

The Mini Messenger for March 2024

This past Wednesday I had the opportunity to preach for our shared midweek lenten service. Preaching always makes me nervous, but I take all the opportunities that come my way, so that I can grow. We all have things that we fear, and it is important to recognize that fear, name it, and work through it.

If you were not there, our theme is the stones will speak. We take a stone that has a story, and share that with those in attendance. I chose a stone I received from a professor at seminary. It was a heart shaped stone with one side slightly smaller than the other. I suggested that if we can change the way we look at imperfection, we can change the way we look at ourselves, and we can begin to see ourselves the way that God sees us. We are all unique masterpieces of God. Or using the words of Psalm 139 I praise you for I am fiercely and beautifully made. I am yours and all that is yours is priceless.

After the service, a couple of young people came up to me. I am taking a guess that they would be youth group age. They both told me how much they appreciated my words and how the message resonated with them. One of them told me there was only one other sermon that spoke to them. This brought tears to my eyes. At first, I thought it was because it was positive feedback. Then I thought it was due to relief from making it through another sermon. Then I realized it was because my words met them where they were at and my words made a difference. But there was something else I couldn't quite put my finger on.

I couldn't stop thinking about those young people and the comment from the one whose name I do not know who said that there was only one other sermon that spoke to them in their life. Then today, it hit me like a ton of bricks: when I was talking with those young people, I was talking to a younger version of myself! I can remember being that age. I was in a confirmation class of four. After confirmation, we were adults in the eyes of the church, but there was really no place for us. I don't recall sermons that spoke to me, there were no activities, and I can remember feeling somewhat out of place. I belonged, but did I really?

We are blessed here at St. John's to have a faith community that welcomes children. I have been told by some members that they smile when we have visitors and they notice that we have dedicated space for children. Children are allowed to be children during church, something many churches sadly do not allow. These children are the youth group of tomorrow.

So when we look around our sanctuary space, see children and youth, and we hear the voices and laughter of children, may we remember we are looking at the younger versions of ourselves. May we remember what it felt like to be them. May we help them to feel loved, welcomed and wanted. May St. John's continue to be that place for them.

LOVED

WELCOMED

WANTED

BELONG

PASSING ON OUR FAITH

THROUGH CARING CONVERSATIONS

One of the ways we pass on our faith is through caring conversations. Here are some conversation starters for you to discuss in your household this month. Some of these were taken from Faith Talk with Children, available at: store.milestonesministry.org.

*What do you think of when you see a cross?

*Where do you hear God?

*When do you like to pray? Why?



SAVE THE DATES:

THURSDAY MARCH 14th Game Meet Up in the Lounge 6-8PM

SUNDAY MARCH 24th Palm Sunday Worship 10AM

THURSDAY MARCH 28th Maundy Thursday 7PM

FRIDAY MARCH 29th Good Friday 7PM

SUNDAY MARCH 31ST EASTER SUNDAY

Easter Breakfast 8AM- 9:30AM

Easter Egg Hunt for ages 2-10 9:15AM

Meet in the entryway to the church office PROMPTLY @ 9:15AM

Worship 10AM

