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WHERE OR HOW HAS GOD SHOWN UP FOR ME THIS WEEK?

HERE'S HOW I WILL RESPOND:

WEEK 5: BEYOND US : A GOD THING

EPHESIANS 3:20-21 "NOW TO HIM WHO IS ABLE TO DO IMMEASURABLY MORE THAN ALL WE ASK OR IMAGINE, ACCORDING TO HIS POWER THAT IS AT WORK WITHIN US. TO HIM BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS, FOR EVER AND EVER! AMEN."

The relationship God wants to have with you is real and personal. Just like the stories of people in the Bible who were asked by God to go beyond what they could do alone, God's invitation for you to work with Him always leads you to a crisis of belief that requires faith and action.

God always takes the initiative to involve His people in His work. Where do you see God's thumb print and are you willing to join Him there?

You come to know God by experience as you obey Him and He accomplishes His work through you. What God moments have you experienced lately? How have you heard God speak to you during these past few weeks?

What adjustments must you make in your life to join God in what He is doing?

WEEK 5 INTRODUCTION

In our final week, we can look back at our journey to deepen our relationship with God. We can look at the ways that we have grown in our spirituality. God has spoken to us, and we have responded.

So where do we go from here? We know that this is *Beyond Us*. Our growth comes from the grace of God through the Holy Spirit working within us. So, we continue to stay grounded in prayer as God's people. We look and move through our world with renewed spirits and open hearts. We know that God is with us all the time, gently guiding us through prayer practices that attune us to movements of the Spirit.

How can we affect the change that God calls us to make? What are our talents and our gifts?

How do we faithfully give of ourselves and give of our resources?

As people named by God, what does our transformation look like, and how is it reflected in the service of our hands and hearts? "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

WEEK 5 PRAYER

*O Holy Spirit, continue to heal, challenge, and permeate my being. I will continue to open and listen to You. I am moved to be Your face and hands to the world. Here I am, Lord. Use me to do Your will. I commit to spending time with You in solitude, prayer and service. I will do my part to hear Your words and feel Your restorative love. I will move faithfully among the world touching Your creation in spirit-led ways that are **Beyond Us**. You are my Center, and all things are possible through You. I am Your humble servant. Amen.*

WEEK 5 PRACTICE

Practice, practice, practice! Remain in prayer! That is how we are in an ever-deepening relationship with God. When we are lost, we return again and again to the solitude where we can rest in God's love. In our final week of practice, we have tasted the Fruits of the Spirit. As a community, as a church, we will continue to pray for an increasing awareness of the movements of the Spirit.

God has shown each of us His face, and God shows us as a church how to be church to others through honest reflection, empowerment of our members, humbly sharing of our gifts and talents, detachment from our material goods, desire for a stable environment and community so that we ALL may grow in faith. All these are gifts from God. All these are challenges and opportunities to share, grow and serve. God is waiting for us. Here we are, Lord! Your humble servants are listening. Show us Your way!

WEEK 5 PILGRIMAGE POINT

THE JOURNEY

After you have had the opportunity to spend these past few weeks in thoughtful contemplation and gratitude for the rich heritage we all share as members of the body of Christ known as Franklin First UMC, there is one more activity where we would like you to engage. In the experiences you have recently completed we are asking you to imagine the faithfulness of our forefathers and foremothers in the church for the more than 200 years we have worshipped here in our beloved community of Franklin.

A STONE OF MEMORIAL. Just as the Israelites stacked stones on the bank of the Jordan River as a memorial when they crossed over into the Promised Land, we are all engaging in a ritual of thanksgiving and remembrance. By the act, we now ask you to imagine the future. Outside the east-facing doors of the main entrance to the Main Campus there are piles of small boulders or smooth rocks. We ask you to select a stone (one for each member of your family) and write a Bible verse on it. The verse can be selected from a list provided or you can choose one yourselves. You only need to write the verse number, for instance John 3:16, using the marker pens provided.

After you have done this, you can take the stones to the tented area in the middle of the large field on the other side of the main drive. Add your stones to those already placed there. This is the location of the future sanctuary which will one day be built to accommodate the future generations of Franklin Methodists who will call Franklin First UMC their church home. We do this as an act of faithfulness, representing our intention to stand unified in our commitment to see that the great work of this church continue its uninterrupted progression.

Just as we have seen additional property purchased and facilities expanded all throughout our history including 1799, 1830, 1872, 1880, 1895, 1906, 1916, 1949, 1958, 1965, 1972, 1975, 1981, 1995, 2007, and most amazingly in 2015, we have seen a heart-inspiring pattern of sacrifice and provision as God has continuously called the members of our church. They have been called each in their day, not only increase the size of the church for their own family's use, but looking to what is ahead in



order to welcome all to experience the inclusive love of this great church. We are the beneficiaries of their extravagant generosity as we have worshipped and been taught in buildings that, for the most part, we didn't finance or build. Imagine with gratitude the 217 years of witness and sacrifice the previous generations have given to this mighty congregation that we now call Franklin First United Methodist Church.

IMAGINE WITH JOY AND AWE WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR OUR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN AND OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN.