

A Note from Pastor Wendy 22
September 19, 2020

This week we continue sorting, packing, recycling, throwing away, and moving stuff. We are also trying to find space in our homes for things remembered or for things that are useful for our families.

I am really beginning to understand that "fine line" between "want and need" when it comes to space. Our whole family is at this same point. Some furniture we know Ashli could use when she graduates and decides to move out on her own. It is worth the inconvenience so she can have a nice dining table and chairs and a couple chairs she wants for a living room. We created "getting started" kits for each of the youth who have not moved out from our homes. These kits are suitcases filled with kitchen items such as bakeware; cooking pans; all sorts of kitchen utensils and a variety of towels, coasters, hot pad holders, etc.

There are so many "wants" that seem essential at a moment. Those "wants" start taking over our lives with everything this world has to offer, including our time. Eventually, there is not time for what really matters.

For the next couple weeks, I am going to be sharing about turning. Russ' Cousin Scott is the Executive Director of Forward Movement, a ministry of the Episcopal Church. Scott has written a book that just came out last month. It is called, "The Way of Love, A Practical Guide to Following Jesus". I have just started reading it.

Scott shared that "Turning—the first and most basic practice—is what makes the Christian life possible. If I believe everything about my life and the world is simply fine, I can keep on going in the direction I am headed. But once I realize everything is not all right with me or the world, I also realize I need to change directions—toward God and away from my self-centered way."

It is about repentance. He says, "One of the key concepts in Jesus' messages, repentance comes from the Greek word *metanoia*. It means "change of mind." This is not in a flip way, like when I decide to have pancakes instead of waffles. *Metanoia* means a deeper transformation, a completely new way of thinking."

In Matthew 4:17, Jesus said, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." Turning is not a one-and-done endeavor. When we are baptized, we are turning from our past to follow Jesus. Each time we turn, we admit we were going the wrong way and must head in a new direction. As Christians it was at the baptismal font where we admit we were going in the wrong direction. There we are reborn spiritually, cleansed from our sins and grafted into the body of Christ—with Christ being the vine.

This turn is where we reject Satan and his evil ways and the sinful desires that draw us from the love of God. We make that turn toward Jesus Christ, accepting Him as our savior and trusting His grace and love. We are then eager to turn back to Jesus when we fall away.

I will be sharing more as I read through his book.

We have been encountering many changes these past few months which calls us to turn to God and follow His ways. May we keep praying about the path we are on and discover what turns God wants us to make in our lives.

God bless you!

Pastor Wendy