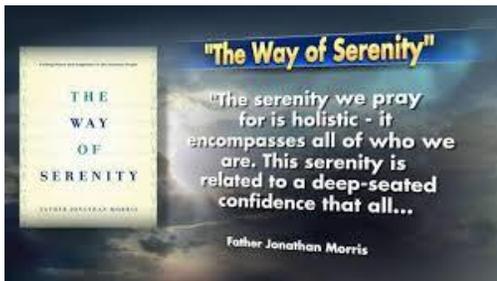




Remember you can join us in person
9 AM Poynette Inch UMC
10:30 AM Arlington UMC
Please remember to wear a mask and stay
6 feet apart!
Poynette Inch Folks you can use the front
or back doors!!!

Worship Service for Sunday May 9, 2021



This is the fourth and last week that we will explore the Serenity Prayer. The United Methodist Women's study, *Finding Peace in an Anxious World*, inspires this sermon series. Today we will consider the concept of Wisdom. Today Pastor Michele will talk about the concept of Wisdom. Exploring "The

Serenity Prayer" phrase by phrase, Father Jonatham Morris shows the hope that can be found by gaining a deeper spiritual understanding of its words and by practicing its message. Enlightening and profound, *The Way of Serenity* includes moving narratives, illuminating historical anecdotes, and pertinent biblical passages that demonstrate the power of the Serenity Prayer to help us grow closer to God and find greater peace and happiness.

*Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.*

Remember if you need anything you can call Pastor Michele at
608-370-4216 or email her at pastor.michele.hopp@gmail.com.
You can reach Michele K at 608-225-4305 or email her at the church
email poynetteinchumc1@gmail.com or arlingtonwiumc@gmail.com.

3 ways to get the online worship service:

You can listen to worship by dialing 608-573-8323 PIN #4242

Our website to get the worship service.

<http://poynetteinchumc.com/>

Poynette Inch You Tube Channel is Poynetteinchum Church

Prayer Requests :

NEW: Please share your prayer requests with us. You can email them to poynetteinchumc1@gmail.com or arlingtonwiumc@gmail.com or call the church at 608-635-2424. We will pray for you. You can also contact Pastor Michele directly.



Sunday May 9th Worship Service by Pastor Michele Hopp "The Serenity Prayer: Wisdom"

Scripture

1 Kings 3:5-9 (Common English Bible)

One night, the Lord God appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, "Solomon, ask for anything you want, and I will give it to you." Solomon answered: "My father David, your servant, was honest and did what you commanded. You were always loyal to him, and you gave him a son who is now king. Lord God, I'm your servant, and you've made me king in my father's place. But I'm very young and know so little about being a leader. And now I must rule your chosen people, even though there are too many of them to count. Please make me wise and teach me the difference between right and wrong. Then I will know how to rule your people. If you don't, there is no way I could rule this great nation of yours."

1 Kings 11:3-4 (Common English Bible)

Seven hundred of his wives were daughters of kings, but he also married three hundred other women. As Solomon got older, some of his wives led him to worship their gods. He wasn't like his father, David, who had worshiped only the Lord God.

Proverbs 2:1-11 (Common English Bible)

My child, you must follow and treasure my teachings and my instructions. Keep in tune with wisdom and think what it means to have common sense. Beg as loud as you can for good common sense. Search for wisdom as you would search for silver or hidden treasure. Then you will understand what it means to respect and to know the Lord God. All wisdom comes from the Lord, and so do common sense and understanding. God gives helpful advice to everyone who obeys him and protects all of those who live as they should. God sees that justice is done, and he watches over everyone who is faithful to him. With wisdom, you will learn what is right and honest and fair. Wisdom will control your mind, and you will be pleased with knowledge. Sound judgment and good sense will watch over you.

Message: “The Serenity Prayer: Wisdom”

Have you ever run a marathon? My good friend wanted to run the Chicago marathon, so our group of friends spent the weekend in Chicago to support her. The night before the race, we ate pasta with her at an Italian restaurant. But she was nervous, which surprised me because she had already successfully completed her first marathon several months before. But despite having one marathon under her belt, she respected the enormity of this next marathon. A marathon is a big deal, no matter how many you have run. You don't have to fear it, but you must respect it. In the book of Proverbs (9:10), King Solomon told us that to have wisdom, we must respect God. He said, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” But wait, you might think. Does this mean that we need to fear God to become wise? No, it means that we must respect God. Fearing the Lord is similar to fearing a marathon because God is so important that you must respect him. God often calls us to take challenging life journeys, which can be as painful and as rewarding as a marathon, even when we are terrified to take the first step.

So how can Christians respond to the anxiety we may feel to follow God on our life's journey? Proverbs shows us the way.

We will look at three components of Godly wisdom as shown in scripture.

1. **Only God can grant wisdom.**

Proverbs 2: Search for wisdom as you would search for silver or hidden treasure. Then you will understand what it means to respect and to know the Lord God. All wisdom comes from the Lord, and so do common sense and understanding.

While it's crucial to search for wisdom like it's a valuable treasure, it's ultimately God who gives us the gift of wisdom.

What can you do to gain this wisdom? Open yourself up to God's purpose and possibilities for you.

How do you do that? Listen for God's gentle whispers, nudges, and shoulder taps.

2. **We can only keep wisdom through a relationship with God.**

1 Kings 11: Seven hundred of his wives were daughters of kings, but he also married three hundred other women. As Solomon got older, some of his wives led him to worship their gods. He wasn't like his father, David, who had worshiped only the Lord God.

When King Solomon first started out as a king, God came to him in a dream and offered to grant him a wish. Solomon asked God to give him wisdom. And, oh, did Solomon start off great in his wisdom! He oversaw a vast building program, led Israel to great prosperity, and had a fantastic reputation in the ancient world. But then he started to go astray. Why? His weakness was a love of women. He acquired 700 wives and 300 concubines. Not only did this consume a great deal of his time and energy, but many of these 1000 women had different faith traditions and worshipped a diversity of gods. Soon Solomon joined his wives and concubines in worshipping these other gods. He drifted away from the Lord, who was the source of his wisdom, and consequently, he lost much of the wisdom God had given him. We can only keep wisdom through a relationship with God.

3. **Wisdom gives us the tools to manage our anxiety.**

Proverbs 2: With wisdom, you will learn what is right and honest and fair. Wisdom will control your mind, and you will be pleased with knowledge. Sound judgment and good sense will watch over you.

To manage our anxiety, we can participate in wisdom practices like prayer, Bible study, meditation, small group meetings, and accountability groups. We can also learn new spiritual practices.

After Rob died in late November, I took a week off from work and decided to get back into my regular routine. Some wise friends suggested that I take a little more time off, but I knew myself well enough to know that I needed to face the reality of life without Rob. So on a Wednesday in December, I put in a full day of work at church. We recorded our Christmas Eve service in the morning, Michele Koopmans and I collaborated in the office all afternoon, and that evening we had a board meeting. Around 7 p.m., I pulled out of the church parking lot and started on my way home. Now to give you some background on this story, I've never had to take care of my vehicles. It was Rob's job. He always made sure that I had enough gas, that my oil changes were done on time, and that my lights were set on auto so I was ready to go, day or night. On my work days, he always pulled my van out of the garage, put my coffee and bag in it, and left it running to warm it up. Okay, so back to my story. It was 7 p.m. on that Wednesday night. I pulled out of the church parking lot and turned right onto Main Street. It seemed darker than usual, but I didn't understand why. The street lights were on. I drove a block down Main Street, and a driver coming towards me flashed their lights at me. Uh-oh, I thought, I must have my brights on. I looked at my dashboard, and in my horror, I realized that I couldn't see any of my controls. That meant that my lights were off! You see, my kids and grandkids had been helping me at home and had moved my van to snowplow, and then had kindly put my van in the garage. They didn't know about Rob's routine to keep my lights set on auto.

In my panic, and with my brain still fogged over from grief, I couldn't remember which of my sticks next to the steering wheel turned on my lights. Soon my windshield wipers were wiping full speed. Whoops, wrong stick! Then I finally remembered how to turn my lights on, and I drove on my merry way. Or so I thought. I turned onto County Rd CS, and within a couple of blocks, I saw red and blue lights flashing in my rearview mirror. Oh, no! I was being pulled over. So I slowed down and parked on the shoulder of the road. A very nice Poynette police officer came to my window and said, "I noticed that you were driving without your lights on, which is very usual. WHAT IS THE MATTER?" Well, the officer had no idea this was the worst way to word his question. "WHAT IS THE MATTER?" I told him, "I'm so very sorry; I truly didn't mean to drive without my lights on." Then I burst into tears. "My husband just died," I said, sobbing and choking on tears. He looked startled and asked, "Are you just coming from the service?" This was a logical question, but it made me feel like a major wimp. "No, he died three weeks ago!" I managed to answer as I cried even harder. "And I feel so silly crying like this because I just made it through the whole workday without crying once." Then, and I am terribly sorry to all of you, I identified myself as your pastor. "I work as a pastor at the Poynette Inch and Arlington UMC's, and I just left work at my Poynette church." The police officer then asked me for my license and proof of insurance. Well, that went just about as well as turning my lights on. He kindly used his flashlight to help me find my license in my wallet amongst my dozens of business cards and credit cards. When I opened my glove compartment to get my insurance card, I actually opened my airbag compartment, but thankfully it didn't inflate. Then I found my glove compartment, pulled out the first insurance card I saw, and gave it to the officer. "That expired six months ago," he said. My panic escalated. "I'm sure my new one is in here somewhere," I said. He said, "Don't worry, I believe you." Despite my extreme embarrassment and my copious tears, I finally realized what had happened with my lights. I told the police officer, "I think I know why my lights were off. My husband always took care of my van and made sure that my lights were on auto. My family has been helping me with snow removal, and they moved my van. I'm sure they were trying to help by making sure that my lights were off. It is completely my fault for not checking my lights before I started to drive tonight. I am so sorry!" Then I cried even harder. You know, the worst kind of ugly cry, complete with sobs and a runny nose. The police officer went back to his squad car, ran my license, and then returned to my car. He said, "I believe that you made an honest mistake, and I'm going to give you a verbal warning tonight." I thanked him and again apologized. Then he said, "You can sit here as long as you like until you feel like driving." And crazy me said, "Thanks, but I'm okay. I think I can drive now." I really just wanted to run away from this terrible mistake and go home. Why did this traffic stop upset me so much? Because I realized that Rob was truly gone. He would no longer take care of me (or my van). I was on my own. That's why the poor police officer saw me ugly cry. I asked myself, "Was my decision to go back to work right away a wise decision?" There is a wisdom practice called the Discernment of Spirits that can help us determine if we have made wise decisions.

Spiritual Practice: Discernment of Spirits

1. Do I have lasting peace after making this decision?
2. Can I talk to God better after making this decision?
3. Can I love people better after making this decision?

I asked myself three questions to discern God's wisdom in my decision.

1. Do I have lasting peace after making this decision?
 - a. Yes, looking back, it was important to face my fears and get back to living even if it was difficult.
2. Can I talk to God better after making this decision?
 - a. Yes. I'm talking to God more often and freely. I need God more, and that has deepened my relationship with God.
3. Can I love people better after making this decision?
 - a. Yes. I can better help grieving people because I more fully understand how difficult it is to lose a loved one.

Discerning God's Spirit takes practice. You'll discover that the wisdom to know the difference is very subtle. God wants our hearts and minds to be open to listening to God's gentle whispers, nudges, and shoulder taps. The more you practice Godly discernment, the easier it will become to have the wisdom to know the difference. And that is how you gain serenity.



Happy Mother's Day
To everyone this
Sunday May 9th!

Arlington UMC on Saturday May 15th will be once again hosting their Euchre Night! We hope you can come out to join us for some fun and fellowship.

Saturday, May 15, 6:30 p.m.

\$5.00 per person

Masks required, no food served

Proceeds benefit United Methodist Women



REFLECTIONS

Bishop Hee-Soo Jung May 2, 2021

*Let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
the world and those who live in it.
Let the floods clap their hands;
let the hills sing together for joy
at the presence of the Lord, for he is coming
to judge the earth.
He will judge the world with righteousness,
and the peoples with equity. (Psalm 98:7-9)*

Often people hear the word “judgment” as a negative thing, as a punitive response to wrongdoing. Certainly, this is one aspect of judgment, but why do we assume the worst when we hear the word? For many people, condemnation and punishment come to mind as the direct result of judgment.

But our God is a fair, a loving, a forgiving and gracious God. The God who comes to judge the world does so with righteousness and equity. And part of the judgment has already come. Through the life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a firm verdict surfaced: we are all guilty and there is nothing we can do to change this fact. All of us have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. None of us has lived up to the high expectations God has for us. So, the verdict of the judgment is “guilty, as charged.”

But the sentencing? Grace, forgiveness, new life in Christ, and opportunity to enter into the justification and sanctification our faith offers to become one in the body of Christ. Amazing! Undeserved and unmerited remission from our weakness and brokenness to be allowed a new beginning. And when we blow it (and we will, on a regular basis)? We are received with love and grace again.

What is the price of this incredible gift? Only that we extend the same forgiveness and acceptance to others who share our guilty verdict. Jesus teaches brilliantly this simple message as Matthew reports in chapter 18, verses 23-35, a parable of an unforgiving servant. According to Jesus, the equity of God’s judgment comes in treating us as we choose to treat others. But God is even willing to forgive our stubborn and petty behaviors if we will honestly repent and attempt to do better.

The judgment of God – the will of God – is that we might be caring and loving and merciful with each other. Our sacrifices to God, our worship of God, our reverence for God are conditioned by only one thing – how we treat our neighbor. And our neighbors include not just our friends or extended circle of community, but to the poor, the marginalized, those in need, those who behave in ways with which we disagree, and even our enemies. God’s judgment is not something we should fear, but welcome. And the joy we expect to enjoy when judgment day rolls around is the joy we should strive to create by our words and actions right now. We can truly treat others with love and mercy, because we can expect nothing less from God.

Prayer: *Merciful God, beyond your judgment we find your grace and forgiveness. When we are honest, we must confess that we fall far short of your commandments to love you first and our neighbor as ourselves. Help us to remember this when we see others whom we judge as falling short or doing wrong. Let us be fountains of your forgiveness and love, O Lord. Amen.*

Dan Dick May 1, 2021

The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles, (Acts 10:45).

Even on the Gentiles... Today we don't really understand the context of biblical authors writing about Gentiles. It would be easy to simply see them as non-Jews, those outside the circle of God's chosen people, but this is inaccurate. For Jewish people in the time of the early Christian movement Gentiles were despised, reviled, distrusted, and hated. Gentiles engaged in outrageous and immoral acts. Gentiles were oppressors and violent aggressors. Gentiles were enemies, opponents, the conquering opposition. Jews worked very hard to steer clear of Gentiles, holding fast to the belief that they were superior to Gentiles in every important way. What must the Jewish people have felt when they saw God's grace and Spirit manifest in their Gentile adversaries?

Why do we as human beings continuously look for ways and reasons to disdain and reject other people? It seems grounded in our very DNA to establish mores and methods to differentiate who is acceptable from who is not. Who is good and who is evil? Who is the saint and who is the sinner? Who is superior and who is inferior? How do we keep *those people* away from *our* community? It is perhaps an innate survival tendency to put up walls and barriers that protect *us* from *them*, but Jesus and the will of God explode those barriers and break down those walls – God loves us all equally.

Some people find this idea challenging and even threatening or reprehensible. How is it possible that God could love those whom we have deemed unacceptable? The simple answer is this: God loves all us sinners and God could care less about the immaterial reasons and excuses we come up with to tear ourselves apart. God's love is greater than our divisions. God's grace smothers our contempts and disrespects. God's will is for all people to be joined together in one blessed fellowship and beloved community of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23). We may not be able to tolerate one another, but God isn't influenced by our limitations and inadequacies.

This is why we have been given the gift of the church: to learn to love others as God loves us. In Christian community, we are called to love the Lord with all our heart, soul, mind, and spirit, and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Jesus summarized all of the Law and Prophecy from Jewish history into this simple commandment. Love. How hard can it be?

Only as hard as we make it. We can give our energy to finding ways to dislike, disrespect, judge, and condemn others or we can give ourselves over to God. If we give ourselves to God, God will fill us with the Holy Spirit. And in the grace of God's Holy Spirit we will learn true love, even love for *the Gentiles*!

Prayer: *Teach us, O Lord, that your name is Love. Possess us with your Holy Spirit that in all that we say and all that we think and all that we do, your divine love is manifest. We ask this humbly yet sincerely in Jesus' sacred name. Amen.*

Scott Carlson May 4, 2021

Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.
(Isaiah 43:18-19)

One of the healthiest ways we can deal with the unexpected, when it arises, is to do what our parents taught us a long time ago; we need to be honest about it. That means that we need to be honest about what happened. We need to be honest with ourselves about the feelings that we are feeling. We need to face them, in all of their enormity and sadness. Facing them, and walking through them, allows us to experience healing that is deep and real.

If we can be honest about the difficulties and our feelings, it actually allows us to reflect upon life in such a way that we can learn from it and make different choices for the future. I have been reading a book called *Transcending: Reflections of Crime Victims*. It is a book about people who have had a tragedy in their life and the different ways they dealt with it. One of the stories in the book is about Joanne Vogt.

She says, "Several years ago on Thanksgiving weekend my sister Jeanette was killed in a car accident, along with her girlfriend. It was drunk-driving and the offender had a pattern of that. My sister and I were best friends.

"It's like a twister coming through your house. You slowly have to clean up, fix the broken pieces, replace things. Eventually your home will be your home again. But it takes a long time . . . for the first month I blacked out. I was just in shock and numb. I now think of this as a shield God gives us to protect us in those first couple of weeks.

"Eventually I started taking charge of my life again. I didn't have my sister anymore so I had to find a counselor I could talk with. I also decided that I wanted to meet the person who hit and killed my sister. I wanted him to meet her and see what she looked like and hear about who she was.

"He was willing to talk with me. But he was pretty stuck on himself. I didn't like his attitude. He was sorry that he was going to be in prison when his child was born. He couldn't get past that I was never going to be there when my sister got married or that she would never have her first child. It wasn't the most satisfying conversation.

"However, at the end of the conversation, I told him that I forgive him. I realized, who am I to judge? That is between him and God. I realized that for me to heal, I needed to look to God. I needed to walk through my pain.

"I believe that God wasn't going to let me fall. He'd let me do the grief. He'd let me go through the mourning. He'd let me be angry, but I knew through all of this, as foggy as it all seemed, he was there and would carry me through."

Joanne's story is a beautiful story of learning to walk with God, to choose God as we face the unexpected. Because the unexpected comes.

Prayer

Gracious God, thank you for walking with us when the unexpected happens. Guide us each day to live for you and to let you live through us. Help us to make a difference for you in the situations we are in and with the people that you send to us. In the hope Jesus offers us, Amen.



MAY Birthdays! **Arlington & Poynette Inch UMC**

- 1 Gracelyn Seas
- 2 Walt Lindner
- 2 Ella Wentz
- 3 Gordon Dunn
- 4 Pam Wentz
- 5 Kirsten Tomlinson
- 6 Chris Robson
- 9 Molly Koopmans
- 9 Helen Rhiner
- 12 Jeremy Schwanbeck
- 12 Michelle Schwanbeck
- 15 Morgan Nacheriner
- 18 Jesse Tomlinson
- 20 Nancy Elsing
- 20 Connie Wade
- 21 Joe Basel
- 21 Rodney Caldwell
- 21 Jacob Hughes
- 21 LuAnn Neabling
- 25 Hayden Lehr
- 26 Ashlyn Wentz
- 29 Maddie Hitz
- 30 CJ Galloway
- 30 Carl Olson
- 30 Manning Wheeler
- 30 Dakota Wheeler