

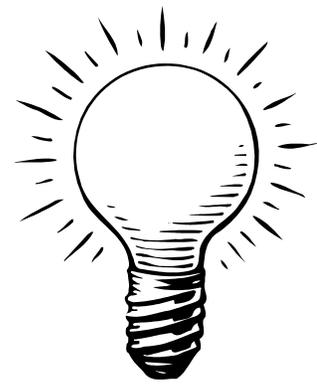
## Brainstorming Messages & Scripture Late Summer and Early Fall Worship

Monday, July 7, 2014

Ron and Vicki Zuker's house

6:00 pm Cookout/Potluck Dinner

7:00-9:00 pm Brainstorming for Worship



Join us for dinner. Ron is grilling chicken. Please bring a dish to pass. Weather permitting, we will meet outside to take advantage of the Zuker's wonderful view of Lake Michigan!

RSVP's are helpful but not mandatory. Sign up at church or contact Karen Booth or Vicki Zuker.

Please read the following scripture and message synopses before we gather. We will continue our study of spiritual gifts as we delve into Romans 12 and 1 Peter 4. Our hope is that we have had an opportunity for people to respond in July by completing a spiritual gifts inventory, either online or on paper, so that they have identified their gifts. After Pastor Mary and her family from vacation (August 13-27), we will look at the "How-tos of Covenant Life," a series on the five parts of membership in the United Methodist Church.

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### 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?

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**August 3, 2014: "Just Do It! - With Grace"**

8<sup>th</sup> 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

**Felt need:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibility:**

**Music suggestions:**

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

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, 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.

<sup>2</sup>Do 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.

<sup>3</sup>For 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. <sup>4</sup>Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup>We 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. <sup>7</sup>If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; <sup>8</sup>if 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.

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**August 10, 2014: "Love, Honor, and Cherish"**

9<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibility:**

**Music suggestions:**

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

<sup>9</sup>Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.

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

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

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**August 17, 2014: Guest Speaker**

11<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

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**August 24, 2014: Guest Speaker**

12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

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**August 31, 2014: "Work and Worship"**

13<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music suggestions:**

**Discussion points:** Pastor Mary has a litany that we might be able to use on today.

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

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

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

<sup>10</sup>God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. <sup>11</sup>Do 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.

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## “How-tos of Covenant Life”

Our Vital Church Initiative prescription #2 focuses on extravagant generosity and giving as a spiritual discipline. Beginning in September, we will focus on a series that looks at the five parts of membership vows: prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. This holistic focus on stewardship could lend itself to a specific response and commitment in worship in early or mid-October.

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)

<sup>4</sup>Attention, Israel! GOD, our God! GOD the one and only!

<sup>5</sup>Love GOD, your God, with your whole heart: love him with all that’s in you, love him with all you’ve got!

<sup>6</sup>Write these commandments that I’ve given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you <sup>7</sup>and 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. <sup>8</sup>Tie them on your hands and foreheads as a reminder; <sup>9</sup>inscribe them on the doorposts of your homes and on your city gates.

### **Leviticus 19:18** (Contemporary English Version)

<sup>18</sup>Stop 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)

<sup>29</sup>Jesus replied, “The most important one is this: ‘Listen, Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. <sup>30</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup>The 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:

Prayers/passionate worship

Service/risk-taking mission and service

Presence/radical hospitality

Witness/intentional faith development

Gifts/extravagant generosity

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## **September 7, 2014: “How-tos of Covenant Life: Prayers - Talk with God”**

14<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music suggestions:**

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

<sup>5</sup>“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?”

<sup>6</sup>“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.

<sup>7</sup>“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. <sup>8</sup>Don’t fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. <sup>9</sup>With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

*Our Father in heaven, Reveal who you are. <sup>10</sup>Set the world right; Do what’s best—as above, so below. <sup>11</sup>Keep us alive with three square meals. <sup>12</sup>Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others. <sup>13</sup>Keep 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.*

(<sup>14</sup>“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. <sup>15</sup>If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God’s part.)

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

15<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibility:**

**Music suggestions:** 2025 As the Deer

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

<sup>41</sup>Every year his parents went to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover.

<sup>42</sup>When he was twelve years old, they went up to the Feast, according to the custom. <sup>43</sup>After the Feast was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it. <sup>44</sup>Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. <sup>45</sup>When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. <sup>46</sup>After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup>Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup>When 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."

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

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

**Scripture:** Psalm 46 (Today's English Version)

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

<sup>2</sup>So we will not be afraid, even if the earth is shaken and mountains fall into the ocean depths;

<sup>3</sup>even if the seas roar and rage, and the hills are shaken by the violence.

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

<sup>6</sup>Nations are terrified, kingdoms are shaken; God thunders, and the earth dissolves.

<sup>7</sup>The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

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

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

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

<sup>11</sup>The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge.

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

16<sup>th</sup> 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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

"A Cheerful Giver"

key verses 12-13

<sup>6</sup>Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.

<sup>7</sup>Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup>And 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. <sup>9</sup>As it is written:

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

<sup>10</sup>Now 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. <sup>11</sup>You 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.

<sup>12</sup>This 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. <sup>13</sup>Because 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.<sup>14</sup> And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you.<sup>15</sup> Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

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## September 28, 2014: “How-tos of Covenant Life: Service - Talents for God”

17<sup>th</sup> 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 Go’s love.

**Felt need:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music suggestions:**

**Possible activity:** Hand washing or foot washing.

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

<sup>1</sup>It 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.

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

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

<sup>6</sup>But when he came to Simon Peter, that disciple asked, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus answered, “You don’t really know what I am doing, but later you will understand.”

<sup>8</sup>“You will never wash my feet!” Peter replied.

“If I don’t wash you,” Jesus told him, “you don’t really belong to me.”

<sup>9</sup>Peter said, “Lord, don’t wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head.”

<sup>10</sup>Jesus 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.” <sup>11</sup>Jesus knew who would betray him. That is why he said, “except for one of you.”

<sup>12f</sup> 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? <sup>13</sup>You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. <sup>14</sup>And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other. <sup>15</sup>I have set the example, and you should do for each other exactly what I have done for you. <sup>16</sup>I tell you for certain that servants are not greater than their master, and messengers are not greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup>You know these things, and God will bless you, if you do them.

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

**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:**

**Metaphor/visuals:**

**World Communion Sunday**

**Media possibilities:**

**Music suggestions:**

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

“Suffering for Doing Good”

<sup>8</sup>Summing up: Be agreeable, be sympathetic, be loving, be compassionate, be humble.

<sup>9</sup>That 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.

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

<sup>11</sup>Snub evil and cultivate good; run after peace for all you're worth.

<sup>12</sup>God 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.

<sup>13</sup>If with heart and soul you're doing good, do you think you can be stopped? <sup>14</sup>Even if you suffer for it, you're still better off. Don't give the opposition a second thought. <sup>15</sup>Through 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. <sup>16</sup>Keep 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. <sup>17</sup>It's better to suffer for doing good, if that's what God wants, than to be punished for doing bad. <sup>18</sup>That'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.

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