: \$15. Synopsis: Visual liturgy. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/4341/matthew-53-12>.
- "The Beatitudes" by Quaddot Productions. Synopsis: Contemplative presentation of the scripture reading using images and piano music. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/23321/the-beatitudes>.
- "Blessed" by Centerline. Length: 1:45. Cost: \$18.00. Synopsis: The world tells us one thing about being blessed, yet the Word tells us something very different. Based on the Beatitudes. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/55767/blessed>.
- "Blessed" by S. H. Redwine. Length: 1:25. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Visual liturgy. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/43318/blessed>.

Music suggestions: 2155 Blest are They; 467 Trust and Obey; 378 Amazing Grace

Scripture: Matthew 5:1-12 (See the last page of this document for three different translations)

February 16, 2014: "Blessed are the Poor in Spirit"

6th Sunday after Epiphany

Synopsis: In what ways does a "poverty of spirit" affect our daily lives? What does it take to sense and accept God's blessings when we are feeling "poor in spirit"?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibility:

Music suggestions: 377 It Is Well with My Soul; 388 O Come and Dwell in Me; 2140 Since Jesus Came Into My Heart

Scripture: Matthew 5:3 (New International Version)

³“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Scripture: Matthew 18:12-14 (New International Version)

¹²“What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? ¹³And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. ¹⁴In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.

February 23, 2014: “Blessed are Those Who Mourn”

7th Sunday after Epiphany

Synopsis: How can we sense God’s comfort in our times of grief and loss? How can we be that source of comfort for others when that is our call?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibility:

Music suggestions: 526 What a Friend We Have in Jesus; 534 Be Still, My Soul; 2216 When We Are Called to Sing Your Praise

Scripture: Matthew 5:4 (New International Version)

⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-4 (Contemporary English Version)

¹ I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared, and so had the sea.

² Then I saw New Jerusalem, that holy city, coming down from God in heaven. It was like a bride dressed in her wedding gown and ready to meet her husband.

³ I heard a loud voice shout from the throne:

God’s home is now with his people. He will live with them, and they will be his own. Yes, God will make his home among his people. ⁴ He will wipe all tears from their eyes, and there will be no more death, suffering, crying, or pain. These things of the past are gone forever.

March 2, 2014: “Blessed are the Meek”

Transfiguration Sunday

Synopsis: What does it really mean to be “meek” as the Bible defines it? Can we be assertive for Christ and still be “meek”?

Metaphor/visuals:

Communion

Media possibility: “Meekness Horse.” Length: 1:32. Cost: \$8.00. Synopsis: Meekness is not weakness, but power under control, as illustrated by the breaking/meeking of an animal. Goes well as an illustration to Matthew 5:5 - Blessed are the meek. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/15506/meekness-horse>.

Music suggestions: 2176 Make Me a Servant; 533 We Shall Overcome

Scripture: Matthew 5:5 (New International Version)

⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Scripture: Psalm 37:1-11 (Today’s New English Version)

¹Do not fret because of those who are evil or be envious of those who do wrong; ²for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.

³Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

⁴Take delight in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart.

⁵Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this:

⁶He will make your righteous reward shine like the dawn, your vindication like the noonday sun.

⁷Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes.

⁸Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.

⁹For those who are evil will be destroyed, but those who hope in the LORD will inherit the land.

¹⁰A little while, and the wicked will be no more; though you look for them, they will not be found.

¹¹But the meek will inherit the land and enjoy peace and prosperity.

March 9, 2014: “Blessed are Those Who are Hungry and Thirsty” 1st Sunday in Lent

Synopsis: How does God fill us when we are hungry for a deeper relationship with Him? What is our responsibility for “feeding” others?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibility:

Music suggestions: 2132 You Who Are Thirsty; 641 Fill My Cup, Lord; 269 Lord, Who Throughout These Forty Days

Scripture: Matthew 5:6 (New International Version)

⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Scripture: John 4:7-15 (New Living Translation)

⁷Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, “Please give me a drink.”

⁸He was alone at the time because his disciples had gone into the village to buy some food.

⁹The woman was surprised, for Jews refuse to have anything to do with Samaritans. She said to Jesus, “You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan woman. Why are you asking me for a drink?”

¹⁰Jesus replied, “If you only knew the gift God has for you and who you are speaking to, you would ask me, and I would give you living water.”

¹¹“But sir, you don’t have a rope or a bucket,” she said, “and this well is very deep. Where would you get this living water? ¹²And besides, do you think you’re greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us this well? How can you offer better water than he and his sons and his animals enjoyed?”

¹³Jesus replied, “Anyone who drinks this water will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life.”

¹⁵“Please, sir,” the woman said, “give me this water! Then I’ll never be thirsty again, and I won’t have to come here to get water.”

March 16, 2014: “Blessed are the Merciful” 2nd Sunday in Lent

Synopsis: How does the Bible define “mercy”? How do we share God’s gift of mercy with the world?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibilities:

- “Mercy Prelude.” Length: 5:03. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: This scripture filled prelude about Mercy is great for any service, bible study or during the offering. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/10632/mercy-prelude>.
- “Bless the Lord, O My Soul: Psalm 103.” Length: 3:12. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: The primary purpose of Nature is to lead you worship Christ, the Creator. Your heart longs for the one to whom it belongs. We yearn to worship God. As the Psalmist cried to God, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name" this video helps you worship God with thankful hearts. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/21387/bless-the-lord-o-my-soul-psalm-103>.

Music suggestions: 355 Depth of Mercy; 121 There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy; 2113 Lamb of God

Scripture: Matthew 5:7 (New International Version)

⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Scripture: Psalm 103:1-13 (Contemporary English Version)

¹With all my heart I praise the Lord, and with all that I am I praise his holy name!

²With all my heart I praise the Lord! I will never forget how kind he has been.

³The Lord forgives our sins, heals us when we are sick, ⁴and protects us from death. His kindness and love are a crown on our heads.

⁵Each day that we live, he provides for our needs and gives us the strength of a young eagle.

⁶For all who are mistreated, the Lord brings justice.

⁷He taught his Law to Moses and showed all Israel what he could do.

⁸The Lord is merciful! He is kind and patient, and his love never fails.

⁹The Lord won’t always be angry and point out our sins; ¹⁰he doesn’t punish us as our sins deserve.

¹¹How great is God’s love for all who worship him? Greater than the distance between heaven and earth!

¹²How far has the Lord taken our sins from us? Farther than the distance from east to west!

¹³Just as parents are kind to their children, the Lord is kind to all who worship him,

March 23, 2014: “Blessed are the Pure in Heart”

3rd Sunday in Lent

Synopsis: How do we seek purity of heart in such an “impure” culture? What are the rewards of having a pure heart?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibility:

Music suggestions: 2160 Into My Heart; 400 Come, Thou fount of Every Blessing; 2133 Give Me a Clean Heart

Scripture: Matthew 5:8 (New International Version)

⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Scripture: Hebrews 10:19-23, 35-36 (Contemporary English Version)

¹⁹My friends, the blood of Jesus gives us courage to enter the most holy place ²⁰by a new way that leads to life! And this way takes us through the curtain that is Christ himself.

²¹We have a great high priest who is in charge of God’s house. ²² So let’s come near God with pure hearts and a confidence that comes from having faith. Let’s keep our hearts pure, our

consciences free from evil, and our bodies washed with clean water. ²³We must hold tightly to the hope that we say is ours. After all, we can trust the one who made the agreement with us.

³⁵Keep on being brave! It will bring you great rewards. ³⁶Learn to be patient, so that you will please God and be given what he has promised.

March 30, 2014: “Blessed are the Peacemakers”

4th Sunday in Lent

Synopsis: How do we live as peacemakers, not just at a personal level, but as citizens of a world that is often far from peaceful?

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibility:

Music suggestions: 431 Let There Be Peace on Earth; 2145 I’ve Got Peace Like a River; 437 This Is My Song

Scripture: Matthew 5:9 (New International Version)

⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Scripture: James 3:13, 17-18 (Contemporary English Version)

¹³Are any of you wise or sensible? Then show it by living right and by being humble and wise in everything you do.

¹⁷But the wisdom that comes from above leads us to be pure, friendly, gentle, sensible, kind, helpful, genuine, and sincere. ¹⁸When peacemakers plant seeds of peace, they will harvest justice.

April 6, 2014: “Blessed are the Persecuted”

5th Sunday in Lent

Synopsis: In what ways are we persecuted as Christians? How can we see those situations as blessings so that we might “rejoice and be glad” in them?

Metaphor/visuals:

Communion

Media possibilities:

- “Thoughts on Persecution.” Length: 0:58. Cost: \$20. Synopsis: This video describes persecution from the view of a shallow Christian. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/29903/thoughts-on-persecution>.
- “Dear God PERSECUTION.” Length: 0:59. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: This video is a letter to God asking Him if He wants us to be persecuted. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/38251/dear-god-persecution>.

Music suggestions: Trading My Sorrows; 534 Be Still, My Soul; 295 In the Cross of Christ I Glory

Scripture: Matthew 5:10-12 (New International Version)

¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹²Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 (The Message)

⁷If you only look at *us*, you might well miss the brightness. We carry this precious Message around in the unadorned clay pots of our ordinary lives. That's to prevent anyone from confusing God's incomparable power with us.

⁸As it is, there's not much chance of that. You know for yourselves that we're not much to look at. We've been surrounded and battered by troubles, but we're not demoralized; we're not sure what to do, ⁹but we know that God knows what to do; we've been spiritually terrorized, but God hasn't left our side; we've been thrown down, but we haven't broken. ¹⁰What they did to Jesus, they do to us—trial and torture, mockery and murder; what Jesus did among them, he does in us—he lives! ¹¹Our lives are at constant risk for Jesus' sake, which makes Jesus' life all the more evident in us. ¹²While we're going through the worst, you're getting in on the best!