

of the world. These are tough words to read! The animosity Christians experience from time to time should be expected because we recognize the animosity that Jesus – the one we follow – experienced. There is often resistance to the transformative work of the church. This should be an indication of the importance of the work.

What are your thoughts? How do you respond when the work of the church is difficult? Write your thoughts here and ask for courage to be a part of Christ's effort to change the world with love.

### **Thursday, September 26**

Read Acts 1:1-8. We are called to be “witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Verse 8) These words represent an ever expanding ring of influence of an individual and the church. A witness is one who shares what he or she knows to be true.

What do you know to be true about God and Jesus Christ? What do you know to be true about the church? Can you share your experience? Perhaps a story of acceptance in our church? Maybe a moment of great learning? Write your thoughts here and pray that you can be an effective witness of our faith – even to the ends of the earth.

### **Friday, September 27**

Read Acts 1:1-8. The language of “Changing our world with Christ's love.” was very intentional. This wording was meant to make our Mission Statement personal.

How might you change your world? What difference can you make within your sphere of influence? How can you demonstrate Christ's love? Write your thoughts here and ask for guidance in how the world might be transformed by you!

## **Message Notes – September 22, 2024**

# ***Our Mission: Changing our World with Christ's love*** \*

- I. Our Mission Statement is not just a slogan to remind us of who we are as a church but we have moved beyond mere words toward \_\_\_\_\_ and a clearer understanding of \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. The official Mission Statement of our United Methodist Denomination is "The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the \_\_\_\_\_ of the world."
  - B. Our Mission Statement \_\_\_\_\_ the Mission Statement of our denomination and has some nuances that will be helpful for our specific congregation.
  - C. Our Mission Statement: Connecting with \_\_\_\_\_. Connecting with \_\_\_\_\_. Changing our World with \_\_\_\_\_ love.
- II. Our passage for today from John's gospel when considered within the entire fifteenth chapter strikes me as a \_\_\_\_\_ news – \_\_\_\_\_ news story.
  - A. The bad news begins with the words of Jesus when he said, “If the world \_\_\_\_\_ you, be aware that it \_\_\_\_\_ me before it \_\_\_\_\_ you.” (Verse 18)
  - B. John's rather blunt and frankly divisive words were written when the church was under the constant threat of persecution; Christianity was \_\_\_\_\_, punishable by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - C. Two important concepts at this point – \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
  - D. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the love of Christ expressed in the early church with the hatred of Rome toward

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\*John 15:18-27 and Acts 1:1-8

the early church is due to the fact that Rome saw the \_\_\_\_\_ of the life and teaching of Jesus the Christ with the life and teaching of the early church.

- E. The good news/bad news flow of chapter 15 in John's gospel is encouraging as we speak of our connection with God, each other and the needs of the world and we are then warned that the important work of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ is difficult and often met with resistance.
- III. We've been considering our Mission Statement these last few weeks; and we can't afford to allow them to be just \_\_\_\_\_.
- A. Otherwise, the \_\_\_\_\_ we read in the first chapter of Acts can become just \_\_\_\_\_; the instructions of Christ can become \_\_\_\_\_ and the promise of the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ and the power we are to receive a \_\_\_\_\_.
- B. Acts 1:8 - "you will receive \_\_\_\_\_ when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my \_\_\_\_\_ in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
- C. The imagery is of a pebble being dropped in water and the ever expanding ripples on the surface of the water emanating from that center spot where the pebble \_\_\_\_\_ with the water.
- D. This is important work – the critical work of the church – its \_\_\_\_\_.
- E. That is why I began this message by saying "a local congregation must have focus and intentionality in determining their \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for ministry."

### ***Daily Meditations and Study Guide***

The following is a daily meditation and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian. It's for your personal reflection or to share with others.

### **Monday, September 23**

Read John 15:18-27 and Acts 1:1-8. For the first two days of this week, we will consider the Mission Statement of our denomination and our local congregation. The official Mission Statement of our United Methodist Denomination is "The mission of the church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."

What are your thoughts about our denominational Mission Statement? How would you define the words disciples and transformation? Write your thought here and pray for a deeper understanding of God's direction for our denomination.

### **Tuesday, September 24**

Read John 15:18-27 and Acts 1:1-8. The Mission Statement of Waterford Central is Connecting with God. Connecting with Others. Changing our World with Christ's love. We believe that our Mission Statement honors the Mission Statement of our denomination.

A considerable amount of time was spent contemplating Central Church's Mission Statement. What are your thoughts? Does it help us define our identity and determine our direction? Write your thoughts here and pray that God reveal how you can connect with God and others and change our world with Christ's love.

### **Wednesday, September 25**

Read John 15:18-27. (If you have time, read the entire chapter.) The message mentioned the good news/bad news flow of Chapter 15 in John's gospel. Jesus shares how we are told how we are connected to Him and His desire for us to connect with each other and the needs of the world. Then we are warned about the hatred