

July 1, 2019 Huntley UMC weekly email

Dear friends,

As we look forward to the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday, blessings to you and your family and friends. Many of us will be gathering this week to host parties and get-togethers and cookouts. Some of us will celebrate with fireworks, and others of us will be content to celebrate by simply being together. However we celebrate our nation's independence, may we do so in peace and thanksgiving for the many blessings we have as individuals, families, and as a nation.

In worship yesterday at Huntley United Methodist Church we talked about Jesus and his decision to resolutely set out for Jerusalem where he would accomplish his God-given task to fulfill God's plan of salvation for humanity and the redemption of creation. His disciples did not understand Jesus' ministry and mission, and did not understand where Jesus was leading them. If they had known, they would most likely have abandoned him, or at the very least questioned his sanity.

Present day followers of Jesus are not much better informed about Jesus mission and ministry. If we are to be effective disciples of Jesus Christ, it is vitally important to know why Jesus was determined to journey to Jerusalem. Following Jesus means being willing to go with him all the way to Jerusalem. No higher priority – no hesitation – no going back. So what does that kind of resolve look like for Jesus-followers today?

Setting your face toward Jerusalem means wanting God's will more than your own plans. Someone has said, "If you want to make God laugh, just tell God your plans." God has a plan for our world and our lives, and they most often do not coincide with ours. True followers of Jesus respond to God's call in their lives, and resolve to go no matter what the cost. Few people do that perfectly, but the better we are about following God's lead, the more fruit we will yield.

Setting your face toward Jerusalem also means submitting to God's will fearlessly. When I decided to become a pastor, I enrolled in seminary in Denver, Colorado. As fall classes approached, I gathered up my family and headed out to Denver without a place to live, and without the funds to pay for my education. Many said it was an unwise move under the circumstances, but I believed that this was God's will for my life. By the time we arrived in Denver, an apartment opened up on campus unexpectedly, and unanticipated funding became available for my education. In the years since, God has never failed to abundantly provide whenever I fearlessly submitted to God's will.

And finally, setting your face toward Jerusalem means sharing your faith in Jesus Christ confidently, so that others can come to know God. You never know that impact your faith story can have on others. You never know whose life will be changed because you were faithful and unafraid in sharing the love of Jesus. We all have an important story to share, a story that can give hope and light to someone who is searching for faith or a way back to faith. Any one of us can change and turn our life back toward Jerusalem, and we may be that person who makes the difference in another person's life. What a gift that would be to them, and what a gift that would be to us also.

Thanks again to everyone who helped out with our work day at the Huntley Project Museum on Saturday.

Companions in Christ group will meet on Monday, July 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. to make sandwiches for area ministries.

District Superintendent Deb Christine will be at Huntley United Methodist Church on Tuesday, July 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. to meet with members and friends of the church. Everyone is welcome and invited to attend.

Coming up on August 4<sup>th</sup>: Christian Music Concert in the Park with Homeward at 10:30 a.m. with Community dinner to follow. Those attending are asked to bring food for the dinner, but extra food will be provided by Huntley United Methodist Church. Please bring picnic place settings and lawn chairs. Cold drink will be provided.

See you in worship,  
Pastor Gary Geiman