

September 17, 2017

How Strong is Your Faith?

Earlier this year we took a survey about how we manage conflict as a church. Our Scripture today encourages us to view the strength of our faith in terms of our willingness to be in loving and respectful disagreement with others. As a church we affirmed strong faith at that time through 100% agreement on these four beliefs:

- 1) It is important to treat others with respect even when we disagree
- 2) We take full responsibility for our role in a conflict and help find effective solutions
- 3) In any conflict situation, we believe the priority should be understanding rather than winning or being right
- 4) We do not believe that if one person is right in a conflict, others have to be wrong

As part of our lesson today, I invite you to look at your own faith strength in terms of your willingness to accept others who differ in their thinking. Answer "yes" or "no" to the following questions and give yourself credit for all of your "yes" answers. Take a closer look at your "no" answers and see if there is an opportunity there to strengthen your faith that we all belong to God.

- I acknowledge that conflict happens and don't try to hide from it.
- I believe it is important to treat others with respect even when you disagree with them.
- If I am right in a conflict, it doesn't mean that others have to be wrong.
- It is important in a conflict to seek to understand differences and to identify common interests, shared goals and possible solutions.
- I take full responsibility for my role in a conflict and help find effective solutions.
- In any conflict situation, I believe the priority should be understanding rather than winning or being right.
- I am willing to agree to disagree and move on in most conflicts.

UNION CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 17, 2017

Sunday Morning Worship

10:00 AM



W e l c o m e

in Christ's name to all who are visiting.

We are an Open and Affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. Please let us know you were here by filling out one of the guest cards provided by the ushers. We are blessed by having you here. May you also be blessed because you worshipped God with us.

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10:00 AM

GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER

Music for Quiet Reflection

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude:

Call to Worship (responsive) (from Lectionary Liturgies by Thom M. Shuman)

L: Disciples and doubters, faithful and feckless,

P: We belong to God who welcomes us all.

L: Followers and those who lag behind, open-hearted and close-minded,

P: We belong to the Lord who is always patient with us.

L: Reconcilers and rabble-rousers, foolish and fearless,

P: We belong to the Spirit who encourages us in every moment.

Opening Hymn "I'll Live for Him" #283 green hymnal

Opening Prayer (unison)(from Rev-o-lution)

God Almighty, we confess that we put up walls and barriers. We refuse to forgive though others have forgiven us. We refuse to help though we have been helped. We see the speck in the eyes of others and fail to see the log in our own. We are stubborn. We want things our way, and cannot see outside of the box that there may be other ways. Forgive our shortcomings, our short-sightedness, and when we become stumbling blocks for others. Call us into your way, to see ourselves in others, to put ourselves in their shoes, to love others as we love ourselves, as you have loved us. In the name of Christ, we pray. Amen.

GOD'S PEOPLE LISTEN

Anthem

Learning Community Conversation

(Children leave for Sunday School through the Fellowship Room afterwards)

*** Fellowship Hymn:** "Living for Jesus" #259 green hymnal

Reading from Scripture Romans 14: 1-12 pew Bible #155 NT

L: God is still speaking to us through the Living Word.

P: Thanks be to God.

Sermon "We Are Accountable to God Alone"

Anthem

GOD'S PEOPLE RESPOND

Responding in Prayer

Sharing Celebrations & Concerns

Morning Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (using **debts** and **debtors**)

Response

Responding through Giving

Invitation to Giving and Receiving of Gifts

Offertory:

Hymn of Praise: "The Doxology"

*** Prayer of Dedication (unison)**

Source of Shalom, God of Peace, over the ages you have called us to live as peacemakers. You have called us to be Children of God. Bless these gifts now, Gracious God, and use them to guide all of your children to act with loving grace and peace, uniting us with each other, despite our differences. Amen.

GOD'S PEOPLE LEAVE TO SERVE

***Closing Hymn** "Blest Be the Tie That Binds" #430 green hymnal

***Benediction**

***Response**

Organ Postlude:

***Congregation:** Please rise in body or in spirit.