

From: FCCV (fccv@snet.net)
To: fccv@snet.net;
Date: Thu, August 9, 2012 11:53:32 AM
Cc:
Subject: Pastor's Weekly Email

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair,....." (A Tale of Two Cities, Charles Dickens)

The opening words of one of the great novels of all time, A Tale of Two Cities, have been running through my head all week now. In a week, when the greatest athletes of the world, gather in London for the Olympics, the world is shocked again by the senseless violence at a Sikh temple in Wisconsin on Sunday. While we draw inspiration from the accomplishments of athletes--their successful achievements; for some, humbling defeats; for all, the chance to follow a dream; and while we cheer and cry with their family and friends, we are also mindful of the devastation and heartbreak of others.

During the past week, in addition to enjoying the Olympics, we've watched the plea bargain by the shooter in Arizona, the arraignment of the shooter in Colorado, and grieved with the families of innocent people seeking to worship their God last Sunday and being attacked in the most sacred of places by one whose life was fueled by hatred.

Truly the best of times and the worst of times.

But, as every high school sophomore knows (that's the grade I was in when I first read the book), A Tale of Two Cities ends with the noble and sacrificial act by an unexpected hero whose final words conclude the novel--*"It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."*

We have it in our power to decide how we will respond to the world around us. And daily, we see before us the impact of the courage of heroes and the evil done by those who worship the false gods of violence and hatred. In some way, each of us can make a difference.

God bless us all to make the right choices and draw on the strength of family, friends and church community.

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Last Sunday, as we gathered for worship, we drew inspiration from a trio of gifted singers from our Sanctuary Choir. Hearing again the story of Nathan's confrontation of David for his sin with Bathsheba and David's heartfelt song of repentance found in Psalm 51, I asked us to give thought to those who the Church (the universal church of which we are a part) wounds people and how we might follow in the ways of faith with new direction. And we were blessed to have one of our own, the Rev. Joanne Myer, assist with the communion liturgy.

This coming Sunday, we will welcome back our past year's TPC student, Joseph Tobin. When Joe was here with us last month, a number of people asked if it would be possible to have him with us again during the summer and this Sunday looked to be the best date for that. Joe will be preaching Sunday on the lesson I Corinthians 2: 6-16 where Paul speaks of the value of being spiritually mature. Joe's sermon title is "Why Am I Here?"

Serena Volovski will be returning this Sunday to inspire us with special music. Her solo is entitled "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked."

And as our organist James Burr enjoys some time off, we are blessed to have Jim Purnell as our guest organist this Sunday.

Hope to see you there when we gather.

Pastor David

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Several of you asked about the study I made reference to in my sermon last Sunday on why young people are choosing to leave the church. The link below will lead you to a very good synopsis of the book that grew out of that study.

<http://www.barna.org/teens-next-gen-articles/528-six-reasons-young-christians-leave-church>

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Field of Flags: This note is a reminder about an upcoming event at FCCV, a memorial called Field of Flags. If you are unfamiliar with this, on Friday, August 24 starting at 8 AM, a flag will be placed on the church lawn for each soldier who has lost their life in the Iraq/Afghanistan conflict. This action is one way to remember each individual, as well as their families and friends, in prayer at our church. The Field of Flags will be dedicated on August 26 during the 10 AM worship service. The Field of Flags will be on display until Thursday, September 13.

Volunteers are needed to help set-up the flags which should take about 4-6 hours. If you can help out, even if it's only for an hour, please contact Brad Leonard, 860-402-0434 or 860 871-1980 or the Church Office, 860-875-7580. Thanks!