

November 2020

Our JOYFUL Noise

The Monthly Newsletter of First Presbyterian Church of Britton SD
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The Bucks' Blog

One of the great truths of the Bible is: human nature is consistent down through the ages. It never changes. That's why God's Word will always apply. Our passage from Philippians today proves the point. There was conflict in the church in Philippi between two women leaders in the church... over 2,000 years ago.

I submit to you that most churches in America today are at one of three conditions in their congregation: They are either in the midst of

conflict, coming out of conflict, or about to go into conflict. Why is that true? Because human nature never changes.

What or who comes to your mind first, when I say conflict? When I looked up synonyms, the list was huge. Conflict, in some form, seems to be everywhere. And, it's not just in the church.

If you've ever attended a city council meeting, a home-owners' association meeting, a parent-teacher's meeting, a board of education meeting, and the list goes on... you know that conflict is everywhere.

Did you know a person can be in conflict with themselves? Internal, personal, conflict can become so great that it can become paralyzing. The conflict of the mind. I read a quote the other day: "Our life is shaped by our mind." Mental conflict.

Then there's our families... now don't pretend. Every family has one or two that just seem to love conflict whenever the family gets together. They're the one(s) that somewhere toward the end of the dinner, will bring up religion, politics, or why a certain relative is

still unemployed or about to get another divorce. We've all been there. Family conflict. And some families never get over it and die in their conflict.

And then, there's conflict in the community of friends. Something happens and two people who had been friends for years suddenly stop talking with each other. It's as if they never knew each other.

And of course, in the last few years, our nation has become a hotbed of conflict. It's as if everyone is on the lookout for conflict somewhere, and is ready to maim, shoot, or kill to resolve it.

What is conflict... really? And it's causes? I submit to you the root of conflict is fear... Fear of losing control, fear of change, fear of loss of independence... it comes from selfishness, pride, sense of privilege, and ego.

And conflict, unfortunately, has become standard fare in the church today... just as it was in the church in Philippi. Eu(h)odia and Syntche were leaders in the church and were at odds with each other; so much so that it was affecting the entire church... probably a home church. Some scholars believe the conflict came from what it meant to truly be a follower of Jesus.

Paul, in prison in Rome, wanted to be with them to resolve the issue himself, but couldn't. So he asked Syzygus, probably the pastor of the church, to intervene.

It hurt Paul's heart to know that these two women who had been in the trenches of promoting the Gospel of Christ along with him and Clement were now severely at odds.

Paul said that the conflict was damaging to the example they were to give of the love of Christ to the non-believers in Philippi and to the members of the church. And in verse 5, Paul says (nrsv) let your "gentleness" be known to

everyone. That word gentleness can also be translated from the greek as moderation, be on their side, forbearance, or reasonableness. All of them come to one conclusion: They are an antidote to fear, anxiety, or worry.

And Paul says right before in verse 4... Rejoice! always! Rejoice! Is he crazy?! Rejoice In the midst of conflict? Yes. That's it.

And then, right after, in verse 6, he says to pray about everything and not to worry about anything. Really? Yup.

As I studied for this message, I pondered... if Paul were to come to your church... your church in the middle of, coming out of, or going into conflict. What if he came to our church? Into our conflict? What would Paul do or say? Or more importantly, what would we say or do?

I think Paul would say...

"Friends, take a step back. Take a deep breath. You're better than this. It's not about you or your families or your 40+ years of whatever it is that's driving you. It's about the body of Christ and being part of the building of the living church. We are, each one of us, living stones with very rough edges being put together into the living church. And most times, when stones with rough edges are put too close to other stones with rough edges, it can get very irritating. And things can get testy. And we get so caught up in our irritation and conflict that we find ourselves drained of any energy to be examples of the love of Christ in the community. And those signs about loving our neighbors, on the front of our church, become indictments against us; because, the community can see that we don't even love each other.

And Paul would say to ALL of us, Pastor and congregation alike, it's past time. Put away all this foolishness. Be gentle and forbearing with

one another, and let's get on with building the living church, the body of Christ.

My friends, my brothers and sisters, we can do this.

I believe the Holy Spirit showed me something as I prepared this message. God wants to do something special in this community of faith... and He wants to do it with me and with you together. And God is waiting for us to put aside our petty irritations so that we can receive what is in store for us. But it's going to require letting go... letting go of anything that hinders God's moving... and being gentle.

I will close with this:

I have a friend from Florida... She and her husband, Bob, are faithful members of First Presbyterian Church, Sarasota, Fl.

Her name is Jane Barr, Executive Coach, who promotes the growth of women leaders in technology.

She relates this story...

When I was in junior high school my favorite clothing for after school and weekends was a cast-off men's blue shirt from my older brother and a pair of white denim cutoff shorts. Much to my mother's chagrin I wore that outfit wherever I could. I loved the feel of that shirt, the softness, the ease. I wore it practically thread bare.

At some point I grew several inches and those clothes no longer fit. I hung on to them as long as I could but even I could recognize that it was time to give them up. Whether it's physical clothes, a mindset or perhaps a job, we all experience things that we love, yet know we have grown beyond.

What might you be clinging to that it's time for you to let go"

Friends, are you willing to let go of what's keeping you from enjoying, together, what God has in store for us?

Great things are going to happen today.

God is ready to move! Let's get going!

Rev. Donald & Mindi



Open Your Heart to Forgiveness

When you release the burden of a heavy heart you experience Jesus' love in action.

by **Tracy Elridge** From **MORNINGS with JESUS** -
Posted on Sep 22, 2020



But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.
Mark 11:26 (NKJV)

Forgiveness is a beautiful thing. It restores relationships and makes things right. But in the real world? It's hard. A few months ago a colleague did something that hurt me professionally. As far as I was concerned, she didn't deserve my forgiveness. Shortly after the

incident, I saw her walking down the hallway toward me and wondered, *Should I take the stairs and avoid her entirely? Or do I walk by without speaking, so she'll know how angry I am?* But as we approached one another, I knew what I had to do. I had to forgive, but it was hard.

Grudgingly I said, "Hello." I started to [feel my anger](#) subside. I felt lighter. Jesus was doing a work in my heart.

Years ago before I knew the Lord, I wouldn't have considered forgiveness. I would've nursed my grudge and worn it like a badge of honor. Thankfully as Jesus helped me to wholly forgive, my heart toward my coworker has changed. I'm not trapped in bitterness and hurt. I'm moving forward in love.

Jesus forgave me of all my sins, paying a horrendous cost for my salvation. In turn, I'm [commanded to forgive](#), so I can receive forgiveness from my heavenly Father. He asks me to forgive for my benefit. The burden of being unwilling to forgive is heavy, but I'm learning that with forgiveness comes freedom and peace. Forgiveness isn't a sign of weakness but love. Jesus's willingness to give His life and forgive my sins is the ultimate act of love. When I forgive others, I'm His love in action.

Faith Step: *Search your heart and think of people whom you've not forgiven. Start calling out their names in prayer and ask Jesus to help you forgive them. Watch your heart fill with love for them.*



Session Notes:

The Session met on Wednesday, October 21st at 7:00 PM. with the following:

- Some trees at the manse need to be removed.
- Camp Pioneer was sold October 5th, 2020 for \$1,810.00. A Presbytery meeting followed the sale to approve.
- Results of the congregational survey were reviewed by the Session.
- Warren is still working on getting the worship services live-streamed.
- Confirmation classes are being held after worship service on Sunday.
- Approved November 22nd, 2020 as Stewardship Sunday.
- Approved congregational meeting December 13, 2020 to present the 2021 budget and elect officers.
- November 1st, 2020 will be Red and White Sunday to recognize students at the school
- The next session meeting is November 18, 2020 at 6:30 PM.





Confirmands are meeting on Sunday following worship service at this time.



Please remember that the church is counting on your gifts, pledges and assistance during these trying times. So, as you are able, please forward your gifts to:

PO Box 127, Britton, SD 57430.

You may also give your gifts by going to our web site and hitting the giving button which will take you to the site for setting up your profile to make a secure one-time gift or a repeating gift through the Presbyterian Foundation to First Presbyterian Church, Britton.

That's at fpcbritton.com.

Several women of the church will be meeting in November to sew mittens and would appreciate donations of tight-knit sweaters and sweatshirts to use in their construction. If you have any to donate, please bring them and leave them in the hallway of the elevator. If you have questions, contact Bev Seibel 470.0142; or Shari Menning 448.2416.

Thank you.

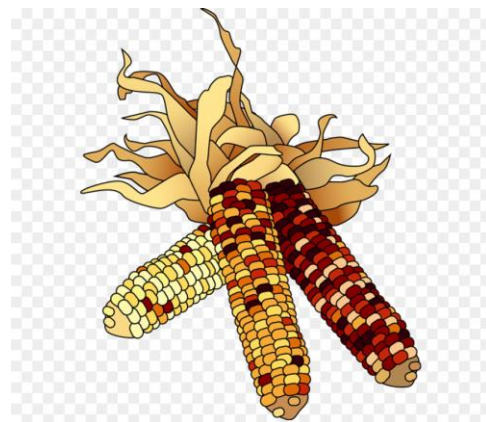


SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday School is back in session every Sunday following worship service.



Youth Group is now meeting every Wednesday at 6:30 P.M.





- Carol Anderson, as she continues to fight cancer and is going through a really tough battle at this time.
- Sandy Ellingson, who recovers at home with improvement each day.
- Sharon Johnson, recovering from surgery to implant a pace-maker.
- Carmen Tisher, as she recovers from knee replacement surgery.
- Sharon Tisher, who is at home getting stronger following her stroke.
- Mark Wismer's sister, Carol Vansicle, who continues to take treatments for a third time.
- Trevor Zuehlke, in our community, recovering from a serious brain injury, who is an inspiration to us all.



**Sunday, November 1st, is
RED & WHITE DAY
at the church.
Please wear the school colors to
honor the students of
Britton-Hecla-High-School!!!**

**Stewardship Sunday is
November 22nd this year.**



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Pastoral Appointments
Monday thru Thursday
10:00 – 4:00**