



From the desk of Pastor Ann

Happy New Year! As we begin the new year, we also begin a new series of sermons on changes that can heal our broken lives, our broken church, our broken world.

This past Sunday, we started with John 1:14, “And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.”

Jesus came to live among us, to show us how to live in right relationship with God and each other. We are to be filled with grace AND truth. We are to be both loving and holy.

So, what exactly does this mean?

Let’s begin with a look at grace. Grace is the unmerited favor of God. Grace is not something we can earn. And we do not deserve it. Christ died and was resurrected to defeat sin and death. This is grace.

But if grace is all you have you may find yourself falling into old “bad habits” over and over, constantly in need of God’s saving grace. So, we need grace AND truth.

Truth tells us what is right and what is wrong. When we embrace God’s truth, we understand there are boundaries about what we should do, and what we should not do. There are boundaries about what we should say TO AND ABOUT each other.

John’s gospel reminds us we need both grace AND truth. Grace AND truth together prevent division and invite us into true relationship with each other and with God.

One of the best examples of grace and truth in action is the story of the woman caught in adultery. The Pharisees dragged her into the town square. They turned to Jesus and said, “The law of Moses commands us to stone such women. What do you say?”

But Jesus didn’t have the people stone her as the law, as truth, demanded. Instead, he said, “Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.”

This is what grace looks like.

Of course, Jesus didn’t stop there. Then he turned to the woman after no one condemned her to die, and LOVINGLY said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.”

This is what truth looks like.

Grace and truth together. This is how we live in the image of God. So, church, if we want to grow in grace and truth, we need to acknowledge that we are all sinners in need of God’s grace. We all fall short of the glory of God.

When we stop pointing fingers and start encouraging each other toward a more excellent way; when we embrace both grace AND truth; when we can make this change; then others will see Christ living within us. Only then can we begin to heal as individuals, in our relationships, and in our church.

May it be so in our lives today. I hope to see you this Sunday, either in person or online, as we continue looking at changes that heal.

Blessings, Pastor Ann

- Greetings from
Pastor Ann
- Prayer Requests
- Thankful
Tuesday
- Breakfast resumes
01/09/2022
- Media Ministry
Training 1/16/22
@ 2PM Sanctuary
- Weekly
Attendance
- Changes that Heal
- Epiphany
- Weekly Calendar
- Celebrations
- Giving

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Prayer Requests this week: Kathryn Julian, Matt Greer, Rege Fechter, Josh Keeling, Jane Peters, Park Place Residents & Staff. Family of Nancy Brock and Tabitha Studdard.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

Friends, we want to be in prayer for each other, without ceasing. Since we are not all meeting in person, please email your prayer request directly to: ann.mann@ngumc.net. Please submit your request by noon on Saturday.

Thankful Tuesday



With a New Year, we have a new opportunity to make Jesus Lord of our lives. In this New Year, I want to invite each of you to join me in reading the Bible daily. My prayer is that we would not only read the Bible daily, but pray over how the Holy Spirit might be speaking to us through God's Living Word. May God speak to each of us, as we seek to live as a church with Christ at the center. (If you are looking for a plan, I suggest The Bible in One Year. It is a free app for your phone or your home computer.) Blessings, Pastor Ann

<https://www.bibleinoneyear.org/>

*****Urgent - All Call for Media Ministry Volunteers*****

A little over a year ago Union Chapel did not have a video ministry. When COVID threatened to shut us down in March of 2020 we started live-streaming our services using Jake's video equipment. Out of our desire to stay in touch with our people, our video ministry was launched. Jake Raby has experience in video technology because of his world-class work in the automotive industry. He brought in some experts, and along with many others, helped make the dream a reality. By July we had purchased our own equipment and have been online ever since.

Now, here we are, 20 months later and Jake continues to work tirelessly in the video booth. **It is time to get him some help.** Jake will continue to lead the ministry he helped bring to life. What we need are people he can train to join him in this vital ministry. **We are having a training sessions Sunday January 16th at 2pm for people willing to volunteer.**

With a team of several volunteers in place, no one person bears the load for this ministry. Please come to the training event to learn all about our Media Ministry! Our desire is to cross train people on the sound board, Easy Worship (the screens), and the live-streaming equipment (including a new audio board.) We need your help to share the good news of the gospel!!

Weekly Attendance

Date	Attendance	Online	Sunday School
01/02/2021	59	130	20
12/26/2021	46	43	13
12/24/2021	85	57	
12/19/2021	95	188	26

Grace and Truth in Scripture

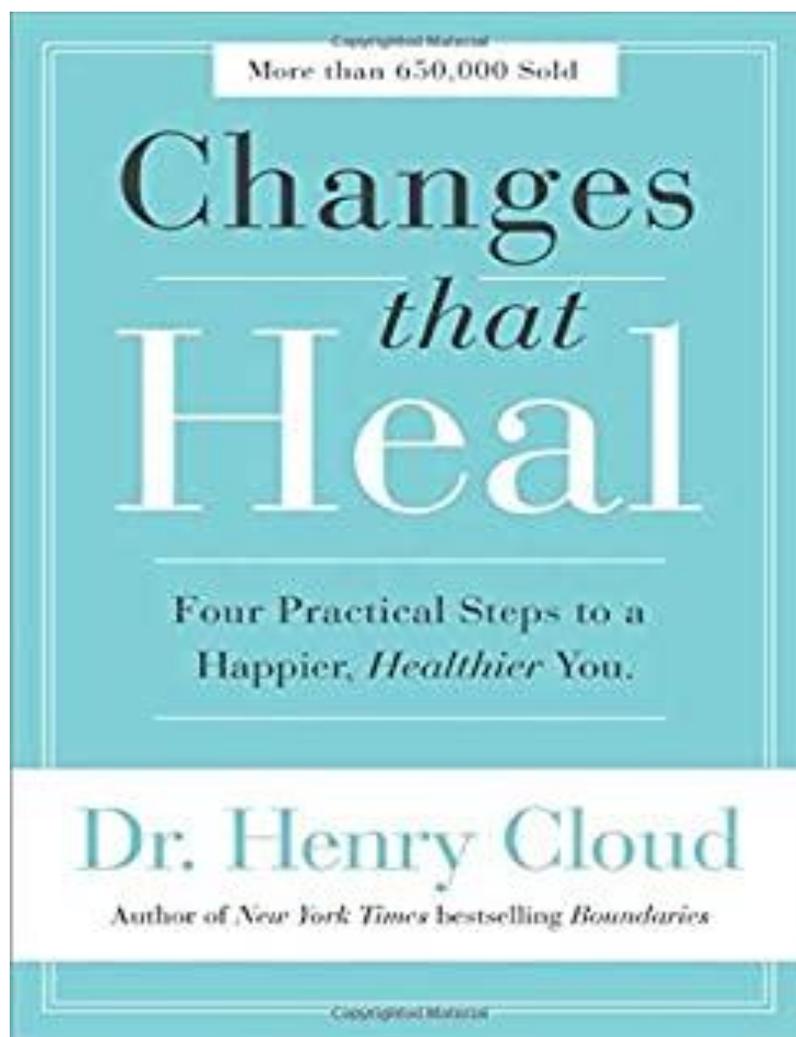
John 1:14 reminds us that grace and truth go together. In the sermon Sunday, I promised some scripture references to the trouble that comes from truth without grace, and grace without truth. Here is what Dr. Henry Cloud says in his book Changes that Heal, “Truth without grace is judgment. It sends you straight to hell, literally and experientially. Paul writes to the Romans about truth without grace--the law--and the things it does to us.”

See Romans 3:19-20, Romans 4:15, Romans 5:20, Romans 7:5, Romans 7:9-10, Galatians 3:23, Galatians 5:4, and James 2:10.

Dr. Cloud also writes, “When we look at what the Scripture says about the law, about truth without grace, we see that the law silences us, brings anger, increases sin, arouses sinful passions, brings death, puts us under a curse, holds us prisoner, alienates us from Christ, and judges us harshly... No one ever grows when they are under the law, for the law puts us into a strictly legal relationship with God: ‘I’ll love you only if you do what is true or right.’ Getting truth before grace, or truth before relationship, brings guilt, anxiety, anger, and a host of other painful emotions...”

“Truth without grace can be called Judgment, Grace without truth can be named License. The scriptures write about this also” See Galatians 5:13, Galatians 5:19-21, Romans 6:15-16, Colossians 3:5, 1 Peter 4:3, Proverbs 13:18.

“The law came through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 16-17). Failure comes through the law, and redemption through Jesus. It is only through him that we can realize two ingredients of growth: grace and truth. It is through him that we can come back into the same relationship Adam had: an unbroken connection (grace) to the One who is reality (truth).”



How do United Methodists celebrate Epiphany/Three Kings Day?

Epiphany is the day Christians remember the coming of the Magi to visit Jesus, bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

It occurs on Jan. 6 every year, the 13th day of the Christmas season. The word "epiphany," from the Greek word *epiphania*, means appearance or manifestation.

The arrival of these visitors was a sign that the incarnation of God in Christ had been made known and was recognized by the heavens to the whole world, so that even Gentile wise men from the East came to pay him homage. This is an observance of great majesty, solemnity and awe.

An even more ancient Christian celebration than Christmas, Epiphany originally focused on the nativity, God's incarnation (God made flesh) in the birth of Jesus Christ, and Christ's baptism. After the late fourth century, as Advent developed as a season of baptismal preparation in addition to Lent, Epiphany became associated with baptism. This is why we see images of the three Magi on many older baptismal fonts.

In many Hispanic cultures, Epiphany is a day of great rejoicing and celebration, often kicked off by a parade the night before in which people dressed as the three kings or carrying statues of the three kings pass through the towns and villages throwing out candy and small gifts to all around. Families and children alike look forward to Día de Los Tres Reyes (Three Kings Day) as a time for presents, feasting and celebration. Attending church services that include the celebration of communion is also common in many of these cultures, even for those who may not attend worship regularly.

In England and some other European cultures, Jan. 5 is known as Twelfth Night, the culmination of the 12 days of Christmas feasting and partying. On Twelfth Night, many families gather in homes to celebrate with friends, food, singing and gifts. It is at these Twelfth Night celebrations that "Chalking the Door," asking God's blessing on those dwellings and upon all who live there, is most often observed.

In New Orleans, Twelfth Night begins another season of celebrations that comes to fulfillment at Mardi Gras (Fat Tuesday, the day before Ash Wednesday). Epiphany itself, Jan. 6, becomes the kickoff day for that season, but is also often observed with a full celebration in church, complete with incense, elaborate processions, choral celebrations, and Eucharist.

Some United Methodists in the United States, who are not part of these rich traditions, tend to recognize Epiphany on the Sunday nearest Jan. 6. There may be a pageant of the three kings as part of worship that day and a small party afterward.

In celebrating Epiphany this year, consider partnering with a Hispanic, Latino or other congregation to find new ways to joyously celebrate Epiphany/Tres Reyes. In whatever ways you decide to celebrate it, remember at the heart of your celebration are the Magi kneeling, worshipping and offering gifts to Jesus, Messiah for all people.

This content was produced by Ask The UMC, a ministry of United Methodist Communications



January 4, 2022 - January 16, 2022

Weekly Happenings

Tuesday, January 4, 2022

6:30 PM Young Adult Bible Study @ Elsmore's Garage
 7 PM Youth Bible Study @ Kenneth & Cindy Little's

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

7 AM Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)
 7 PM Choir Practice

Thursday, January 6, 2022 Epiphany

5:30 PM UMM meet at church to eat @ Bonner's

Sunday, January 9, 2022

9:15 AM Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)
 10 AM Sunday School (main Sanctuary Classrooms)
 10 AM Contemporary Worship (theChapel)
 11 AM Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
 Noon Youth After Church
 4 PM SPR Committee Meeting (Fellowship Hall)
 5 PM Long Range Planning Meeting (Fellowship Hall)
 6 PM Trustee Meeting (Fellowship Hall)

Monday, January 10, 2022

6 PM United Methodist Women (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 11, 2022

7 PM Youth Bible Study @ Kenneth & Cindy Little's

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

7 AM Men's Bible Study (Fellowship Hall)
 7 PM Choir Practice

Saturday, January 15, 2022

4 - 6 PM UMW Chicken Stew, \$9.00

Sunday, January 16, 2022

9:15 AM Breakfast (Fellowship Hall)
 10 AM Sunday School (main Sanctuary Classrooms)
 10 AM Contemporary Worship (theChapel)
 11 AM Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)
2 PM Media Ministry Training Session (Sanctuary)
 6 PM Administrative Council Meeting (theChapel)

**Tithes and Offerings can be given either online from our website or mail a check to
 Union Chapel UMC Finance
 P.O. Box 622, Monroe, GA 30655**



- 5th Alec Hamby
 - 6th Katherine Sargent
 - 7th Juanita Peters
 - 9th **Don & Cathy Culpepper**
 - 11th Brandon Ferguson
 RG Baker
 - 13th Kenneth Peters
 - 17th Bethany Lynn Fuller
 - 21st Clay Harris
 - 22nd Elaine Adcock
 - 27th **David & Sally Malcom**
 Joshua Malcom
 - 28th Josie Witcher
 - 29th **Larry & Sandra Callaway**
 Julie Sargent
- *Anniversaries are in red**

*****Administrative Information*****
Church Office Hours
Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday
9 AM - 2 PM

**Please note, messages are not picked up during non office hours. If you have an emergency outside office hours, please call:
 Pastor Ann, 70-256-4556 or
 James Johnson, 678-767-2712 .*

******Newsletter Submissions******

Please submit any information , prayer requests or articles that you might have for the newsletter to the church office by Tuesday at noon, as the newsletter will be published on Tuesday. Also, as a reminder, please have prayer requests submitted by noon on Thursday for the Sunday bulletin. The church office email is: unionchapel@windstream.net.