



Partners in Prayer

2013

Riamukurwe Parish
Nyeri, Kenya
and
Faith Presbyterian Church
Emmaus, PA

August 2-13, 2013

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Some of the earliest followers of Christ (in countries other than our own) penned and proclaimed this beautiful truth together as creed:

“I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

For centuries, the Church around the world has recited the Apostles’ Creed with ONE heart and ONE voice unto the ONE God and Father of us all. As we have done so, we have made some very powerful statements about God and the Church.

We have identified ourselves as Apostles (“sent ones”) – those who are sent by the Spirit of Christ into the world to participate in the mission of God in the world. Our true identity is found not in our country, our color or our particular congregational affiliation. Our true identity is found in living as Apostles – sent out into the broken world around us for the sake of God’s mission and purposes.

We are all Apostles participating in God’s mission in the world. We are all guided by God’s Holy Spirit. We are all valuable members of the ONE Church. We are all united in communion across space and time as we share the bread and cup and celebrate the forgiveness, resurrection and life that are ours in Christ. Therefore, whether we have previously acknowledged it or not, we are partners in the life and work of our God.

We are PARTNERS. As the members of the ONE Church who happen to live in these two particular corners of the world, we have always been partners. However, there is a beautiful intentionality to our partnership. We are not partners in the mission of God who are ignorant to the other. We are partners serving in the two very different contexts of Riamukurwe and Emmaus, yet who have been called by God into meaningful relationship.

We trust that God has called us into relationship because it will be fruitful unto the glory and growth of the Kingdom. Great efforts have gone into raising funds and obtaining the necessary permissions to be together. Thank God for the patience and clarity of calling along the way!

We trust that our time together in fellowship and prayer will not only further strengthen our relationship with each other, but will also strengthen our relationship with God; and, we also trust that our time together will be used by God to grow and inspire us all – so that we might all be more effective Apostles for the sake of the Kingdom in Kenya, the U.S. and unto every end of the Earth.

May this devotional be but one of a thousand ways that God uses our intentional fellowship and communion to shape the ONE Church for the sake of God’s glory and Kingdom!

Peace and Grace to all,
Pastor Tim Dooner

Strength Through God

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.—Philippians 4:13

Have you ever set a goal for yourself to strive towards? When working towards this goal, were you ever afraid, intimidated, or overcome? When you were afraid, did you pray to God?

We all have something that we strive towards, whether it is to achieve something mentally, spiritually, physically, or relationally. More often than not, we are faced with struggle on our way to our goal. It is in these times of struggle when we should turn to God for guidance and strength. Through Him we can draw strength, and overcome anything in our path, just as we have overcome many obstacles in getting our Kenyan friends and partners here. Though it seemed impossible at times, it became a reality through God's grace.

Paul writes earlier in the letter to the Philippians "Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). All we have to do is talk to God and let him know of our struggles, and through His grace we are led down God's path. Worry is not necessary, for we know that we have God with us all the time.

Not only does Philippians 4:6,13 apply to personal, worldly goals, but more importantly to the goal of becoming a disciple of Christ, of reaching "the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). This is a journey that will last a lifetime, a journey where there will be doubts and fears. We cannot make this journey without the strength of God helping us when we stumble. Through God, we keep striving towards discipleship, and through Him we can keep striving to be more like Jesus.

Prayer

Almighty Father, thank you for bringing us all together here today, and thank you for staying with each of us through all of our struggles. It is through you we find strength, and it is to you who we turn when we stumble and fall. Thank you for always working in our lives so that we may be better disciples. Amen.

Jack Melnick
Faith Church Member
Student

More Important Than Anything Else

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, ‘What do you want?’ or, ‘Why are you speaking with her?’ Then the woman left her water-jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, ‘Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?’ They left the city and were on their way to him. Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, ‘Rabbi, eat something.’ But he said to them, ‘I have food to eat that you do not know about.’ So the disciples said to one another, ‘Surely no one has brought him something to eat?’ Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, “Four months more, then comes the harvest”? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, “One sows and another reaps.” I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.’—John 4:27-38

Jesus had a heart for His work. He had a sense of urgency that meant that some things were more important than even His lunch. I suspect that it is hard for some of us to go without lunch even once. Jesus had a sense of purpose. He knew what He was supposed to be doing. He was on earth to talk to people about Himself. That is why He took time out – even when He was tired and hungry – to explain the things of God to a rather disreputable lady. By the time the disciples came back after buying food, they found Jesus where they had left Him. He was tired but triumphant. There is nothing that lifts the spirits as much as seeing someone respond to the gospel. As He watched the woman bringing back the men and women of her village to “see a man who told me all things I ever did”, Jesus was satisfied!

There is nothing quite so fulfilling as completing an assignment for God. Sticking to the task until it is done. The joy comes, of course, when you are doing His work. We lose heart when we consider it our work.

Doing work for the children at Tumaini and Huruma, can be breath taking and one can give up easily especially when the very kids misbehave. But when the kids leave

What do you consider most important in your life?

Prayer

Dear Lord, help us we pray, to have a sense of the home and become successful in life, it gives me much joy. I am satisfied. Purpose for the most important things in life just like you did. This way, we can truly rejoice when the task is done; the task of the great commission. Amen.

Virginia Munyiri

Church elder and secretary to partnership committee.

Faith: A Radical Trust

What is Faith? It is the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. It is the evidence of things we cannot see. God gave his approval to people in days of old because of their faith.—Hebrews 11: 1-2

Was I certain our friends from Riamukurwe Parish would be here at Faith Church? Did I really believe this could happen? It is tempting to believe that this happened solely because of human effort and a team of conscientious planners? How easy is it to focus only on the fundraising activities, trips back and forth to the embassy in Nairobi, many emails and phone calls and our own endurance and strength.

Yes, there was sweat equity (on both sides). Yes, we have a loyalty and commitment to our partnership. For over a decade we have built trust in each other and formed many relationships – but can we take full credit for this? In spite of our own human efforts, was I ever really “certain” this mission would happen?

I have come to learn that certainty and faith are not the same thing. As a matter of fact, if I were ever really certain about something, why would I ever need faith? When the possibility of doubt is gone and I (we) am in total control, the possibility of faith is also gone! A person who is certain about something is a person who needs no faith whatsoever. Faith is a verb. It asks me to act in spite of any certainty. To be honest, this process tested my faith. All throughout the past year, I believed we had the will, talent, and human effort to make this mission happen, but the many roadblocks and uncertainties required me to rely on a deeper action, FAITH!

The test of our faith requires each of us to rely on a power that is beyond our control, beliefs or human efforts. We are asked to have the confident assurance that what we hope for is going to happen. God asks us to not only believe, but to RADICALLY TRUST.

Prayer

Thank you Lord for continually reminding us that Faith requires us not only to believe, but to act even when we are not certain or in control. Thank you for allowing us to witness your great power during this past year. Help us also to understand that our love for one another is the greater gift of all!

Jack M. Decker
Partnership Co-Chair
Faith Presbyterian Church

Enjoying God's Riches at Christ's Expense

Good Morning and Praise the Lord!

In my reflections I often wonder what would be if every ounce of air I breathe was sold as we do in hospital intensive care units. More so the heartbeat i.e. 72 beats per minute for trillions of seconds in a man's life. Incidentally the human heart (conscience) manufactures a milliard of thoughts which coincidentally are evil and does not please God in any one sense. Evil thoughts breeds evil actions and activities in human life e.g. murders, malice, jealousies, rapes, assaults, strife, discrimination etc.

Consequently, man has consistently missed God's mark in his life and has had an acute mishap that dulls his understanding of God's presence and ability. Most times man's heart assumes a state of self-containment and sustainment. We often glorify our tiny achievement in our tiny arrogance to our disadvantage and miss God's blessings. We give 99% of our time to our own self and less than 1% to Gods' service such as service to the disadvantaged, orphans, windows, sick and dispossessed persons within our communities. We, supposedly have greater trust in the creation, such as science and technology, than in God the creator of heaven and earth as we profess in the Apostles creed. In the Gospel of John 3:16-19;

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son. This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.

We are called to repent and have Christ take captive of our hearts and throw out our evil thoughts, and in His soul cleansing blood redeem us reconciling us to God himself. This way we shall be witnesses of His saving GRACE (God's Riches At Christ Expense) bearing fruits of the Spirit which is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

It takes one moment and one phrase of faith i.e. I repent and believe in Jesus the Son of God and His redeeming blood shed on Calvary, to sign in to Gods' Riches who accords a believer their best life here on earth and eternal life yonder in His Glory. Try this today and it will never be the same again. Have yourself blessed moments.

Thank you

Emmanuel Wachira Muthomi

Chair- PCEA Riamukurwe parish Partnership Committee

Home is Where God's Heart Is

*There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.* —Psalm 19:3-4

A friend's baby was having trouble sleeping. Trying to be a good husband, my friend went in and changed the baby, before bringing him in to the bedroom to be fed. But nursing didn't help, nor did walking around in the dark, and his poor singing only woke the baby up more. Out of desperation, my friend finally just lay down on the floor, and rested the crying child on his chest. And it was in that very position that his wife found them in the morning, sound asleep. Maybe the baby was exhausted, but just maybe it was the sound of home, a sound barely heard yet truly felt, a sound of near-silence that is not of the world, a silence that is God's.

It is a gift to have friends close by that are normally so far away. Some of us stay connected by letters, phone calls, or Facebook. Others look at our giraffes and are reminded to look across the ocean. Either way, the Psalmist reminds us that beneath our shared words, there is a silent voice that is not heard, so much as felt. This is deep speaking to deep, those sighs too deep for words, and the peace that passes understanding. Prayers unheard, but shared by grace to the end of the world.

Amidst the busy-ness of life, and all that competes for our attention, may Christ's be the clearest voice, reminding us of who and whose we are. We are together, in the US, yes, but not simply here. We are in the very heart of God, the place that is our true home.

Prayer

Jesus, give us ears of the heart to hear your invitation as clearly as you hear our desires, your promise as close as your heart. Amen.

The Rev. Dr. Steve Shussett
Teaching Presbyter and Stated Clerk, Lehigh Presbytery

The Desire to Advance

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, “What do you want?” or, “Why are you speaking with her?” Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, “Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he? ”They left the city and were on their way to him. Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, “Rabbi, eat something.” But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.” So the disciples said to one another, “Surely no one has brought him something to eat?” Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, ‘Four months more, then comes the harvest’? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labour. Others have laboured, and you have entered into their labour.—2Kings 6: 1- 7

Introduction

The mention of the sons of the prophets in the chapter clearly shows that this was a new generation of prophets who were still in the discontentment of the old order of doing things as their fathers were. The setting of the campus also shows that this was a residential school which was the usual classroom where prophet Elijah lectured or tutored them. After some time, they felt the need to advance and enlarge their territories.

As generations change there must be change of traditions or ordinary way of doing things. The church also should be ready to move with the changing time and its vision should be written in Big Letters. For this to happen we as Christians must be ready to embrace these fundamental principles to make the church a dynamic entity.

(1) Have Vision

The vision of the sons of the prophet was to have a more spacious place to live in and also to own the place, rather than inherit from their fathers and stay the same way. They wanted to move from one glory to the other.

(2) The desire to advance

Desire compels us to move on despite challenges and hindrances on the way. The sons of the prophet didn't have materials to build a new dwelling but the desires to do so made them even borrow working apparatus. In Ministry we never have enough resources, but by faith and desire we soldier on to occupy new territories. Desire gives power to start.

(3) Devotion and Commitment

The commitment to achieve gives us the power to continue until we realize our vision or meet our expectation. This also helps the members of the church to overstretch ever in their finances to help them achieve their absenting. This has been the biggest snare or draw to Christian maturity and stewardship.

Conclusion

As a church and a family of Faith we need God to move with us as we explore new territories. We need Him all the way as our guide and helper at all times. If the sons of the prophets went alone the fallen axe could not have been recovered let us have the desire to expand our territories to make the church dynamic and discover new areas of mission to fulfill the great commission.

Thank you

Rev. Patrick Mwangi Warutere
Parish Minister – Riamukurwe

Be Doers

“Be ye doers of the word and not hearers only” — James 1: 22

This letter of James is pre-eminently ethical, practical, and forceful. All this is of great interest when we accept the view which is almost beyond dispute, that the man who wrote the letter was a brother of the Lord. He had lived with Jesus in all the early years in Nazareth. Though James was not a disciple, he was with Jesus in the central period of His Ministry and suggests that looking back and thinking of all those years, this man was impressed with the harmony between the Lords teaching and His life. This is a great challenge to Christians globally, and more so in Kenya, and many believe that is why the 20th G.A. took James 1: 22 as its theme.

All the challenges in the church in all its sector originates from Christians who read the bible quite well but do not put it in practice. Due to that challenge, the gospel has stagnated and church workers and go without salary and the harmony of Christians lack in our places of worship.

As Christians, let us be practicing Christians and God will bless us and others. In all places that Jesus went He did good and brought happiness and satisfaction to many.

Peter M. Muturi
PCEA Riamukurwe parish.
Development committee chair/Partnership member

The Garden

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. John15:1

I am an avid gardener and often equate the time spent in my garden as a spiritual experience. My garden is a peaceful place and I can see why Jesus retreated to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. I too, often pray while working in my garden. I look at the labor and process involved in producing fruits and vegetables to that of my faith journey.

- I as the gardener, must first prepare and feed the soil. This involves turning the soil and adding nutrients and compost...I read my bible and go to church services to lay down my knowledge foundation.
- I start my own plants at home or pick out quality seedlings at the nursery so that the plants have a fighting chance to grow...I choose church or community activities that I feel match my talents and gifts but may stretch me so that I too will grow.
- I dig the soil and plant my young plants. I protect them from frost and rabbits....I often need to defend or protect a new project or initiative that not everyone understands. Or I may need to fight for someone or something that will help myself and others move forward on their faith journeys.
- I feed and water my plants giving them what they need to continue to grow into maturity.... I need to constantly work to stay focused on God and feed my soul with stimulating conversation, prayer and scripture to keep myself centered.
- There may be set backs along the way like hail storms that rip through tender new leaves. Some plants may be destroyed, only to be replaced by new ones.... Just as my journey will be challenging, I must learn to bend with the storms and stay strong in my faith.

As a gardener, I know the reward for all the hard work is a bountiful harvest that can be eaten and shared. This harvest is tangible and easy to see. Sometimes the harvest of my faith journey is seen and other times I will never know where or how I influenced another. I can only pray that God is directing my efforts and that maybe one day I will see the full harvest.

Prayer

Dear Lord, Thank you for being the Master Gardener of our lives. Thank you for providing those things that we need to grow in our faith and the patience for when we start to wilt. Thank you for helping us though the dry times and rejoicing with us in the sunshine and harvest days
In Jesus Name we pray Amen.

Lisa Decker
Faith Church

Loving One Another

Dear friends, lets continue to love another, for love comes from God. Anyone who loves is a child of God and knows God.—1 John 4:7

Everyone believes that love is important, but love is usually thought of as a feeling. In reality, love is a choice and an action, as 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 shows, God is the source of our love. He loved us enough to sacrifice His son for us. Jesus is our example of what it means to love, everything He did in life and death was supremely loving. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to love; He lives in our hearts and makes us more and more like Christ. God's love always involves choice and action, and our love should be like His. (How do you display your love for God in the choices you make and the actions you take?)

It is impossible to love one another when love is not directed to others and not inward toward ourselves. Love that is not selfish goes against our natural inclinations. It is impossible to have this love unless God helps us set aside our own natural desires so that we can love and expect nothing in return. Thus, the more we become like Christ, the more love we show to others.

Love is the greatest of all human qualities and is an attribute of God himself (verse 8). Love involves unselfish service to others. Faith is the foundation and content of Gods message, hope is the attitude and focus. Love is action. When faith and hope are in line, you are free to love completely, because you understand how God loves.

Does your faith fully express itself in loving others?

Prayer

Our Lord we thank you for loving us so much that you sent your son to die on our behalf. Help us to love one another with the love that comes from you. Amen.

Virginia Munyiri

Church elder and secretary to partnership committee.

Angels in Disguise

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.— Genesis 18:1-21

As I sit here writing, I'm listening to a CD of the voices of an angelic choir. Here is the story of how I received this and other gifts from 2 angels in disguise:

After church, I was driving Kelly back to Maryland with the disassembled parts of a bed in the opened up space behind our front seats. Halfway there at a traffic light, a young man comes running up to my driver's window to tell me my left back tire is flat and asked me if I wanted to pull over so he could help me with it. I only had time to thank him quickly, when he then announced that the light had just turned green. I turned at the next light, where we found a parking lot to check out the situation.

We all had to work together to lift the bed slats in order to remove the spare tire, (which, as it turned out, was also flat), and find the tire jack. They then offered to drive us to the nearby gas station to fill up the spare. We got a first lesson in how to use an air pump and then lesson #2 in how to change a tire. I hadn't personally completely changed a tire on my own in years and Kelly had never changed one. I mentioned an auto course I had taken decades ago and his wife then talked of her own auto course she had taken. Kelly and I were continuously thanking them for noticing my flat tire and for his tire changing skills and for taking the time to help us.

After all this they then presented me with a CD of old hymns sung by the Antrim Mennonite Choir. (They had had to move their guitar to their car's trunk in order to make room for us when we drove over to fill the spare). Later on when I looked at the photo of the choir in the CD notes, I think I saw them in the picture. I offered, but they would not take any money for the CD. I even said that their help would save me a lot of time for what I would need to do later on that night, when I got back home. I explained that I needed to write a devotion for a devotion booklet, being used during the time when friends from Kenya would be visiting our

church. Then the light bulb went on in my head and before we parted I added: "and I think that the both of you will be the subject of my devotion!" Thank you, Jason and Charlene, my angels in disguise!

Prayer

Thank you LORD for all of your angels in disguise, that help us in our times of need, offering their time and talents in whatever interesting ways the situation requires. Thank you for the loving WWJD directive of these angels and for allowing Kelly and I to witness this directive as clearly in the actions of these 2, as it was spelled out in the letters of their license plate. May You LORD, give all of us the courage and grace to do the same. AMEN

Darcy Dodd
Mission and Partnership Committees

Hope

Who by him do believe in God that he raised him up from the dead and gave him glory that your faith and hope might be in God.—1 Peter 1:21

Everybody should have hope. Anything he or she does with hope succeed. Hannah had prayed to God for a long time; she had hope she will get a child, and a miracle came when she was old. Jesus disciples, they had hope that Jesus would rise again; they were always gathering together to pray with hope. Even in our life when we go through difficulty, we should have hope to sustain ourselves.

In our homes we should have hope to sustain ourselves...

In our churches...

In our community...

so that God can bless us for everything that we will be doing.

AMEN

Susan
Riamukurwe Parish

Our Value to God

Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground unperceived by your Father. And even the hairs of your head are all counted. So do not be afraid; you are of more value than many sparrows. — Matthew 10:29-31

At our home right now we are in a struggle with some birds, tree swallows. They have taken up residence near the front entrance to our house. They are quiet pretty, the male bird is a lovely color of iridescent blue, and their songs are also nice to hear. However, they feel threatened by us every time we leave the house and swoop down and click their beaks at us. These birds are scary and awesome at the same time.

We learn in Matthew that God even cares about these little birds, so much so that he knows if they have fallen to the ground. I find it easy to get caught in my own worries and concerns and not just turn it over to God.

Yet God is there, willing and able to help me, but I insist on trying to do it myself. It has been helpful to me to see these birds as a reminder of how much God values us and in turn cares for us.

Prayer

Dear God, Thank you for your constant care for us and the ways you remind us that we are worth more than two sparrows. In the same way show us how to care for your creation and creatures, whether human or covered in feathers. Amen.

Alicia Shussett
Elder and Sunday School Teacher
Faith Presbyterian Church

Unity of Purpose

Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. And as they migrated from the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks, and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth."

The Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. And the Lord said, "Look, they are one people, and they have all one language; and this is only the beginning of what they will do; nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech." So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore it was called Babel, because there the Lord confused the language of all the earth; and from there the Lord scattered them abroad over the face of all the earth. — Genesis 11:1–9

Introduction: The tower of Babel was a great structure build by people who had everything in common and wanted to stay together and be noticed.

It was a monument that was to be seen all over the world. The location in the plains between the Tigris and Euphrates River was a perfect one for the construction. Nevertheless, the motive of the building was not right, but the methodology and the planning teaches important working principles for a healthy Christian community.

(1) **Relationship**

Relationship in any group working together is very important; like in this story, the people in the group agreed on important matters concerning their projects, listened to one another's ideas, and agreed with one another to accomplish their goal.

They talked the same language.

(Gen: 11: 3 – 4)

2. **Being Focused**

Many times when things don't work according to plan, it brings disharmony in the group and in most cases the work stops. In a healthy working Community challenges are stepping stones to success, not stumbling blocks, as long as the group remains focused to their goal and purpose. There was no stones or cement to build, but this made the people think of bricks instead of stones, and tar instead of mortar and they remained focused to their original purpose and goal.

3. **Without God Nothing can Succeed**

Any Christian group or organization that moves without putting God as their main reason to what they are doing misses the point. There is nothing that can occupy the place of God in whatever we do because we do it for the glory of God.

Those people missed the point, they wanted to build the monument in their honor but not to the honor and glory of God. Instead of God congratulating them, He scattered them all over the world and what they were doing came to a dead end.

Conclusion

God has brought us together as the body of Jesus Christ, healthy, strong and functional to build one another with the gifts he has given each one of us.

Remaining focused to him and putting Him above everything else that we do will make us succeed in every aspect of our Ministry. “United we stand divided we fall” —1 Corinthians 12

Rev. Patrick M Warutere
Parish Minister
Riamukurwe

Dancing in the Rain

As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: He is a buckler to all those that trust in Him. Psalm 18: 30

Throughout life, a person goes through many stages. They experience different life lessons that in the end make them who they are. As a young adult, I can only imagine the stages I have yet to encounter on my faith journey. I hit a new stepping-stone this year when I went off to college. I had no idea what to expect. I was going to a new school in a new town, almost a new state. And, I was scared. I would have to say this year was nothing like I expected it to be. It was filled with so many new and trying times that I had no idea I would endure. I experienced love and loss and learned a lot about who I am and what I want out of life. The one thing I found to be most true through all of my ups and downs is that God was and still is at the center of it all.

It is easy as humans, and especially as a teenage girl, to lose sight of the fact that God is with us always. In a completely new environment surrounded by strangers, I found it hard to find my place within my campus, let alone with God. I was disconnected from the life I lived in Emmaus and was forced to look at life through a new lens. I had to learn that finding myself and being happy with who I am is more important than trying to live up to someone else's standards. The only person who is truly with us from the day we are born, until the day we die is ourselves. To be happy with who you are is one of the most important things you can accomplish in life. I'm not saying doing this is an easy act; it's hard and can take an entire lifetime. However, the one thing I did learn is that no matter where we are in life, God loves us always. He is there through the heartbreaks, the celebrations, the tears, and the laughter and will never leave you. I had times during this year where I felt very alone, but once the darkness cleared, I realized that God had been there the entire time, wiping my tears and protecting me.

Everyone is going to experience times in their life where things are not going to always go as planned and you will be sad. Knowing that God is there, however, through the good and bad, and believing that his plan for your life is better than anything you could have ever imagined, is what faith and hope are all about. It's about believing in something bigger and greater than yourself. And allowing yourself to fully trust in God, that he has your back so to speak and will be there to catch you when you fall. God has truly blessed me since I left for school. He allowed me to have so many new and amazing opportunities and has given me a group of friends that I believe I will have for a lifetime.

One of my favorite quotes is "life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, but learning how to dance in the rain." I feel that this holds very true in life and in faith's journey. A year ago, I would have never

expected my life to be the way it is today. However I am glad of the changes that have been made in my life. I am a stronger more independent person and I honestly believe a better person after my first year away from home. I had a slight storm in the beginning of my new life, but after learning how to dance in the rain, my life will never be the same.

Prayer

Dear Lord, Thank you for this wonderful life that you have given each and every one of us. Thank you for showing me that you will always be by my side through any hardship. Give me strength and allow each one of us to grow through your word. And thank you for making us all unique in our own way. Help us each to learn how to dance in the rain. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

Jacqueline Decker
Faith Presbyterian Church

In Love

This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you.—John 15:12

Love changes our life because you will be doing good things to human beings all the time – without love you cannot be a good Christian. You should love your neighbour so that you can serve God well. We should show love to our enemies, that's what God's commandment says. Love is the richest thing in the life of a Christian, because you can be able to overcome anything that destroys our life. We shall have happiness because of love that we have for our families, friends, enemies and community. God will bless us for good things that we would be doing when we share our love with the weak.

All of us...we are servants of God without love no truth in our hearts (Jesus was crucified because of our sins so that we can be saved)/ He loved us that is why he suffered for us.

AMEN

Susan
Riamukurwe Parish

Let No Man Despise Thy Youth

Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. —1 Timothy: 4:12

These were the words of Paul who in another letter (Philemon) had described himself as “Paul the aged”, to Timothy a young man. This is a warning to others not to despise the young people. Paul intended to tell Timothy, a young person, that he must maintain his dignity. If that is done it would make it impossible for others to despise him. See to it that your actions are not despicable.

There is a tendency among older people to hold youth in contempt, but it is often the fault of the youth not to prove that they can. Young people when placed in a position of responsible oversight, need to live to be an example. This means living in a manner of life, love, faith and purity.

How do we encourage the youth for tomorrow's leadership? Do we guide them in love and example so they will like to serve the church? In Kenya sometimes there is a noticeable gap between the youth and the adults.

To the youth... the elderly can love, respect and miss you if you live in purity, love and faith.

To the elderly...the youth needs love guidance and support.

Peter M. Muturi
PCEA Riamukurwe Parish
Development committee chair/



Cover Art: Unknown Kenyan Artist