

December 9, 2019 Huntley UMC weekly email

Dear friends,

Yesterday in worship at Huntley United Methodist Church, we lit the Candle of Peace on our Advent Wreath. It joined the Candle of Hope that we lit last week. They will be joined by the Candles of Joy and Love in the next two weeks. The Season of Advent is a time of preparation. We are to prepare our hearts for the coming Messiah. For Christians, we recognize Jesus Christ as the Promised One. He is the One we are preparing for.

How do we prepare for Jesus? It seems to me that if we have Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love in our hearts, we will be well prepared to receive Jesus into our lives. Exhibiting these characteristics in our lives doesn't just happen, they take intention. The Season of Advent calls us to practice these beautiful characteristics so that we will be ready to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Are you practicing Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love as we get ready to celebrate Jesus' birth?

Bob Goff, in his book *Everybody, Always*, said "... [he] found a beautiful kids' book that changed everything for [him]. It was a book about buckets, and its promise was simple: we will become in our lives what we put in our buckets." I like that, and I believe it is true. "We will become in our lives what we put in our buckets!" Our world could certainly use more people whose buckets are full of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love.

It doesn't take a genius to understand that if we fill our buckets with anger, we will become hate-filled people. If we fill our buckets with selfishness, we will only think of ourselves. If we fill our buckets only with work, we will not have time for our families. If we fill our buckets with judgment, we will become self-righteous. But if we fill our buckets with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, well, you get the picture.

The Advent message is clear: the most excellent way to prepare our lives for the celebration of Jesus' birth is to fill our buckets (lives) with Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. We can literally become Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. But it takes intention. It takes practice. It doesn't just happen. We have to prepare. We have to fill our buckets with the best we have to offer. That is the beauty of Advent. That is the promise of this season!

Advent study on Monday, December 9th at 7:00 p.m.

Huntley United Methodist Church will participate in the Huntley Christmas Stroll on Saturday, December 14th from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Children's Sunday School Christmas program will be on Sunday, December 22nd during the worship hour.

Christmas Eve Service will be held on Tuesday, December 24th at 5:00 p. m.

See you in worship,
Pastor Gary Geiman