

January 2021

Pastor Debbie

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Center United Methodist Church

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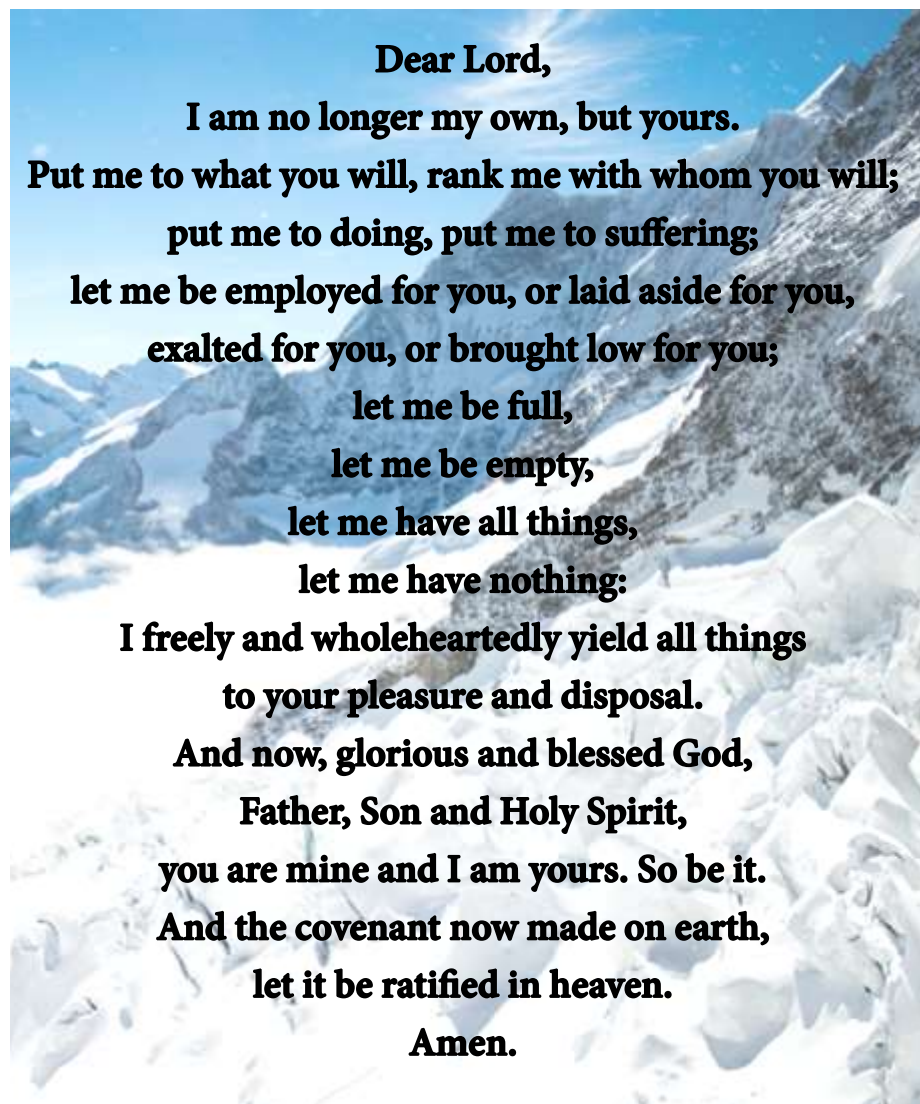
"But those who hope in
the LORD will renew
their strength. They will
soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not
grow weary, they will walk
and not be faint. "

- Isaiah 40:31 (NIV)

I would like to thank both Center and Saguache United Methodist Churches for allowing me the freedom to complete my third unit of CPE. I appreciate the birthday wishes and the very generous Christmas monetary gift and the many beautiful cards, delicious goodies, and lovely gifts. I am truly blessed and honored to serve you as your pastor especially during these difficult times.

Christmas Eve services at both Center and Saguache was different because it was virtual and in-person; yet it was still beautiful. It is my prayer that it was a meaningful way to celebrate the nativity. Thank you for those who participated either virtually or in-person. There are still many in our hearts and mind needing continued prayer.

As 2020 closes and 2021 begins, it is time for us to reflect on our previous year and celebrate the successes and grieve the losses in an altogether peace, altogether hope, altogether love, and altogether joy. As we begin the New Year let us spend time reflecting and considering the Wesleyan Covenant Prayer:



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The Twelve Disciples

Who was Simon Peter?

Simon, also known today as St. Peter the Apostle, was viewed as the leader and spokesman of the disciples. The Name of Peter was given to him by Jesus when they first met in Galilee. He loved Jesus, but prior to the crucifixion his true belief in his Lord can sometimes fall short. In countless parts of the scripture he voices his devotion, but when his faith is put to the test, he fails. This is shown in Matthew 14 when he attempts to walk out to Jesus when he is walking on water and then **promptly sinks into the sea. Jesus then said, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" (14:31). The most serious offence was of his denial of Jesus in his cowardice to save himself, which is told in all four Gospels. But despite the crisis of faith Peter exhibits, He is the first to see Jesus after his resurrection. According to John 21 Jesus tasks Peter to "Feed my lambs...Tend my sheep...Feed my sheep" and before in Matthew Jesus says "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church" (16:18). In Aramaic the same word would have been used for the name Peter as well as for "rock". Some believe Jesus meant for Peter to be the rock he built his church upon and Jesus' words to Peter after his resurrection affirms this claim.**

After his shame of denying Jesus, He changed. He was no longer wavering in his devotion and became the leader of the church until his imprisonment by King Herod and later escape. He became the perfect, humbled servant to his lord.

He is probably one of the most relatable disciples not because of his apparent devotion to Jesus, but because of his mistakes and human flaws that we might see in **ourselves. Perhaps Jesus didn't name him as Peter** because he was always steadfast and unwavering, but because he saw what he would become. We admire Peter because he shows us that despite our past mistakes or wavering devotion to god, we can still be redeemed.

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May these words echo across our faith community as we embrace the opportunities God gives us for **our future. May we no longer be our own, but God's.** May God put us to what God wishes, ranks us with whom God will, put us to doing, put us to suffering, let us be employed for God, or laid aside by God, exalted for God, or brought low for God. Let us be full, let us be empty, let us have all things, let us have nothing. We freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. And now, glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, You are ours and we are Yours. So be it. And the covenant now made on earth, let it be ratified in heaven. Amen.

No one dreamed that last year when we read these words what 2020 would hold for us. Yet God knew and was already preparing us for what we would encounter. This should encourage us to face 2021 knowing we are not alone; God is with us. Beginning January 13th, we will continue our Disciple Bible Study at 6:30 pm via Zoom.

Twelve Days of Love

(Continued from December)

December 28 – **Bring your neighbor's garbage up to** their house or pick up the litter on the area in front of your house.

December 29 – Feed the birds and/or squirrels or tell a child they are special and loved.

December 30 – **Call or write someone who wasn't at** church and tell them they were missed.

December 31 – Leave a random happy note sharing **God's love somewhere you go in town.**

January 1 – Tell someone how much you love them.

January 2 – Smile at everyone you meet and wish them a wonderful day.

January 3 – Write a letter to a service member or veteran thanking them for their sacrifice.

January 4 – Go through your closets to find clothes and items to give to the thrift store.

January 5 – Collect non-perishable food items for the food bank to bring tomorrow.

Joke of the Month

God is talking to one of his angels and says, "Do you know what I have just done? I have just created a 24-hour period of alternating light and darkness on Earth. Isn't that good?"

The angel says, "Yes, but what will you do now?"
God says, "I think I'll call it a day."



Finance Report

As the end of the year draws near our ever growing need for your financial help increases. We are -\$13,290.63 in the hole right now. However with our faith in God we will make it through these rough times. And our little church will rise above these financial needs.

Oh Lord, mighty in power, I thank you in advance for the financial blessings that are coming to us! I know that you will meet all our needs according to your glorious riches. Father, we put our trust in you. Amen.

Donations can be mailed to Center UMC at P.O. Box 626, Center, CO 81125. and for the Saguache UMC at P.O. Box 184, Saguache, CO 81149 For your convenience you can make your donations by text at 719-628-1830 (then just follow the prompts). Or online at our website www.umcofcenter.com the link is on the front page.

Vicki J Ratzlaff

Center Finance Chairman

Winter White Soup

Recipe by: Simone Stevin (Allrecipes.com)

Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic (chopped)
- 2 shallots (chopped)
- 1in piece of ginger (minced)
- 3 green onions (chopped)
- 1/3 small head cauliflower (chopped)
- 10 sm button mushrooms (chopped)
- 1 pear (peeled, cored, & diced)
- 1/2 c cannellini beans
- 1/2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp chopped fresh dill
- 3/4 c Chardonnay wine
- 6 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 (14.5 oz.) can chicken broth
- 1/3 c heavy cream
- Salt & pepper to taste



Directions

1. Heat the butter and olive oil in a large saucepan over low heat. Stir in the garlic, shallots, and ginger, and cook until fragrant but not brown, about 5 minutes. Stir in the green onions, cauliflower, parsnip, and mushrooms, and cook and stir an additional 5 minutes. Add the pear, beans, mustard, and dill, and stir just until heated, about 1 minute.
2. Stir in the wine and thyme, and turn up the heat to high. Boil, stirring constantly, until the wine is reduced by half and is syrupy, about 5 minutes. Pour in the chicken broth. Return the mixture to a boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer, partly covered, until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes. Allow the soup to cool slightly.
3. Pour the soup into a blender, filling the pitcher no more than halfway full. Hold down the lid of the blender with a folded kitchen towel, and carefully start the blender, using a few quick pulses to get the soup moving before leaving it on to puree. Puree in batches until smooth and pour into a clean pot. Alternately, you can use a stick blender and puree the soup right in the cooking pot.
4. Stir in cream, and, if needed, thin with additional chicken broth; serve hot. You may wish to serve this soup the next day. It will improve in taste with time.