



NEWSLETTER

OF THE

Estancia United Methodist
Church

600 Williams, Estancia, New Mexico

<http://www.estanciamethodist.org>



SEPTEMBER, 2015

Estancia United Methodist Church

www.EstanciaMethodist.org

600 W. Williams, P.O. Box 126, Estancia, NM 87016

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From the Desk of...

Pastor Bonnie

I heard a story recently about a teacher who sprang a “POP QUIZ” on her class. The very thought of a pop quiz might make you a little queasy... like it does me! But hang in there.

The teacher handed out a single sheet of paper, face down, to each student. When it was time to start, the kids turned their papers over. All they saw was a single black dot in the middle of the page. The quiz? Tell me everything about what you see.

The kids wrote everything they could think of to describe that single black dot – its color, its diameter, its location on the paper... some even attempted to describe the existential meaning of the dot!

After 15 minutes, the teacher collected the papers. “There will be no grade assigned to this work. But there’s something very important we all need to learn from it.”

Everyone had written about the black dot. No one had written about the white space all around it.

And that’s what can happen in our lives if we’re not careful. We can get so focused on the one problem (or black dot) in our lives that we fail to see the white space of God’s grace and the brilliance of His blessings all around us.

On September 19-20, the Estancia Church will be visited by a Healthy Church Initiative (HCI) leadership team. This is the culmination of many months of work on the part of the Estancia Church HCI team; and the entire congregation is invited to a conversation on Saturday the 19th from 11am-3pm to discuss God’s calling for Estancia UMC. Based on that conversation, a “prescription” for improving congregational vitality will be announced by the leadership team after worship the following day.

Are we going to be a congregation that focuses on the black dot or on the white space? I look forward to our conversation!

Blessings,

Pastor Bonnie

An Excerpt from - Emotions and faith

August 21st, 2015

[By Jill M. Johnson](#)

1

“What is going on inside their head?” In the opening scene of the movie “Inside Out,” the above question is asked. And who hasn’t wondered what is going on inside someone else’s head, or even their own?



The movie ... helps us better understand how certain emotions interact, particularly joy and sadness. A spoiler alert — but a critical lesson in the film — is the appropriate way to embrace sadness, as it helps Riley [the main character, an 11-year-old girl] understand the changes she’s going through, setting the stage for her to develop a new identity. Psychologists Dacher Keltner and Paul Ekman praise the movie for shedding light on how emotions organize, rather than disrupt, rational thinking and social lives. In a recent New York Times blog, Keltner and Ekman write, “The truth is that emotions guide our perceptions of the world, our memories of the past and even our moral judgments of right and wrong, most typically in ways that enable effective responses to the current situation.”

Neuroplasticity: Managing our emotions

It’s true we are emotional beings, but we do have some control over our emotions and can use tools to increase joy and overall well-being while letting other emotions arise as appropriate. Neuroplasticity is the scientific concept that shows our brains are not static but rather change throughout our lives in response to our lifestyle, physiology and environment. Our brains have the ability to reorganize pathways and create new connections, and we can intentionally aid this process when it comes to emotions.

In a recent Huffington Post blog, Dr. Richard J. Davidson, professor of psychology and psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and leading expert on the study of emotions, offers tips for understanding and managing each of the emotions highlighted in *Inside Out*. He cites the capacity to experience joy as crucial to well-being and that learning to savor positive moments can increase our joy. People with depression can experience joy, but it’s short-lived and fleeting. People who have the capacity to activate the brain regions associated with joy for sustained periods of time report higher levels of well-being and lower levels of cortisol, a stress hormone. Davidson states that reflecting on “innate basic goodness” can increase positive interactions and enables us to respond to others in a way that furthers their well-being and ours. In other words, take time to pay attention to the beauty around you and the goodness in others.

Davidson explains that the emotions of fear, disgust and anger all have in common the amygdala and its role in recovery. The amygdala is the structure in our brain associated with “fight-or-flight” and signals the rest of the body when something is wrong. For example, seeing a snake can initiate the fear response, or smelling rotting food can initiate the disgust response. In context, these emotional responses are healthy. But when they linger beyond the point of usefulness (when no threat or disgusting element is present), they can be harmful. Davidson advises that “mindfulness meditation” can help appropriately regulate these emotions, as it helps reduce worry over things that haven’t happened and speeds up recovery after negative events have happened.

Anger, while also an appropriate response to certain situations, can pose the greatest danger if left in charge of our brains. According to research, anger is biologically toxic and can increase the risk for health problems such as a heart attack. Anger often occurs when our goals are thwarted, and Davidson suggests harnessing that energy to work around the obstacle rather than being frustrated by it.

Sadness is also a contextually appropriate response, but if it controls our brains unnecessarily, it can lead to depression. Surprisingly, Davidson suggests the best antidote to sadness is generosity. Helping others in their own suffering helps us realize we’re not the only ones with problems and moves us beyond ourselves. According to research, generosity activates circuits in the brain associated with joy. Other suggestions by health

experts for increasing brain plasticity include mental and physical exercises, healthy diets, and certain nutritional supplements such as Vitamin D.

Neuroplasticity in Scripture

As I was writing the previous section, I realized how often Scripture treats our emotions with kindness and helps us grow into better human beings. A number of Bible verses and stories started popping into my head that can help us retrain our thinking and emotions. On learning to sustain joyful experiences, Philippians 4:8 (NIV) encourages us, “Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable— if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.” In Luke 10:38-42, Jesus reminds Martha, who is distracted by tasks and duties, to act more like Mary. Jesus gently acknowledges Martha’s emotions (“Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things”) and then encourages her just to sit and listen (“One thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part. It won’t be taken away from her”).

While others view the lepers, blind people and sinners with disgust, Christ consistently reframes this view with love and compassion by healing, even physically touching, those least among us. And while Scripture understands our propensity to fear things not based in reality, we are given numerous words of comfort, including, “Don’t worry about your life, what you’ll eat or what you’ll drink, or about your body, what you’ll wear” (Matthew 6:25), and “Throw all your anxiety onto him, because he cares about you” (1 Peter 5:7).

In Matthew 21:12-13, Jesus displays contextually appropriate anger by pushing over the tables of those who were buying and selling in the Temple, channeling his anger into an important lesson: “It’s written, My house will be called a house of prayer. But you’ve made it a hideout for crooks.” In James 1:19-20, we’re taught why anger can be harmful: “Know this, my dear brothers and sisters: everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to grow angry. This is because an angry person doesn’t produce God’s righteousness.”

And Scripture is peppered with stories of those who were generous in the midst of sad or difficult circumstances. Jesus praises the widow who gives two small copper coins worth a penny. While others give out of their wealth, “she from her hopeless poverty has given everything she had, even what she needed to live on” (Mark 12:41-44). Proverbs 11:24 states, “Those who give generously receive more, but those who are stingy with what is appropriate will grow needy.” The Bible confirms a universal spiritual truism that in times of scarcity, we should give more, not less. Science confirms these acts lead to more joy — and a more Christlike life.

Sooooo... What’s going on inside your head?!



Get Their Name Workshop
Presenter: Bob Farr
Open to Laity and Clergy
Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2015, 10am - 3pm, St. John's UMC, ABQ



This is a great opportunity to hear the architect of HCI, nationally recognized author and speaker, and a successful church grower. He did an interactive, dynamic workshop last fall in Sacramento around his book Renovate or Die, which was informative & fun.

The workshop is sponsored by the Office of Congregational Vitality. The only cost is \$15 for an excellent St. John's UMC, ABQ lunch and snacks. For more information and to RSVP, please call Rev. Cheri Lyon at (505)440-6849 or cherilealyon@gmail.com.

52 Messages of Hope! Pastor Bonnie is preaching a series this year on HOPE. Every Sunday we hear another reason for us, as Christians, to be hope-full! Following is a *very brief synopsis* of the Hopeful Message preached before her vacation in July. More to come in August!

Date	Sermon Notes	The Reason for Our Hope
8/2/15	<p>Adam Hamilton, in his book, <u>Revival</u>, recounts a sermon he once preached about junk cars. Adam pastors a HUGE church – Church of the Resurrection – in <u>Leawood</u> Kansas; and the chancel area is big enough to hold several cars. He brought in a number of vintage autos – all restored from “junk” – and parked them right on the chancel, to demonstrate his point. Like old junk cars, we can be run down, broken, rusted out. All of us have been used – and some of us have been abused and discarded. Our lives are stained with sin – just like the old junk cars had been stained with rust.</p>	<p>But this is the reason for our Hope: Just as a master auto restoration specialist sees junk cars for what they were intended to be – so also God sees US for what He created us to be! God can restore you and me so that we shine like new. Our purpose and function can be restored. In God’s hands, we can be that thing of beauty for which He created us – vehicles of His love and blessing, bearing His light to <u>all the</u> world! Jesus says, in John 6:35, “I am the bread of life.” It is He who feeds us, restores us, sustains us, <u>gives</u> us a life worth living. It is our relationship with Him that allows us to be the shiny, new, well-oiled machines of blessing to others! Thanks <u>be</u> to God.</p>
8/9/15	<p>Today’s scripture tells a portion of the story of the prophet, Elijah. Most of us are familiar with his defeat of the 400 prophets of Baal, his encounter with God in the still small voice on the mountain, and his healing of the widow’s son. But today, Elijah is running for his life. He’s overwhelmed, defeated, and asking God to release him from his earthly appointments. “It is too much, Lord. Now let me die.”</p> <p>All of us have faced difficulties in our own lives. Some may even have sought, as Elijah did, the sweet release provided by death. Some have faced painful illness, others broken relationships or divorce. Some may have faced bankruptcy, humiliation, or helpless addictions. Some seem to face persistent bad luck, lack of employment, mental illness... you name it. LIFE CAN BE HARD. And we can be tempted to simply “OPT OUT”.</p>	<p>But this is the reason for our Hope: In the depths of Elijah’s misery, God sent him an angel – an encourager! When Elijah gave up, God sent food – sustenance! When Elijah perceived himself a failure, God gave him a new assignment – purpose! And God will do the same for me and you. Do you need encouragement? Cry out to the Lord. Do you need sustenance? Look around – God certainly will provide it. Do you need purpose in your life? Ask & it will be revealed to you.</p> <p>Jesus is the bread of life. It is He who provides encouragement, sustenance, and purpose. Take, eat and drink. Feast upon Him in your heart and know that you are loved. And then – get on with the work He’s assigned you – because only YOU can accomplish it.</p>
Date	Sermon Notes	The Reason for Our Hope
8/16/15	<p>The Apostle Paul wrote to the new Christians in Ephesus: “<i>So be careful to live your life wisely, not foolishly... these are evil times. Because of this, don’t be ignorant, but understand the Lord’s will.</i>” <i>Ephesians 5:15-17</i></p> <p>His admonition echoes down through the ages to us today. We know the times are evil – proof enough comes flooding at us every day via radio, TV, and a barrage of other electronic media. It’s a truth we cannot escape! And we don’t want to be ignorant; but just HOW is it that we are to UNDERSTAND the LORD’S WILL?! Like a car whose wheels are out of alignment, we also are out of alignment with God’s will. We have a bent toward sinning that, if left unchecked, will steer us into the ditch every time. Who can save us from ourselves?!</p>	<p>This is the reason for our Hope: Jesus is bread for us in our search for meaning and significance in our lives. Jesus is the bread of life that connects us to the divine and gives us an understanding of our purpose and calling in this life. Jesus is bread for us in our times of trial. Jesus is bread for us in our moments of desperation.</p> <p>Participating in the means of God’s grace, most especially in Holy Communion, brings alignment to our lives. A close relationship with Jesus keeps the mission before us. In alignment with His calling, we can allow ourselves to be blessed... and to pass that blessing on to others. Thanks <u>be</u> to God!</p>

Date	Sermon Notes	The Reason for Our Hope
8/23/15	<p>When I graduated 8th grade, our class was treated to a 'dinner dance' – a completely new experience for all of us! We met in a banquet hall in a neighboring town, dressed in our finest, and ate food we'd never heard of. When we got to the dessert, we all breathed a sigh of relief. Something familiar – lime Jello with a dollop of whipped cream on top – hallelujah. But as we collectively dove into our treat, there was a nearly unanimous gag reflex – <u>aaghhhh!!</u> Instead of whipped cream, the Jello was topped with mayonnaise. You can imagine the scene. Some choked it down. Others spit it back up. Some went running to the restrooms.</p> <p>Jesus' message in John 6 resulted in a similar reaction. Eat His flesh and drink His blood?! WHAT?!?! Everyone found it unpalatable. Many spat it out and left Him for good. Others barely choked it down. This was NOT the message they were expecting. They wanted dessert – something familiar, sweetness and light – healing, freedom, prosperity, sight, wisdom, power, affirmation, all the good things this life can afford.</p>	<p>But this is the reason for our Hope: Our expectations color our experiences. Scripture tells us that in this life, there will be trials and temptations. For most of us, this life will leave us wanting. Some of it will be down right unpalatable – even sickening. But when we participate in the Lord's Supper – Communion – we participate in the Kingdom living of which Jesus spoke. In that meal, we ask Jesus' presence with us as we consume elements of bread and fruit of the vine – the spiritual meal Jesus shared with His Disciples in the Last Supper. His Kingdom is all around us. In the midst of all we experience in THIS world, God is with us; and we have the hope of eternal sweetness of life in Christ. Thanks <u>be</u> to God!</p>
8/30/15	<p>Today's scripture (Mark 7:1-8ff) tells the story of a group of scribes and Pharisees who confronted Jesus about his disciples' poor hygiene. They didn't wash their hands before they ate. Gross! <i>Everyone</i> knows that 'cleanliness is next to Godliness' right? And truthfully – poor sanitation remains the world's leading cause of preventable death. Millions die every year from a lack of clean drinking water. But no one has ever lost their eternal soul over eating with dirty hands. Jesus rebuked his accusers, saying "... it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, <i>and they defile a person.</i>"</p>	<p>But this is the reason for our Hope: God's Grace is ever-present, speaking to our hearts as well as our minds, working to transform and conform those who are willing, to the image of Christ. This is the power of His sanctifying grace at work in the lives of all believers. And the Bible promises that He who began a good work in you will certainly bring it to completion!</p>

We are quickly approaching the Consultation Weekend (September 19-20) for our Healthy Church Initiative (HCI.) If you're feeling 'out of the loop' regarding HCI, talk to Melanie Chavez, Bill & Barbara Simms, or Nick & Julie Griffo in Estancia (or Patty Mahoney, Wanda Giovengo, Maribeth Dixon, Anna Hopping, or Kent Potter in Mountainair) for details. **Your input to the group consultation on Saturday, September 20 will be essential to the future of Estancia UMC!**

HCI is all about revitalizing churches... breathing new life and new hope into the future of our Christian communities. A recent article from [Ministry Matters](#) included the following advice about church revitalization from Ron Edmundson:

“I’ve written frequently about church revitalization. As one who has planted a couple of churches, I know the challenges are unique. One thing I’ve noticed is the number of pastors who enter revitalization thinking the church just needs new leadership. Or better sermons. Or them. I’ve learned there is so much more. **Here are five secrets of church revitalization:**

Have a clear vision: You have to clearly know where you are heading. What does a revitalized church look like? Specifically what does this church look like? In my experience, unless you are starting over completely, people need to be able to “connect the dots.” It must make sense where you are going. That means whatever is next will likely have some similarity to the past. You can’t take people too far from their root DNA. Keep in mind, vision doesn’t change frequently — if ever. For a church, a vision might be “to make disciples.” The next season after revitalization will still be to make disciples. There may have been some time since people experienced that in the church, but it’s likely still what can motivate them. If the church has a deep heritage in missions, the future will likely need to have a strong missional aspect.

Honor the history: Hopefully this theme is clear from the previous point, because it’s paramount. I’m convinced you simply cannot be successful if you don’t at least attempt to honor the past. I frequently say “Rediscover, don’t reinvent.” Unfortunately I hear so many pastors who go into a church as the champion of everything new. They alienate people who have given their heart and life to the church, making them think everything they have ever done is wrong. These pastors can never seem to get traction. One of the single biggest days in the life of the church since we’ve been in revitalization was the day we had a “homecoming” type of day and invited the two former pastors to attend. It seemed to rally all aspects of the church. If there were “sides” they seemed to come together this day. I knew we needed this to occur if we had any hopes of moving forward successfully.

Innovate: What can you do new that will reach new people without hijacking the church? How can you build momentum? Whatever you do it will almost always involve change. In fact, I’m not sure you can define revitalization without some form of change. The end goal should be to create a healthy environment for sustained change and growth. Ask questions such as:

What are we doing that requires more effort than the results produced?

What are people no longer excited about doing?

What is something everyone gets excited about at this church?

What is one thing we can try next?

If money weren't an obstacle, what would we do?

This is where you get the best minds in the room and brainstorm. These people may or may not be the current leaders. I wouldn’t even be shy about inviting people from outside the church. They could be from other churches — in the community or outside the community. (We visit with another church every year to learn from them.) Or, what if you asked people in the community what they would look for in a church? You don’t have to implement their ideas, but you might just learn something.

Attack your fears:

It can seem daunting to revitalize a church, especially once you actually start making hard decisions. People can be intimidating. In fact, when you change some things, you’ll find people can be mean. You will likely have to face some direct confrontations. People you thought were the sweetest Christians may smile at you on Sunday and give send you the nastiest email Monday morning. Some may grandstand at business meetings. Others will work behind your back. (All true for me, and more.) You have to love the calling you have to revive a church more than you love popularity — or an absence of conflict. And, you have to have patience and tenacity. It will take longer to realize change than in a church plant. Much longer. Usually the longer the church has needed revitalization the longer it will take to see improvement.

But know this. There are usually those in the church desperate for change and solidly behind you. You have to look past the loud negative voices to find them. That requires faith and perseverance.

Forgive and Repent:

If things were done wrong in the past, lead people to recognize and admit them. I felt the need to preach on forgiveness and unity — a lot — in the early days of church revitalization. And I challenged people when I heard bitterness or anger. Church revitalization is hard. But it is so needed. And, there are so many kingdom opportunities out there. And these aren’t “secrets”, even though I used that in the title. Yet they aren’t always our natural reactions in church revitalization. We tend to want to do all new things. We ignore conflicts rather than address them. We back away when things get too difficult.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where our forerunner, Jesus, has entered on our behalf. Hebrews 6:19-20



On Sunday, August 16, Pastor Bonnie presented school supply bags to the teachers of the congregation. The bags were given by St. John's church in Albuquerque.



Church in the Park last Sunday, Aug. 23rd

EUMC -- Highlights of the Summer

With fall quickly approaching, it is time to celebrate the great things our "small but mighty" congregation did this summer.

- Worship in the Park blessed congregation members and their guests three different times this summer! Music was wonderful, attendance was great, and we were graced with an excellent service! Thanks to Billy Isidoro and Novie Keith.
- Fourth of July at Arthur Park was a fantastic celebration of America's independence and God's love! EUMC worked with the First Baptist Church and the Assembly of God to bless over 300 people with crosses, food and water. We served over 700 (?) hot dogs to hungry park go-ers as they listened to music by the Mountainside Jug Band. We gave wooden crosses with a blessing to each person we fed. The crosses were from Cross the World, an organization dedicated to making God's love visible one cross at a time. What a wonderful afternoon!!
- Contemporary praise songs were added during King's Kids to help our youth connect with God. Our young people choose a new song to sing for three weeks. Thanks to the congregation for participating and allowing our young people to celebrate Jesus in their way!!



Church in
the Park
last
Sunday,
Aug. 23rd



September



**All are
Welcome**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
August 30 6pm Fifth Sunday Hymn Sing at Mt Air UMC Altar Color – Green	31	September 1	2 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	3 Estancia Work Day 8am-5pm	4	5
6 Communion Sunday Altar Color – Green	7 Accountable Discipleship Study ABQ, 6pm	8	9 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ <input type="checkbox"/> 11:30 Faith @ Work Luncheon <input type="checkbox"/> 1:30 Prayer meeting @ the Moore's (303 N Walker)	10	11	12 5am-8pm Pastor Bonnie's Emmaus Team Meeting in Aztec
13 10am Estancia Prayer Walk & BBQ Noon MtAir Pot- Luck & Ad Council Altar Color – Green	14 Accountable Discipleship Study ABQ, 6pm	15 2-6pm Promised Land / Road- runner Food Bank	16 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	17 11-2 AMA	18 Pastor's Dinner w/HCI Team	19 HCI all- hands in Estancia 11am-5pm
20 10am Combined Worship in Estancia Park w/Clovis DS Jane Vaughan Altar Color – Green	21 Accountable Discipleship Study ABQ, 6pm	22	23 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	24	25	26
27 10am Estancia Sunday School – <u>The Call</u> Altar Color – Green	28 Accountable Discipleship Study ABQ, 6pm	29	30 7am Pastor's Breakfast, ABQ	Always Do the Right Thing!		



Sent with a prayer to:



Estancia United Methodist Church
P. O. Box 126
Estancia, NM 87016

24 Famous Proverbs As Told By A Class Of First Graders

By Bobby Popovic

A first grade teacher presented each child in her class the first half of a well known proverb and asked them to come up with the second half. It's hard to believe these were actually done by first graders. Their insight and humor may surprise you.

1. You can lead a horse to water but.....how?
2. Strike while the..... bug is close.
3. It's always darkest before..... Daylight Saving Time.
4. Never underestimate the power of..... termites.
5. Don't change horses..... until they stop.
6. Don't bite the hand that..... looks dirty.
7. No news is..... impossible.
8. A miss is as good as a.....Mister.
9. You can't teach an old dog new..... math.
10. If you lie down with dogs, you'll..... stink in the morning.
11. Love all, trust..... me.
12. The pen is mightier than the..... pigs.
13. An idle mind is.....the best way to relax.
14. Where there's smoke there's..... pollution.
15. Happy the bride who.....gets all the presents.
16. A penny saved is..... not much.
17. Two's company, three's..... the Musketeers
18. Don't put off till tomorrow what you...put on to go to bed.
19. Laugh and the whole world laughs with you, cry and
.....you have to blow your nose.
20. There are none so blind as..... Stevie Wonder.
21. Children should be seen and not..... spanked or grounded.
22. If at first you don't succeed..... get new batteries.
23. You get out of something only what you.....see in the
picture on the box.
24. When the blind lead the blind..... get out of the way.