

Brainstorming Summary Late Summer and Early Fall Worship

Monday, July 7, 2014

Members present: Michael Boersma, David Booth, Glenn Chilson, Vicki Zuker, Brad Dean, Ron Zuker, Pastor Mary Ivanov (Ivan, Ana and Luka for dinner), Steve Hill, Gary Cooper, Karen Booth, Dirk Fuller, Jimmy Epplett, Marilyn Forton; Lynne Richmond shared her ideas via email

We are continuing our study of spiritual gifts as we delve into Romans 12 and 1 Peter 4. Our hope is that people will have had an opportunity for by completing a spiritual gifts inventory, either online at <http://lakeharborumc.org/2014/07/life-in-the-spirit-spiritual-gifts/> or on paper, so that they have identified their gifts. There is a separate survey for youth. This will help Pastor Mary get to know members. Lay Leadership should be able to use the results too.

Our Goal:

“The worship we hope to develop will be rooted in Scripture, centered on Christ, and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It will be relevant to local and emerging culture, while addressing the needs of believers and unbelievers alike. Above all, it will intentionally engage people physically, emotionally, intellectually, and soulfully.”

Felt needs: What physical, emotional, intellectual, or spiritual need are we addressing in this service so that worship is engaging and a means of making disciples? What question needs to be posed/answered so that we are making disciples?

August visuals:

- Large wrapped gift up on the ledge with ribbons down the wall from the present, attaching the spiritual gifts to the present (maybe more each week)
- Hang red ribbons out over the congregation attaching the spiritual gifts to the ribbons.
- Continue with the wrapped packages symbolizing our spiritual gifts (from July)
- What if the gifts came from a person, not the one large gift described above?
- What about gifts “from the heart”?

August 3, 2014: “Just Do It! - With Grace”

8th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Even when we know what our spiritual gifts are, we are still challenged to use them in line with God’s will. How do we know if we are using them well?

Communion

VBS wrap-up

Felt need: To know I am using my spiritual gifts well

Metaphor/visuals: Continue with the wrapped gifts theme from July.

Media possibilities:

- “Here Is the Church.” Length: 1:11. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: The Church isn’t a building, it’s people. It’s the body of Christ. That body is made up of many different parts designed by god to play a very specific role in the Church. Preview it at <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/44006/Here-Is-The-Church>. **Comments:** We liked that it was narrated by a little girl,

especially since this is VBS wrap-up Sunday. There is a lot going on at the same time. Slow it down; Karen can do that (with a working computer). It would also be better on a bigger screen.

- “The Body.” Length: 1:31. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: In 1 Corinthians, Paul explains that just as the human body has many parts with many different functions, the church has many different parts as well, all needing to work together to accomplish God’s purpose. No matter how small their part may seem, it is still crucial to the body. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/4852/the-body>. **Comments:** This fits the message better than the first video and has a sweet beat.
- “Everyone Has Gifts.” Length: 2:20. Cost: \$17.00. Synopsis: A fast-paced energetic video reminding people that regardless of how we feel, the Bible says that we've all got gifts, they are all important, and it's all for the glory of God. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/14982/everyone-has-gifts>. **Comments:** Due to technical difficulties, we were not able to preview at the meeting, but had at a previous meeting.

Music suggestions: “If We Are the Body” by Casting Crowns, “The Gift” by Celine Dion, “Made to Worship” by Chris Tomlin

Discussion points: 1) Everyone has gifts to offer, even youth and kids. 2) Visuals to tie this to 1 Corinthians: Ron Zuker has some body parts that we can use (hand, foot). 3) Other video suggestions: “Gifts” (<http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/7195/Gifts>) and “Gifts in a Closet” (<http://www.sermonspice.com/product/19882/gifts-in-a-closet>).

Scripture: Romans 12:1-8 (New International Version)

¹Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.

²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

³For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

August 10, 2014: “Love, Honor, and Cherish”

9th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Spiritual gifts are used in the Body of Christ in the community of faith. The challenge remains, “How do we serve in love and get along?”

Felt need: To serve the hard to love in love.

Metaphor/visuals: Ten Commandments of Spiritual Giving → bookmark.

Media possibilities:

- “I Am Love: Urban Evangelism.” Length: 1:58. Cost: \$15. Synopsis: We are called to live out the qualities of faith, hope, and love everyday by serving those around us. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/3918/i-am-love-urban-evangelism>.
Comments: Nice blend of graphics and music. Good message. Hard to read. This might work better for the August 17 service with the youth.
- “You Are My Body.” Length: 3:35. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: A simple, fresh, and powerful challenge to the Body of Jesus, to live out the physical presence of Christ on earth. Based on Ephesians 5:30, “for we are members of his body.” Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/20056/you-are-my-body>.
Comments: Due to technical difficulties, we did not preview it at the brainstorming.
- “Loving Others Is Hard.” Length: 1:21. Cost \$20.00. Synopsis: A powerful video that reminds us that loving others is important. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/57241/loving-others-is-hard>.
Comments: We like it!

Music suggestions: “Gimme Your Eyes” by Brandon Heath

Discussion points: 1) Romans 12:13 is featured on the home page of our website. 2) The Celebration Service will be outside, making it harder to show a video. 3) Illustration: Dirk’s kids love their cousin Garrett’s fiancé because Garrett loves her. She comes with some baggage. They don’t judge her as many adults would.

Scripture: Romans 12:9-21 (New International Version)

⁹Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹²Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

Pastor Mary and her family are on vacation August 13-27.

August 17, 2014: Guest Speaker 11th Sunday after Pentecost

We have tentatively scheduled the youth. They will talk about their mission trip to Chicago. See August 10 for a media suggestion.

August 24, 2014: Guest Speaker 12th Sunday after Pentecost

Pastor Mary is working with Myke to see if her daughter, Kim Bos, will be available. Kim is spending her summer in South Dakota. She will return to Garrett Theological Seminary this fall to begin her second year of seminary.

Steve Hill’s Florida pastor, Rev. Frank Leeds, stays at Maranatha during the summer. He preached in August 2011 while Pastor Mark was on sabbatical and may be willing to do so again. Frank can be contacted at fleeds3@yahoo.com or frankleeds@oakhurstumc.com.

August 31, 2014: “Work and Worship” 13th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Spiritual gifts are for the building up of God’s Kingdom in the church and in the world. How do our spiritual gifts affect our daily lives at home and in our workplaces?

Felt need: To reconcile what we profess (faith) with our profession (work).

Metaphor/visuals:

Media possibilities: Due to technical difficulties, we did not preview either video.

- “What Is Your Work?” Length: 2:40. Cost: Free. Synopsis: With beautiful shots of a carpenter building a table in his shop, this reflective worship starter or sermon illustration will help viewers to refocus on their work as an opportunity to worship the Maker. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/56289/what-is-your-work>.
- “Just.” Length: 1:41. Cost: \$18.00. Synopsis: Every day we let opportunities pass us by to help a stranger, a friend, and our families. Just because it seems too hard or because we don’t think we have anything to offer. Sometimes all it takes is just one little thing. With Jesus in your heart, it JUST takes you. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/23328/just>.

Music suggestions: “Hello, My Name Is” by Matthew West

Discussion points: 1) The inspiration for this message comes from Pastor Mary’s college days. The campus ministry explored questions of faith, calling, and how we live out that faith (profess) through our work (profession). 2) Pastor Mary has a litany that we might be able to use on today as an act of commitment for our daily lives. It includes specific prayers for many professions. 3) How does what we do during work inform people of our faith? What does it look like for different professions? What about boundaries? When is it appropriate to witness while on the job? Examples: Pastor/interesting conversations in social settings. Physician/office can be set up to show faith. Teachers/classroom rules. Realtor/giving back to the community (Family Promise). Instructor at the jail/(Brad Dean will need to fill this in). 4) Do we act different at work and church? 5) Brad Hilleary’s story: A group of people are confined to a single room. They begin to introduce themselves in terms of their jobs, throwing their resumes on the table. Bob says, “I am a Christian. God is using me in my job now by.....” 5) We can show faith in social situations by not participating in unacceptable behavior. Two of Cornerstone’s most active drama participants were drawn to Cornerstone’s ministry after meeting through Community Theater. They were both “outcasts” because of what they didn’t do with other cast members.

Fifth Sunday fellowship activity: See September 7 idea about making rosaries (prayer beads).

Scripture: 1 Peter 4:7-11 (New Living Translation)

⁷The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers.

⁸Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. ⁹Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.

¹⁰God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. ¹¹Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

“How-tos of Covenant Life”

Beginning in September, we will focus on a series that looks at the five parts of membership vows of the United Methodist Church: prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. “Membership” itself is not as important as active participation in the life of the church.

This holistic focus on stewardship could lend itself to a specific response and commitment in worship in early or mid-October, which is VCI prescription #2, extravagant generosity.

We will use Psalms each week. Pastor Mary will also weave Old Testament examples throughout the series, even though they may not be the focus Scripture:

Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 (The Message)

⁴Attention, Israel! God, our God! God the one and only!

⁵Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that's in you, love him with all you've got!

⁶Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you ⁷and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night. ⁸Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; ⁹inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.

Leviticus 19:18 (Contemporary English Version)

¹⁸Stop being angry and don't try to take revenge. I am the Lord, and I command you to love others as much as you love yourself.

Mark 12:29-31 (Today's English Version)

²⁹Jesus replied, "The most important one is this: 'Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. ³⁰Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' ³¹The second most important commandment is this: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment more important than these two."

We might also consider making a connection between membership vows and the five practices of fruitful congregations since everything we have address from July through early October speaks to the Vital Church Initiative process:

Prayers/passionate worship

Service/risk-taking mission and service

Presence/radical hospitality

Witness/intentional faith development

Gifts/extravagant generosity

Worship is also part of faith development. Who is willing to share a two-minute witness each week during the series? For example, how has being part of the communion prayer teams affected your faith walk?

Series visuals: Cardboard letters on the ledge: OUR COVENANT LIFE. Add the focus word each week, i.e. PRAYERS, PRESENCE...

September 7, 2014: "How-tos of Covenant Life: Prayers - Talk with God"

14th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Covenant is a word that means relationship. So how do we live out the promise to love God and love neighbor? Prayer is the basis for our relationship with God, and therefore, with each other. As someone said, prayer is the oldest form of wireless communication.

Communion

Felt need: To know how to talk to God (pray).

Metaphor/visuals: OUR COVENANT LIFE: PRAYER

Media possibilities:

- “Pray in this Way.” Length: 1:35. Cost: \$10.00. Synopsis: Why do we pray? With all that flows out of our mouths when we pray, it’s possible we miss its original intent. This video incorporates honest words and artistic elements to give us fresh eyes to see what Jesus desired for us when He said, “pray in this way.” Preview it at <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/12944/Pray-In-This-Way>.

Comments: 1) This reminded us of the movie, “Bruce Almighty.” 2) This illustration will hit home for many people; their prayers are the same as ours. 3) We liked the juxtaposition of our selfish prayers with the Lord’s Prayer.

- “Teach Us to Pray.” Length: 2:16. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: Our lives are full of challenges and struggles that present endless opportunities for us to call upon God for help. Unfortunately, most of us simple don’t know how to ask. Lord, teach us to pray. Preview it at <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/10213/Teach-Us-To-Pray>.

Comments: Good visuals.

Music suggestions:

Discussion points/activities: 1) Main point: Love God. Love your neighbor. 2) Media: Consider using both videos, one after the other. 3) Rosaries/prayer beads: Vicki’s Saturday morning prayer group made rosaries under the guidance of Julie Brott. They took about an hour each. Could we make them on August 31 after worship? How about at the Sunday School Kick-Off picnic? Maybe the Sunday School kids could make them too using pipe cleaners instead of a string. 4) Pass one rosary along each row. 5) Giant paper maché prayer beads. 6) Drive-up prayer: A Flint, MI church occasionally had a “driver-up” prayer session in the parking lot. People actually drove in for a prayer? Do we have people willing to take a short shift? We could advertise on our sign and hand out leaflets about our church at the same time. See related note, “Fridays in the parking lot,” on the last page. Our neighbors might not think these ideas are too weird to try given some of the other things we have done including a free car wash and hot dogs and canvassing the neighborhood. 7) Free: Many people have a hard time believing anything can actually be free. A “free” sofa sitting on the curb often gets left there. If it has a price on it, people will take it more quickly---maybe without paying for it.

Scripture: Matthew 6:5-13 (14-15) (The Message)

⁵“And when you come before God, don’t turn that into a theatrical production either. All these people making a regular show out of their prayers, hoping for stardom! Do you think God sits in a box seat?

⁶“Here’s what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won’t be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace.

⁷“The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They’re full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. ⁸Don’t fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. ⁹With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are. ¹⁰Set the world right; Do what’s best—as above, so below. ¹¹Keep us alive with three square meals. ¹²Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others. ¹³Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil. You’re in charge! You can do anything you want! You’re ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

(¹⁴“In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can’t get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. ¹⁵If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God’s part.)

September 14, 2014: “How-tos of Covenant Life: Presence - Time with God”

15th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: We may not think that our presence in worship is so important; however, when we consider the things that compete with our time in worship, we see that presence is a true and treasured gift that we offer to God and to one another.

Felt need: To value time spent corporate worship over other activities.

Metaphor/visuals: 1) Image: Drawer full of ping-pong balls with “God” written on them. 2) Time jar filled with ping-pong balls (or larger balls). What if we used a bigger ball to represent the time we spend with God? 3) OUR COVENANT LIFE: PRESENCE.

Media possibilities:

- “The Time Jar.” Length: 2:19. Cost: \$15.00. Synopsis: Our lives are busy. We spend our days running from one activity to the next, barely keeping up with our schedules. Before we know it, the day has slipped away and we’ve neglected God completely. This video illustrates how easily that can happen and challenges us to spend time with God every day. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/52305/the-time-jar>.

Comments: 1) Ending: How many of us would pick up our bibles at the end of the day? We expected the guy to put his “God” ping-pong ball in a drawer with a bunch of other God ping-pong balls. Would it make more sense to stop the video before he picks up his bible? 2) Color coded ping-pong balls would be easier to see from a distance and would give us a chance to see if our lives are balanced. 3) We are too overscheduled, same as the guy in the video. Do we need to see a different perspective? 3) The jar full of balls shows that there is a limit as to how many things can fill up our time. Many of them are small, but stress us out.

- “TIME - How Do You Spend It?” Length: 2:29. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: Spending time with God is hard. Doing God’s will is hard. But maybe there is a better way to look at it. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/26167/time-how-do-you-spend-it>.

Comments: We liked the way God was in the center of everything at the end of the video. Related activity: Could we make a 3-D cross that we could fill up?

Music suggestions: 2025 As the Deer

Discussion points: 1) Take-home: Three dimensional take home objects, like a **ping-pong ball**, are more memorable than two-dimensional take home objects, like a paper cutout. They help people think about God outside of worship. 2) Being spiritual, or having personal devotion time, is not sufficient. God calls us to corporate worship. 3) When we become members, we make a covenant with God and each other to spend time in corporate worship. It is often harder to be in the church **and** actively participate than remain alone. 4) We need to be held accountable. What does tithing our time look like? 5) Consider how doing everything for God’s glory changes our perspective on time. 6) If God is in the center of our lives, then our work and faith mesh.

Scripture: Luke 2:41-52 (New International Version)

⁴¹Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

⁴²When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. ⁴³After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but

they were unaware of it. ⁴⁴Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. ⁴⁵When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. ⁴⁶After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. ⁴⁸When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

⁴⁹"Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" ⁵⁰But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

⁵¹Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart. ⁵²And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Scripture: Psalm 46 (Today's English Version)

¹God is our shelter and strength, always ready to help in times of trouble.

²So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken and mountains fall into the ocean depths; ³even if the seas roar and rage, and the hills are shaken by the violence.

⁴There is a river that brings joy to the city of God, to the sacred house of the Most High. ⁵God is in that city, and it will never be destroyed; at early dawn he will come to its aid.

⁶Nations are terrified, kingdoms are shaken; God thunders, and the earth dissolves.

⁷The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

⁸Come and see what the Lord has done. See what amazing things he has done on earth.

⁹He stops wars all over the world; he breaks bows, destroys spears, and sets shields on fire.

¹⁰"Stop fighting," he says, "and know that I am God, supreme among the nations, supreme over the world."

¹¹The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

September 21, 2014: "How-tos of Covenant Life: Gifts - Treasure to God"

16th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: For many of us, money is the most difficult thing to give to God or anyone else. Though it is "ours," God is the giver. In a culture where money seems to be the key to happiness, how do we find joy in giving our gifts for the sake of God's Kingdom? And how does that joy overflow in our relationships with others?

Felt need: To find joy in sacrificial giving.

Metaphor/visuals: Large branch with 10 bills, one being a different color to obviously show the 10%.

Media possibilities: We might want to save one of these for the stewardship series.

- "God Wants Your Money." Length: 1:04. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: A powerful video that reminds us that God wants our money. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/56269/god-wants-your-money>.

Comments: This makes you think. It is very blunt, but it is the truth, and the truth can hurt. How would a visitor receive this? Pastor Mary would help put this in context so that is less a problem.

- "How Much?" Length: 2:46. Cost: \$20.00. Synopsis: In this funny introduction to tithing, Frank is ready to give. He just wants to know how much he owes. Watch as the Pastor tries in vain to explain that tithing isn't just a matter of how much, it's a matter of the heart, and the amount is between you and God. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/3550/how-much>.

Comments: This offers a whole different perspective on giving.

Discussion points: 1) Additional media possibility from the past: "Stewardship." Preview it at <http://www.worshiphousemedia.com/mini-movies/12544/Stewardship>. 2) Children's time message: Explain what tithing means using ten apples. Note that we get to keep nine out of the ten. 3) God gives 100%. How much of his money are we going to keep? Why should it bother us if we return 10% to him? Can we illustrate that with a skit or pictures? Can you imagine a child getting 10% of a parent's love? Anyone being satisfied seeing only 10% of a rainbow? How would 10% of a skateboard work? 4) Both videos evoke a strong emotional reaction. People should be able to see themselves in one way or another.

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 "A Cheerful Giver" key verses 12-13

⁶Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

⁷Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. ⁹As it is written:

"They have scattered abroad their gifts to the poor; their righteousness endures forever."

¹⁰Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. ¹¹You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.

¹²This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, people will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.

¹⁵Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

September 28, 2014: "How-tos of Covenant Life: Service - Talents for God"

17th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Those who work in the "service industry" are sometimes treated poorly, with little pay and low esteem. And yet, Jesus call us into the service industry, loving others with humility and grace. To serve others is to live out Jesus' command to love one another just as he loves us with God's love.

Felt need: To serve as Jesus served, with humility and grace.

Metaphor/visuals: OUR COVENANT LIFE: SERVICE. Bowl of water and towel.

Media possibilities:

- "Right Now." Length: 3:31. Cost: \$18.00. Synopsis: You can make a difference in this world. This motivating video give many examples how we can serve and be a part of God's Kingdom right now. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/19351/right-now>. **Comments:** Well done!
- "Stranger." Length: 4:00. Cost: We own it. Synopsis: From Romans 12, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If your enemies are thirsty, give them something to drink. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Preview it at <http://www.theworkofthepeople.com/stranger>.

Comments: This is a very inclusive video. The man washing people's feet served anyone who was willing. Could be used during a foot washing as suggested by Marcia McFee. Needs new background music.

Music suggestions: "Here I Am, Lord"; "Follow You" by Leeland; "Do Something" by Matthew West (maybe Skylar and Abby would want to dance again)

Possible activity: Hand washing or foot washing. 1) We have only done a foot washing a couple of times, most recently on Maundy Thursday 2012. Almost everyone participated (70 people). We would need at least six stations for foot washing. Ask people to come in sandals or to remove their socks and shoes before coming forward. 2) Cultural relevance: In Jesus' time, foot washing was a sign of hospitality. Given today's footwear and easy access to soap and hot water, foot washing might not have the same cultural relevance. A free cup of coffee, car wash, or full service fill-up at less than the pump-it-yourself price, might be more welcome. 3) Intimacy: Foot washing is very intimate. Many people, especially the older folks who live alone, crave loving skin-to-skin contact. We can offer hand washing as a "safer" alternative.

Discussion points: 1) There is a wealth of bad examples of "Christian behavior" at <http://sundaysaretheworst.com/stories/>. Unfortunately, the website is due for a February 2015 re-launch so the stories are limited. 2) Take-away item: Washcloths. 3) Lakeside used to hand out a card that read, "God loves you, no strings attached." 4) Jimmy's soup kitchen story: One woman worked day after day in a soup kitchen that was open for three meals a day, seven days a week, year after year, and served 10,000 people every day. When asked by a reporter how she did it day in and day out she said, "Every day when I get up, I pray: Dear God, may I see you in line today." 5) Gas buy-back: Ask Pic-n-Pac if they would charge one dollar less per gallon during a two-hour window. They would advertise this on their sign. Members would pump gas, wash people's windshields, and hand out cards similar to Lakeside's as an act of service. We would pay back the difference so the station would not lose money. In two hours, we would have a chance to interact with hundreds of people for maybe \$500. What an opportunity to make disciples!

Scripture: John 13:1-17 (Contemporary English Version)

¹It was before Passover, and Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and to return to the Father. He had always loved his followers in this world, and he loved them to the very end.

²Even before the evening meal started, the devil had made Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, decide to betray Jesus.

³Jesus knew that he had come from God and would go back to God. He also knew that the Father had given him complete power. ⁴So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.

⁶But when he came to Simon Peter, that disciple asked, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷Jesus answered, "You don't really know what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸"You will never wash my feet!" Peter replied.

"If I don't wash you," Jesus told him, "you don't really belong to me."

⁹Peter said, "Lord, don't wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head."

¹⁰Jesus answered, "People who have bathed and are clean all over need to wash just their feet. And you, my disciples, are clean, except for one of you." ¹¹Jesus knew who would betray him. That is why he said, "except for one of you."

^{12f} After Jesus had washed his disciples' feet and had put his outer garment back on, he sat down again. Then he said:

Do you understand what I have done? ¹³You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. ¹⁴And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other. ¹⁵I have set the example, and you should do for each other exactly what I have done for you. ¹⁶I tell you for certain that servants are not greater than their master, and messengers are not greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷You know these things, and God will bless you, if you do them.

October 5, 2014: "How-tos of Covenant Life: Witness - Tell about God

18th Sunday after Pentecost

Synopsis: Jesus proclaims that we are his witnesses when he ascends into heaven. Just like the early church, we struggle to be effective witnesses who bless others. We struggle to tell our story of faith - to give an account of the hope that we have - and do it with gentleness (v. 15). When we come to the table, we're fed and strengthened by God's grace to live transformed lives and transform the world.

Felt need: To when and how to share our hope through Jesus.

Metaphor/visuals: OUR COVENANT LIFE: WITNESS. Shoes from youth that went on the mission trip (v. 11b). World Communion visuals from an I-Worship DVD (check with Jimmy).

World Communion Sunday

Media possibilities:

Music suggestions: "He Reigns" by the Newsboys

Discussion points: 1) Verse 15b is one of the few verses that Pastor Mary has memorized. 2) Ivan has a faith talk story that uses ketchup and mustard. 3) GodTube video: What do you say to someone who does not believe in God? Click on this link to find out, http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=012C91NU&utm_source=GodTube%20Must-See%20Video&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=01/28/2014. 4) We have people who might can speak other languages: Glenn Chilson (German), Brad Dean & Kendra Robbins (Spanish), Drew Hilleary (Arabic), Vilum's hockey player (a Slavic language). Mark and Sue Graves often have foreign exchange students. Molly Epplett ("Mollyisms" ☺). 5) Could some youth give testimony from their mission trip?

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:8-18 (The Message)

"Suffering for Doing Good"

⁸Summing up: Be agreeable, be sympathetic, be loving, be compassionate, be humble.

⁹That goes for all of you, no exceptions. No retaliation. No sharp-tongued sarcasm. Instead, bless—that's your job, to bless. You'll be a blessing and also get a blessing.

¹⁰Whoever wants to embrace life and see the day fill up with good, Here's what you do: Say nothing evil or hurtful;

¹¹Snub evil and cultivate good; **run after peace for all you're worth.**

¹²God looks on all this with approval, listening and responding well to what he's asked; But he turns his back on those who do evil things.

¹³If with heart and soul you're doing good, do you think you can be stopped? ¹⁴Even if you suffer for it, you're still better off. Don't give the opposition a second thought. ¹⁵Through thick and thin, keep your hearts at attention, in adoration before Christ, your Master. **Be ready to speak up and tell anyone who asks why you're living the way you are, and always with the utmost courtesy.** ¹⁶Keep a

clear conscience before God so that when people throw mud at you, none of it will stick. They'll end up realizing that *they're* the ones who need a bath. ¹⁷It's better to suffer for doing good, if that's what God wants, than to be punished for doing bad. ¹⁸That's what Christ did definitively: suffered because of others' sins, the Righteous One for the unrighteous ones. He went through it all—was put to death and then made alive—to bring us to God.

Discussion points not related to either series:

- *Opening of worship:* Walking to the middle of the congregation and lifting the candle (a la Marcia McFee) is very effective.
- *Possible sermon series:* The biggest lies our culture tells about Christianity. Examples:
 - Faith is only something to fall back on when life gets rough.
 - Women's worth is tied to their looks.
 - Men's worth is tied to their net worth.
 - I am "spiritual." I don't need to go to church.
 - Going to church gets you into heaven.See Michael Boersma for more topics.
- *Offering:* 1) Sam was sitting in the front row on July 6, ready to drop his offering in the plate, but the ushers passed by him. We need to be aware of missing people or making assumptions about them. 2) Don't make change from the plate (Jim Post's story shared by Gary Cooper).
- *Skit:* Pastor Mary has a stewardship skit. Ask Ken Lockett.
- *Toby Mac:* His songs might work for the offering.
- *Fridays in the Parking Lot:* Offer activities in the parking lot on Fridays during the summer. Ideas include movies ("God's Not Dead"), s'mores, live music (Michael), and drive-up prayer.
- *Marne UMC:* 1) Retired television weatherman Buck Matthews has a way of coming up with some great sayings for their sign, placed strategically on I-96, not in front of the church. Find out more: http://www.mlive.com/living/grand-rapids/index.ssf/2012/03/former_tv_weatherman_buck_matt.html. 2) Because of their great location, they have offered a drive-thru coffee service for morning commuters as a way of showing God's love.
- *Hospitality:* 1) A good way to introduce yourself is to say, "I don't believe we have met. My name is..." 2) How can we encourage people to leave the last two rows of pews for visitors? Most visitors don't want to have to be seated in the first few rows. 3) Nametags: We have been advised that wearing nametags makes visitors stand out. Are we making a mistake by asking members to put their nametags on now? On a related note, Sam noticed that more people were wearing them on July 6 and wanted to make sure he could have one too. 4) "How Can I Help?" press passes on a lanyard: Brad Dean suggested that we might want to have 5 or 6 people wear them so that people know who to ask for help.
- *Finance moments:* We are trying to have one finance moment each month. Ron Zuker and Jim Grace have spoken recently.
- *Mission moments:* We are trying to have one mission moment each month. Kendra Robbins and Diana Wright-Stubbs (MAP backpacks) have spoken recently.