

Series: *One Good Thing*

November 2020

Brainstorming: Monday, October 19, 2020

2020 theme: 20/20 Vision – Seeking God’s Vision for Ourselves, Our Church, Our Community, and Our World

20/20 Vision theme connection: See the good that we often miss if/when we focus on bad things that happen, negativity, etc.

It seems like media is dominated by bad news. We know that negativity and tragic events get ratings and attention, but too much bad news can leave us feeling hopeless and apathetic. We forget that God is good – and God can bring new life and hope even in the midst of difficult circumstances.

What about good news and good things? How can we overcome the fear of what’s in front of us and see at least “one good thing” in every situation? This is not a call to ignore our authentic feelings of anger, disappointment, or sadness, but to recognize that God is with us and working for good.

Resources:

- *Some Good News* that began during pandemic and other positive news sources
- "A Thank-You Note helped Me Find My Calling," WSJ 12/28/19. Synopsis: A man's father insistence that his son write a thank-you note, spurred a friendship, visit to a clinic, and realizing his life's calling.
- "Down Syndrome and the Gift of Innocence," WSJ 12/24/19 Synopsis: The Little Sisters Disciples of the Lamb exist so that "those who are in last place in the world - women with Down Syndrome - can hold live their vocation.
- "One Good Thing," WSJ 4/3/20. Synopsis: Four people reflect on how simple acts of generosity can bring comfort in troubled times.
- *For Better or Worse* comic – perspective on gratitude
- <https://qz.com/307214/heres-what-happened-when-a-news-site-only-reported-good-news-for-a-day/> Synopsis: A paper tries reporting just good news for one day. It didn't go well.
- https://www.ted.com/talks/laura_trice_remember_to_say_thank_you?language=en Synopsis: A 3-minute TED talk on the power of the words "thank you."
- https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/10547/finding-joy-in-2020-its-not-such-an-absurd-idea-really?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_content=Finding%20joy%20in%202020%3F%20it%E2%80%99s%20not%20such%20an%20absurd%20idea%2C%20really&utm_campaign=MM%20Newsletter%2010-07-20 Synopsis: The role of joy during suffering. Specific references to 2020.
- <https://clearlens.org/blogs/what-does-the-bible-say-about-grace?rq=what%20does%20the%20bible%20say%20about%20grace> Synopsis: I (Karen) am

not exactly sure why I saved this article for November, but maybe it is because joy is found in offering grace.

- <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=335027947704896> Short video on 100+ year old Glenna Droscha playing “Amazing Grace” on piano
- Story from #teachlove:

Kenyan runner Abel Mutai was just a few feet from the finish line, but became confused with the signage and stopped, thinking he had completed the race. A Spanish runner, Ivan Fernandez, was right behind him and, realizing what was happening, started shouting at the Kenyan to continue running. Mutai didn't know Spanish and didn't understand. Realizing what was taking place, Fernandez pushed Mutai to victory.

A journalist asked Ivan, "Why did you do that?" Ivan replied, "My dream is that someday we can have a kind of community life where we push and help each other to win."

The journalist insisted "But why did you let the Kenyan win?" Ivan replied, "I didn't let him win, he was going to win. The race was his." The journalist insisted, and again asked, "But you could have won!" Ivan looked at him and replied, "But what would be the merit of my victory? What would be the honor in that medal? What would my Mother think of that?"

Values are passed on from generation to generation. What values are we teaching our children? Let us not teach our kids the wrong ways and means to WIN. Instead, let us pass on the beauty and humanity of a helping hand. Because honesty and ethics are WINNING!

Ideas for the series:

- Use small business cards to share an act of kindness – to do “one good thing” each week during the series
- **STAR WORDS:** THANKFUL, GRATEFUL/GRATITUDE, PERSEVERANCE
- Visuals: **#1/ONE**
- Social media: Share “one good thing” each week
- God Moments as a weekly testimony to seeing “one good thing”

Music ideas:

- *I've Got Peace Like a River*
- *Joy*
- *Sanctuary*
- *Jesus, We Are Here*
- *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*

Scripture ideas:

- Use Paul's letter to the Philippians as a foundational text – especially Philippians 4: 8-9 (NIV), which could be used as a blessing each week: ⁸ **Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.** ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

There is a good possibility that we will return to in-person worship (one service at 10:00 a.m.) in the sanctuary with safety protocols beginning on November 1. We'll continue to livestream worship as we have been doing.

November 1, 2020: "Laundry with the Lamb"

DST ends, All Saints Day – LIVESTREAM

Lectionary 11/1/2020

Scripture: Revelation 7: 9-17 (CEB) "The Great Crowd and Seventh Seal"

⁹ After this I looked, and there was a great crowd that no one could number. They were from every nation, tribe, people, and language. They were standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They wore white robes and held palm branches in their hands. ¹⁰ They cried out with a loud voice:

"Victory belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."

¹¹ All the angels stood in a circle around the throne, and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell facedown before the throne and worshipped God, ¹² saying,

"Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and always. Amen."

¹³ Then one of the elders said to me, "Who are these people wearing white robes, and where did they come from?"

¹⁴ I said to him, "Sir, you know."

Then he said to me, "These people have come out of great hardship. They have washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb's blood. ¹⁵ This is the reason they are before God's throne. They worship him day and night in his temple, and the one seated on the throne will shelter them.

¹⁶ They won't hunger or thirst anymore. No sun or scorching heat will beat down on them, ¹⁷ because the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them. He will lead them to the springs of life-giving water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Scripture: Psalm 34 (MSG)

I bless GOD every chance I get;

my lungs expand with his praise.

² I live and breathe GOD;

if things aren't going well, hear this and be happy:

³ Join me in spreading the news;

together let's get the word out.

⁴ GOD met me more than halfway,

he freed me from my anxious fears.

⁵ Look at him; give him your warmest smile.

Never hide your feelings from him.

⁶ When I was desperate, I called out,

and GOD got me out of a tight spot.

⁷ GOD's angel sets up a circle

of protection around us while we pray.

⁸ Open your mouth and taste, open your eyes and see—

how good GOD is.

Blessed are you who run to him.

- ⁹ Worship GOD if you want the best;
 worship opens doors to all his goodness.
- ¹⁰ Young lions on the prowl get hungry,
 but GOD-seekers are full of God.
- ¹¹ Come, children, listen closely;
 I'll give you a lesson in GOD worship.
- ¹² Who out there has a lust for life?
 Can't wait each day to come upon beauty?
- ¹³ Guard your tongue from profanity,
 and no more lying through your teeth.
- ¹⁴ Turn your back on sin; do something good.
 Embrace peace—don't let it get away!
- ¹⁵ GOD keeps an eye on his friends,
 his ears pick up every moan and groan.
- ¹⁶ GOD won't put up with rebels;
 he'll cull them from the pack.
- ¹⁷ Is anyone crying for help? GOD is listening,
 ready to rescue you.
- ¹⁸ If your heart is broken, you'll find GOD right there;
 if you're kicked in the gut, he'll help you catch your breath.
- ¹⁹ Disciples so often get into trouble;
 still, GOD is there every time.
- ²⁰ He's your bodyguard, shielding every bone;
 not even a finger gets broken.
- ²¹ The wicked commit slow suicide;
 they waste their lives hating the good.
- ²² GOD pays for each slave's freedom;
 no one who runs to him loses out.

Synopsis: We may be struggling with loss and uncertainty because of the state of the world – and our country seemingly divided. God offers us a vision for life with Jesus – the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, and it's a vision for us to claim boldly.

Felt need: To claim hope for the saints and find hope for ourselves in the promise of peace, comfort, and unity in God

Visuals: White robe, palm branches, angel wings

Media: Psalm 34 video featuring LHUMC congregation

<https://lakeharborumc.org/2018/08/august-12-2018-message-ready-to-praise/>

Related info: <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/these-are-they/all-saints-day-year-a-lectionary-planning-notes/all-saints-day-year-a-preaching-notes>

Activity: Holy Communion, Naming saints who have died since All Saints Day 2019

Music: *For All the Saints, Holy Ground*

Children's Time:

Worship leader: Dave Lorenz

November 8, 2020: "Will Joy Win?"

Sunday after Election Day, 23rd Sunday after Pentecost – LIVESTREAM
Lectionary 10/11/20

Scripture: Philippians 4: 4-9 (NIV)

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸ **Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.** ⁹ Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Synopsis: Joy isn't the same thing as happiness, but requires us to prepare and even anticipate moments when we can experience it. In the midst of a contentious time in our country, how will we stay grounded in the joy of the Lord, which is our strength?

Felt need: To recognize that focusing on what is good can cultivate joy in our lives

Visuals: Praying hands. "Rejoice!"

Media: "Prayer for Civility in a Divisive World"

<https://www.umc.org/en/content/a-prayer-for-civility-in-a-divisive-world?fbclid=IwAR02LkPBq0AqkH7fPhou6q1cXV6ukzDaq0nr11yGTdjXHWQdFN0nr1nra-M>

Related info:

Activity: Acknowledge Veterans Day at beginning of worship

Music: #2193 "Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying"; #2218 "You Are Mine"

Children's Time:

Worship leader: Dirk Fuller

November 15, 2020: "It's the Little Things"

24th Sunday after Pentecost - LIVESTREAM

Jimmy Epplett, preaching

Lectionary 12/30/18

Scripture: Colossians 3: 12-17 (NIV)

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

¹⁵ Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. ¹⁷ And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Synopsis: Small things seem...well, small, but when we put them all together they can change the world. Small acts make a huge difference.

Felt need: To understand that our actions can have a profound impact on others and can make all the difference in their lives and in ours.

Visuals:

Media possibility:

- “I Like Being 98.” Length: 3:49. Cost: \$25.00. 98-year-old Evelyn is a friend to her neighbor Joyce and believes we should all contribute to society.
<https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/57136/i-like-being-98>
- “Love Actually Is.” Length: 1:22. Cost: Free with our subscription. Most of us could quote Pauls’ “love chapter,” or 1 Corinthians 13, off the top of our heads. But how many of us consistently live out those definitions on love in the everyday, mundane moments of life?
<https://www.playbackmedia.com/mini-movies/81424/love-actually-is>

Related info:

Activity:

Music: #2036 “Give Thanks”

Children’s Time:

Worship leader:

November 22, 2020: “Getting Angry, with God”

Christ the King Sunday, Sunday before Thanksgiving – LIVESTREAM

Jeff Verry, preaching

Lectionary 8/8/21

Scripture: Ephesians 4: 20-32 (CEV) – Jeff to choose translation

²⁰⁻²¹ But that isn’t what you were taught about Jesus Christ. He is the truth, and you heard about him and learned about him. ²² You were told that your foolish desires will destroy you and that you must give up your old way of life with all its bad habits. ²³ Let the Spirit change your way of thinking ²⁴ and make you into a new person. You were created to be like God, and so you must please him and be truly holy.

Rules for the New Life

²⁵ We are part of the same body. Stop lying and start telling each other the truth. ²⁶ Don’t get so angry that you sin. Don’t go to bed angry ²⁷ and don’t give the devil a chance.

²⁸ If you are a thief, quit stealing. Be honest and work hard, so you will have something to give to people in need.

²⁹ Stop all your dirty talk. Say the right thing at the right time and help others by what you say.

³⁰ Don’t make God’s Spirit sad. The Spirit makes you sure that someday you will be free from your sins.

³¹ Stop being bitter and angry and mad at others. Don’t yell at one another or curse each other or ever be rude. ³² Instead, be kind and merciful, and forgive others, just as God forgave you because of Christ.

Synopsis: Anger is a valid human emotion. Being able to express our anger is crucial to being authentic and genuine in our relationships. How can we allow ourselves to be angry in constructive ways? How can we give each other grace and space to do the same? How has God modeled this for us?

Felt need: To find better (godly) ways to be angry – Karen Booth’s words, not Jeff’s

Visuals: Setting sun/bed (v. 26). Duct tape (1st video).

Media possibility:

- “EPH 429.” Length: 1:34. Cost: We own it. Last used: 9/16/12. This quick sermon starter on how we use our words asks us to stop and take Ephesians 4:29 seriously—and then dares the viewer to be the first to reject using any words that don't help those who are listening.
<https://media.preachingtoday.com/mini-movies/22712/eph429>
- “Mismanaged Anger.” Length: 2:04. Cost: \$16.99. Sometimes tempers flare from something deep within, and we’re not even sure what we’re really outraged about. Use this emotionally-stirring video to set up a message on pain and anger.
<https://skitguys.com/videos/mismanaged-anger>

Related info:

Activity:

Music: #2167 “More Like You”

Children’s Time:

Worship leader: