

FEBRUARY 7, 2021

Marion

weekly update

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

“Connecting people with Jesus Christ so all can experience his love and joy.”

SERMON Jan 31th, Counterfeit Christianity: Exclusive Deals Deuteronomy 7:3-4, 1 Corinthians 5:11-14, Matthew 9:9-13

This week in our Counterfeit Christianity series we tackle the subject of exclusivity. Who are we allowed to exclude from our company and membership? In case you'd like to skip to the end, my answer is somewhere between "no one" and "if anyone probably not the folks we think." That this is the case, Christianity that peddles exclusivity is peddling a counterfeit notion.

What do I mean by exclusive may be the first question? By definition it means "not admitting other things" or "restricted to the person, group, or area concerned." This definition makes exclusion sound very definite, like there's a bouncer at the door deciding who can and can't come in. It implies perhaps a list of criteria which must be met to be included. Certainly this applies to churches and Christianity in some fashion. For our purposes, we will define exclusion a little more broadly.

We can exclude people much more subtly than a hard and fast denial of entrance. Yes, there are churches that literally have a membership statement that must be signed to be allowed to be fully "in" the church. These often include statements of value, core belief, doctrine, etc. If one will not sign off to fully agree, membership is denied. What this means is that even if the individual is permitted to attend services, they are expressly informed that they are not really "in". Their place will always be, in a formalized fashion, somewhere on the fringe. The policy codifies the sense that "if you don't agree with us entirely you're not 'really Christian'."

The more subtle forms occur when we as individuals have our own sense of who is "in" and who is "out", or our church has made this group or groups expressly known without turning it into some kind of legalistic formality. Exclusion comes in the form of a lack of welcome. It's the cold shoulder or the dirty look. It's making sure someone's name is never brought up or always shot down when a discussion occurs about whom to invite where. It's the unspoken arm's length people receive.

Sometimes we think that we can hide this attitude in our hearts. Most of us realize that there is a sense of courtesy we're supposed to extend. Unfortunately if our heart sees the other as "less than" or "unworthy", it is almost inescapable that our facial expression, tone of voice, and/or body language will betray us. Other times there are the side conversations where a person or group is being discussed in a judging way. We forget given the diversity of our world that likely in earshot is someone who is part of, or connected to someone being judged. The message? "You aren't welcome, or at best are simply tolerated."

Most recently and intensely, we hear time and again Christians deeming whether or not someone belongs to Christ by how they cast their vote in the last election. No Christian could support "so and so" even to the point of some telling others that they are in danger of damnation depending on whom they favor. To be direct, if that is our standard for salvation, a political figure, we have gone very far afield of any sense of the gospel. Tying one's salvation to any political figure over the much more complex relationship we all have with Jesus is no different than Rome's devotion to Caesar. It is a contemporary extreme example of how rules are made and walls are built to exclude with vitriole rather than include with compassion and willing conversation.

The standards we have for exclusion are man made and often scripture twisted. The first question we have to ask ourselves, in the mirror, is "in my heart, who are the people I immediately doubt actually know Jesus? Who do I not want in my church? Who doesn't deserve a full role in the faith?" Through the years this question has had many answers. For a time the answer was women. They weren't equal to men. Slavery and segregation made it a matter of race. Theology was part of and still is an issue. What do you believe about baptism? What do you believe about communion? Faith was at the heart of it. Catholics didn't include Protestants nor Protestant Catholics. Sometimes it wasn't skin tone, but country of origin. Through history immigrating cultures from the Chinese to the Irish to the Italians and so forth experienced discrimination. Even today, there are churches that are hubs for sexism and racism. Where this thrives, exclusion thrives as well. Our day and age faces this particularly with the LGBT community.

Sometimes it's more superficial. How does someone dress? Is their hair too short or too long? How much jewelry do they wear? Do they fit in with my congregation's aesthetic? In some places we dare not have so much as a glass of wine with dinner or risk condemnation. In other if one is divorced there is a stigma that is hard to shake.

How much of this is Divinely inspired vs. man made?

Let's look at scripture to sort this out. First, one of the scriptures that was long used for exclusion, and at the very least, at the worst segregation. Our verse in Deuteronomy is in the context of the conquest of the Promised Land. They were to wipe out every person in the tribes they came across. The question of divine genocide is for another time. However, it does lead into the scripture surrounding intermarrying. They are not to do it at any cost. What is telling and instructive is the reason why. To only take the prohibition without the reason is misleading. In that case it's easy to read it as one is "better" than the other and order a life of segregation.

Through the history of Israel, however, we see this bear out in a more honest and practical way. As nations live alongside one another, interaction and engagement is inevitable. It is necessary. In more modern, Christian commands it is our mission. While the Jewish religion is not considered a missionary one seeking converts, Christianity is. How can we carry out the Great Commission if we hole up and keep to ourselves?

Engagement is necessary, however there is an understanding of what can happen when we tie ourselves to those who do not share our faith. This is the second half, the reason, for the command: "for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods". The command was not about exclusion, it was about guarding their hearts and their faith.

This is not far from Paul's instruction to not be "unequally yoked." Once again, this isn't a matter of exclusion. It is a matter of faith. It is undeniable that to link the deepest part of who we are to someone who does not share a like sense of faith is to risk inviting compromise and even departure of our own. This is evident as Paul talks about marriage meaning that our attentions will be split between doing what is best for our family and wholly following God. If our spouse is hesitant to embrace faith and pursue it, we are then often torn by how far to pursue our own. We see this time and again with families divided in belief, and so often the participation in the body of Christ for the believer diminishes. This can come to rest in confusion on the part of a child in the family.

Even outside of family, consider it in business, in livelihood. What happens if a person of Christian value and morality yokes to an unscrupulous person who doesn't share the faith? At some point there is the danger that ethics will become a confrontation. The person of faith is then at a crossroads. Do I compromise my faith for the sake of my business and livelihood, or take a stand and risk a break and maybe having to start all over again?

It isn't about exclusion. It is all about faith.

Our passage in Matthew addresses some of the reasons we exclude. Sometimes it's fear. Sometimes it's assumptions. Sometimes someone has told us who and what to disallow.

Fear takes hold when we are afraid that somehow engaging with those we might call "sinners" will contaminate us and lead us away from our faith. Given what we know of the Great Commission and our job as followers of Jesus to transform the world by inviting people into relationship with Him, the question of having a strong foundation of faith is put cart before the horse in this sense.

The strength of our faith isn't demonstrated by how we hide ourselves from the world. It is demonstrated by our ability to enter and interact with the world for the purpose of the Great Commission, and know that our faith will remain intact and secure. It is I am concerned about compromise, the problem with the strength of my faith isn't the world, it's my faith.

Assumption is often the product of lack of exposure. To put it most clearly, we turn the mirror on ourselves. How would I feel if I were to be immediately judged by the worst examples of my particular group? Any group? How would I personally feel by being judged by the worst examples of white people, straight people, pastors, or Christians? If I feel that would be unfair, and I am doing that to others, I need to reexamine my sensibilities.

I have had the opportunity to be exposed to many different groups, lifestyles, and so forth that I had assumptions about earlier in my life. Never have I met someone who has lived up to my worst assumptions. Often have I found people who in many ways are doing far better than I at this journey of life. Getting to know individual persons rather than assuming has made all the difference in not just knowing the individual, but clarifying my view of the group.

Going on another's "say so" is similar but different. Leadership that tells their Christian following that certain people are "out" run the risk, if not outright saying so, of identifying people we are called to serve and inspire to faith the enemy. This is no where more present than the Crusades, and the damage that this kind of messaging does has been seen throughout the ages even in our modern times.

In the Crusades, inspired by religious leaders, soldiers marched through the land, sometimes on the way to liberate the Holy Land from Muslim rule. On the way, they killed innocent Jews and Muslims, and even some Christians who had the misfortune of looking like a Muslim due to their attire. These people were not seen in light of the Great Commission, but rather enemies to be slaughtered.

Today, for the most part, Christian leaders aren't calling for the death of those who are different, though every now and then we hear a voice pop up. Still, the sense of demonizing those who need to hear the gospel and painting them as "enemies" carries with it the counterfeit nature of exclusion and hatred.

In Matthew, we see Jesus fellowshiping with the "sinners" that the religious leadership wanted nothing to do with. They were beneath them, they were contemptible, and to associate with them meant the one doing the associating was deficient. Their criticism is leveled at Jesus Himself for daring to eat with them. Why?

I suggest the three reasons above. Fear, assumption, and what others told them. Being around people who have issues can be fearful because it draws to light the issues in ourselves. Seeing folks who hold things differently often leads to assumptions about their core nature. Things become engrained in us when people in authority tell us they are true.

Jesus example is the exact opposite. Who needs Him? Those who are struggling with sin, the imperfect, the impure. Those who know they are imperfect, sinful, and impure find in Jesus the love and grace that helps them see past their imperfections to something greater through the transforming power of Jesus' redemption and the Spirit. "I came for the sick, not the righteous."

Read that statement with a twinge of sarcasm. Jesus clearly wasn't calling the Pharisees righteous enough to be above the need for redemption and transformation. Quite clearly the implication is that the self-righteous are having an issue because they can't see their own need to humbly transform before and through God.

Jesus in fact calls them, and us to the same expectation. "I desire mercy." The call of Christ is not to exclude the different and imperfect. We aren't to join in the practice of siding with the ones who call any group "unworthy" or underserving of our time or mercy. The call of the church is to come alongside others, no matter who, and extend to them the same love of Christ Jesus offers as He dines with a table of "sinners."

So is it true that no one is excluded? 1 Corinthians gives us some interesting instructions, two that we often misread in different ways.

The first is Paul's instruction to judge those within the body of Christ and leave judgment on those outside of it to God alone. Many Christians have this flipped. Harsh judgment is reserved for those outside the church, while those inside may be given a pass. Naturally we want to be lenient on those close to us. They are our friends, family, and members of our extended family of faith. This grace at least makes sense, and we'll get to that further in a bit.

The first piece that needs addressed is how the church has started pointing the “judgy” finger at those who aren’t part of the church at all. The world is condemned and even vilified. We dismiss our own, and do the exact opposite of what Paul instructs. Judgment for those not in the body of believers is to God alone. It makes absolutely no sense to get caught up trying to police people in matters of faith who don’t share that faith. Quite the contrary, our role is to be in relationship with them for the purpose of showing them the love of Christ. We are to invite them into the body so they can share in that same intimate, transforming grace we receive through the Holy Spirit. Harshly judging does the opposite. I certainly wouldn’t want to come into a community whose first impression is to criticize or even demonize me. Why would anyone else? Now let’s turn to the sense of those within the church. This makes it sound like we at least have a window to exclude or eject folks. Ironically it’s not the ones that many times we’ve thought. Still, there are some other factors at play before jumping on this idea and attitude. In particular, there is the matter of context.

Paul’s context for this remark is that he is dealing with a situation in which there was an incestuous situation in the congregation, widely known, and no one was doing anything about it. No one was calling it out. There was no accountability. In other words, whether by voice or by silence, it was “permitted.”

The issue at hand was more than just the sin in the relationship. It was the blind eye that sends a destructive message to the congregation at large. “If they can get away with this big of a sin, surely I can get away with my much smaller ones.” The temptation is to turn from transformation and acknowledging sin for what it is in our own lives. We remember the words in 1 John that “whomever says they have no sin and the truth is not in him”. This is not a place that is faithful or healthy for any Christian. When it pervaded the congregation it becomes widespread.

So Paul makes a statement about excluding those engaging in unrepentant, habitual sin. We don’t know explicitly but perhaps might speculate that in conjunction with the sin it asserts that the sin is widely known and broadly ignored. Several sins are outlined in the scripture, though I would suggest that the list is not intended to be exhaustive. Then, of course, there would be the matter of handling the matter in keeping with the order prescribed by both Paul and Jesus. Go to the individual one on one, if no change occurs, take several witnesses, and if still no change bring the individual before the congregation. No change equals expulsion at this point until there is a change.

Here’s what makes this even stickier. First, very infrequently is anyone’s dirty laundry aired to the point that everyone goes along with it. The pervasiveness isn’t common by any stretch. Coupled with that is that most of us have more intimate circles of people we connect with in the community of faith. I would like to think that family and friends care enough to hold us to some level of account when we are habitually out of line. Those folks also often have the grace and compassion to stick with us trying to help us move beyond our sin.

But is this wrong given this passage?

That begs the question of who is the judge of what and where the threshold is to merit such consequence. Which sins are severe enough? What is the frequency of commission of said sins? For example one mentioned is “greed.” Is this connected to how much time one spends working to accumulate wealth? How much wealth one has? How fast one accumulates it? How stingy one is with sharing excess with those more in need? All of the above? A few of the above?

How long has the individual been a Christian? Does the scale slide depending on how long one has been in the faith? We acknowledge that someone new to the faith needs grace and patience as they learn and build the foundation of their relationship with Christ. How does this sort out?

What about matters of addiction? An unfortunate part of many recovery experiences is relapse. Sometime relapse is active months of using whatever is the source of addiction until active recovery returns. In this regard, do we expel them during active use until they “come around” and get back to active recovery? If so does this violate that higher rule of mercy and compassion, knowing that part of successful recovery is having a community alongside the individual for support and encouragement?

There are so many factors at play that, given the initial context of Paul’s comment, make it unlikely that excluding someone from the body makes sense. This isn’t to say it’s never warranted, simply that the window where it is is incredibly small. Not only small, but targeted not at those outside the church, but those inside which let’s be honest, is a complicated matter of both conscience and the heart.

Most simply put, there is no place in Christianity for exclusive attitudes. Considering the example of Christ in context of the Great Commission, we should rather be people of radical inclusiveness.

If this is the case, how do we combat the temptation in our nature to exclude and the permission given by some voices that this is actually a “Christian” value?

I offer a single strategy as a foundation to build on. Stop thinking we are the ones responsible for or even able to transform another. This isn’t us. It’s God working on and in an individual heart.

This notion puts us back to where we were last week, Paul and Appollos. “One plants, another waters, BUT GOD BRINGS THE INCREASE.” Paul was wise enough to know that yes, both he and his partners in ministry had their jobs to do, but ultimately it wasn’t any of them that brought about redemption and transformation. It was, and is, the Spirit of God at work.

What is step one in this experience? Being actively and openly in the presence of God. This is our job. Invite people into God’s presence so that God’s love and grace can be experienced and begin working in our lives. Yes, those that have been believers longer will instruct new believers in scripture and help them to understand what it looks like to be in relationship with Jesus in word and deed. This is not taking credit for the change, but rather continuing to point the way for the individual to go deeper in their connection with God, trusting that God will continue working in the heart to bring about transformation.

It’s interesting how often Christians say “all glory to God”, falsely claiming that we take none of it on ourselves. Yet if we put up our walls of exclusion, we are doing just that. The walls, the standards, are trying to force the hand of another to change into who WE think they should be before we’ll invite them with us into the presence of God. We have taken the power of transformation on ourselves, and in effect are attempting to steal some of that glory.

Our responsibility is to invite and point the way, to plant and water. God brings the increase.

A wonderful benefit to this works two ways. In regards to the other, when our hearts are open and inviting, our witness becomes brighter and grows. Doors are perceived to be open rather than shut, community becomes true community with all of us in the same boat and on a common path towards God. The things that don’t matter to God cease to matter to us as we allow the lead of compassion, humility, and mercy through Christ to be our guide.

In regards to ourselves, our burden is suddenly lighter. The angst, anger, and tension that comes from feeling the pressure to judge and reinforce our boundaries to “keep out the rabble” is gone. Our hearts are bigger, our experience broadens to include wonderful people and ideas otherwise shut out. The faces in our midst grow, and begin to represent all of God’s children.

We get one step closer to seeing the Kingdom come.

Chapter 15 of John continues Jesus' "farewell discourse" with the disciples. This is important to remember as these last chapters are not "stand alone". They are one long discussion that weaves together, preparing the disciples for Jesus' coming crucifixion. There are measures of comfort, caution, and instruction all for the benefit of His followers, whom He also has now identified as His friends.

Noteworthy is that there is a lot of repetition between chapters 14 and 15. There are points that Jesus wants to ensure are not missed, and so He reiterates them. Paying attention to this repetition is important, as it serves to drive home a message not just for the disciples then, but also disciples today.

Zeroing in on this term "friend", there is a distinction here made between friend and servant, and also a bit of a deeper meaning to the term that gives Jesus' statements both a there and then as well as here and now meaning. First, this term friend is deeper than just friendship as we understand it interpersonally. Certainly this is a component of it, which is the "there and then" connection with those personally present with Jesus at the moment. Also, this term has a deeper sense of referring more broadly to "those I love". This broadens the scope of the term to include all of those who would follow Him in the future, even until today. While we understand that Jesus loves everyone, I suggest that in this context this refers to the added dimension of the relationship with those who love Him in return.

Second, there is the relationship between friend and servant. On one hand, Jesus says that they are no longer His servants as He has shared with them all that God has shared with Him. Later, however, as they are informed that the world will hate them for His name's sake, it seems they are relegated back into the servant position. "If they hate the Master, they will hate the servant" kind of thing. This in actuality is referring us back to the foot washing. Even as Jesus' friends, they, like Him, fall into the role of servant. Serving others even as we serve Jesus. As our service conforms to that of Jesus, those who can not tolerate Him will be unable to tolerate the disciples.

Grasping this notion of friend is very important today. In many circles there is an effort to appeal to the masses by making Jesus too familiar. The goal is to make Him relatable, to an almost "just like us", buddy to grab a burger with kind of status. While I think Jesus would love to grab a burger with us, we need to remember that He is still Lord. We are not equal. As such, the relationship, while incredibly intimate, must acknowledge His superiority, Lordship, and Divinity. When this is lost, Jesus' commands turn from command to suggestion. This is at our peril.

The image of the vine and the branches gives voice to this. The agricultural flavor of those hearing this for the first time would have given them special insight into the illustration. The vine, Jesus, is the source of the nourishment and strength of the branches, us. Without the vine, the branch withers. The vine is the source for the branch. Further out, the gardener tends the vine. In order for the vine to produce fully and freshly, that nourishment needs to go to the branches that are actually using it and furthering the purpose of the vine. Branches that do not produce are cut off and burned. The Gardener is God, who judges and holds to account those of us who claim to be in Christ. To not produce is a sign that we are not truly in the vine, Christ, and as such are removed to make room for those who will.

The message is clear, but hard. The image is a much vaguer sense of the body of Christ than Paul outlines in Corinthians. Nevertheless, it is an image of authentic Christians recognizing and living into the truth that for God's Kingdom, we do nothing on our own. We stay close to Jesus, His teaching, and His example. The Holy Spirit nourishes and guides us so that our lives bear the good fruit of grace, love, compassion, and mercy, hoping to inspire others to graft into the vine as well. To put it simply, if we are truly in Christ, our lives will tell the tale.

The harsh part is the removal of branches, or the removal of those who claim to be in Christ but in actuality are not. Like the branches that don't produce fruit, they remove energy and strength from the rest of the body, diminishing their ability to inspire the world to faith in Christ. As such, the sentiment here is that they should be removed from the body for the sake of increasing the purpose of the body, which is to provide the brightest witness for the transformation of the world.

We tend to shy well away from this kind of action towards one another. We don't want to judge, nor be perceived as judging, one another. It seems harshly critical. To those who humbly recognize their own faults and limitations, it seems almost hypocritical. In truth, here it speaks of the gardener doing the pruning, however elsewhere there is precedent for this responsibility to be on the community of faith. Regardless, we hesitate, rightly so, to do the pruning ourselves. If you want to have this elaborated upon more, check the message from our service on Sunday January 31. Despite the difficulty in practice of balancing our own abiding with Christ and bearing fruit and dealing disfunction within the community, there is a stark message. Stay close to Jesus and live out that faith productively. If this message isn't heeded there is consequence, and it is for the benefit of the witness of the gospel.

Repeated over and over again in the first part of this chapter is something we've already seen multiple times in John's gospel. Jesus' command is to love. This is how the world knows we belong to Him. We do it by remaining in the love of Jesus. And in fact, this relational "friend" love of Jesus has a contingency. This love is granted if we obey His command. This further demonstrates the difference between the unconditional love of Jesus that desires us to be reconciled, and the deeper relational love that comes about when we accept that redeeming grace. The love if freely offered, the question becomes whether or not we will open our hearts to receive it.

Jesus then turns the discussion sharply from love to hate. This is simply a device in contrasts. He instructs them on who they are to be, and assures them of His abiding, empowering love for them. As He does, they are being prepared for the caution of how they will be received by the world. They will be hated.

In a comforting statement, Jesus reassures them in a twist of the "it's not you it's me" statement. The disciples are simply serving and ministering to the world as they have been shown by Jesus. They, and we, are to model this. As such, the closer we are to the example of Jesus, the more the world will receive us as it did Him. The result is that its hatred isn't directed at us, but at the one we follow. The world in truth doesn't hate us, but hates Jesus.

This notion merits some unpacking, particularly today. Too often Christians brashly push a prepackaged version of salvation on an unsuspecting individual who doesn't believe. The interaction can be pushy, and in many ways insulting to the one on the receiving end. When the recipient refuses to accept the offer of salvation, the evangelist walks away comforted by realizing that "the world hated Me, it will hate you."

No.

This is not what this is speaking to. In so many instances, the rejection is not because of any genuine rejection of Jesus Himself. Rather it is the rejection of an individual who has just treated them disrespectfully. It is the essence of the cartoon with a man at the pearly gates hearing St. Peter say "yes, I know you call yourself a Christian, you just forgot the part about not being a jerk about it."

Perhaps a couple other illustrations may help clarify. One of the comments made in our Tuesday study referenced the Good Samaritan. All of the "good" people passed the injured man on the road by. The Samaritan was the one who gave him aid. Let's translate this for today.

Imagine there is someone in need who is reviled by the people around them. They are the fringe, the different, the other. They are ignored because after all, who would help someone "like that." Enter the Christian who sees this person with the eyes of Christ. Who sees the need described in

Matthew 25 where there is no other qualification for deserving help than simply being in need. Imitating Christ, aid is offered, and now the onlookers despise the Christian as well for daring to give help not to “the least of these” but as they see it “the worst of these.”

Let's go a step further. Our world is polarized to a dangerous extent. It is divided to a degree where people are berated or attacked simply because of a shirt, hat, faith tradition, political leaning and so on. The Christian sees someone being accosted by multiple folks berating and threatening them. Modeling Jesus' intervention with the woman about to be stoned, they come alongside the victim trying to calm the situation. “Blessed are the peacemakers” after all. What often happens when one sides with the unpopular or the attacked? You receive the same venom and aggression. These are, in my opinion, far more honest understandings of what it means to be hated by the world. We refuse to participate in its greed, dishonesty, hate, cruelty and so forth to the point that we are seen as the enemies of it. When we actively step in, we may experience it in action. When we are merely understood to oppose it, that hate may merely be present in the minds and hearts of those around us.

As the chapter closes, we see two additional thoughts that bear our attention.

The first is defining the specific “sin” that Jesus references when He tells the disciples that folks committed despite His having spoken with them and having shown them signs and wonders. This is repetitive through out John. The sin isn't some specific morality or behavioral act. It is something much more foundational, understanding that morality and behavior flows from it. The sin is that they have not believed Jesus when He told them who He is. Because they wouldn't accept He is from the Father, and the Father lives in Him, they have not believed in His true Messianic and redemptive identity. The result is not only that they now have no reason to listen to Him. They have outright rejected Him.

The disciples, however, have. To them will come the Holy Spirit. The Spirit will testify about Jesus, and in turn the disciples must as well. How can the Spirit testify? The testimony of the Spirit resides in the heart. There is the drawing presence of the Spirit in every heart. There is the guiding, confirming, and affirming witness of the Spirit in the heart of the believer. What is critical for the believer as we fulfill our calling to testify to Jesus to the world is for it to be congruent with that of the Spirit.

In other words, the Spirit may guide me in a direction or attitude. I have the option to either embrace that direction fully or deviate from it. Embraced fully, my witness is on target and pure. Deviating I corrupt the witness to some degree, denying the full witness of the Holy Spirit in my heart. Jesus is instructing the disciples to bear pure witness, affirming them that they have an additional confirmation in having been present with Jesus since His ministry began.

The words of John 15 are powerful. Love Jesus and draw near to Him, knowing that bearing fruit is of the essence and only happens truly through His guidance, nourishment, and grace. Know that relationship with Jesus is two way. His love for us is deep and genuine. Belonging to Him relies on our willingness to obeying His commands, the most primary of which is to love. In doing so, be prepared for an unloving world to disdain those who stand in stark contrast to it, revealing it for what it is. In doing so take comfort that the Spirit is there to affirm and inform our testimony.

February 7, 2021

Prelude

Greeting and Announcements

Opening Prayer

Hymns

#369 Blessed Assurance

#395 Take Time To Be Holy

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Scripture

Ephesians 2: 1-10 Ephesians 4: 17-32

John 13: 21-24, John 3: 16-21

Sermon

Counterfeit Christianity:
Both/And

Closing Hymn

#672 God Be With You Til We Meet Again

Benediction



Giving

Offering	\$7,286
Building Use	\$100
Tae Kwon Do	\$25
Missions	\$540
Building Fund	\$25
Improvement	\$40
-memorials-	
Tom Catlett	\$75
Gale Love	\$25
Donald Daugherty	\$25

Received	\$16,121
Needed	\$20,335



FIRST RESPONDER APPRECIATION MONTH

Send a card,

Arrange lunch delivery

Bake a cake,

Drop off donuts -

This month's

mission project is to

find a way to let police,

fire, and EMT folks know

their efforts are appreciated.

