

Thursday, June 18

Think about the words transition and transformation? Do you see a difference between them? How would you define these words individually? How are they related? Pastor Jack suggested that, “Transformation, in comparison to transition, in my mind leaves room for our influence and control.” In other words, our attitudes and actions can aid in our lives being transformed; there is a change that is possible when we put our minds toward making change happen. Transition is often a process over which we have little or not control. Have you experienced that type of transition? How did you feel when that was happening in your life? Your life may have changed because of a transition, but was your life transformed? Meditate on these thoughts about transformation and transition and write your thoughts here. You might want to pray for transformation in your life!

Friday, June 19

Read I Corinthians 13 (the entire chapter). This is known as Paul’s Chapter of Love. Paul describes many attributes of love as well as what love is not. He also wrote that without love we are nothing and we gain nothing. Love, as suggested in the message, is at the core or is the DNA of friendship. Paul suggested that love “bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things” as well as, “Love never ends.” I (Pastor Jack) have always believed if I can observe a congregation loving their pastor, then that congregation would have the capacity to love me. It is not coincident that my predecessor knew of your love over 13 years of ministry and I have now experienced the same. Thank you for 13 wonderful and love-filled years. It has been my privilege to be your pastor as well as pastor at Grosse Pointe UMC, Oxford UMC and Big Beaver UMC, sharing and sacrificing together! I love you all!

Message Notes June 14, 2026

Divinely Designed Friendship *

- I. Today, my friends, I want to talk about friendship because friendship is an _____ relationship if you think about it.
 - A. Friendship is the only relationship that does not have clear _____.
 - B. Every relationship except friendship, for example, has a clear _____ and _____.
- II. Our scripture this morning is from what is known as the _____ Discourses, John’s Gospel, Chapters 13 through 17.
 - A. The key to _____ relationships is found in the eight verses leading up to our scripture for today.
 1. These verses are about Jesus’ proclamation that he is the _____ and we are the _____.
 2. In summary, Jesus identifies the essential property of vines and branches which is _____.
 3. _____ is at the center of our relationships, friends.
 - B. Jesus, as he declares his disciples to be his friends, identifies the crucial elements of true and deep friendship: _____ and _____.
 1. They share together in _____ of God’s grace and sharing as _____ in the work of the church.
 2. In our sharing we also make _____.
- III. The English noun “_____” does not fully convey the presence of love that undergirds the concept of _____ in John’s Gospel.

- A. The words translated _____ is *philos* and is the Greek verb, *phileo*, meaning “_____.”
 - B. John’s Gospel uses two _____ for “love,” *phileo* and *agape*.
 - C. *Agape* represents the _____, most _____ form of love.
- IV. Having given some _____ and _____ to Jesus’ understanding of love, let’s talk about us.
- A. We are in a time of _____ here at Central Church.
 - B. _____, in comparison to transition, in my mind leaves room for our _____ and _____.
 - C. At the _____ of this time in our lives as Pastor and Congregation is _____.
- V. The Transformation during this time of our lives means _____ our relationships.
- A. So, in the words of my four-year-old son, “You’re all my _____!”
 - B. Let’s take up the _____ of Jesus to abide in him, loving each other and allowing for that love to grow by loving _____.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, June 15

The message began with a simple story about Pastor Jack’s oldest son, Jeremiah. That simple story begs the question about whether we can have more than one “best friend.” Other observations include the idea that friendship is unique in that it doesn’t have a definitive beginning or ending. Sure, we can remember when we met our friends but there was not ritual or certification of the beginning of the relationship. What’s your experience of friendship? Do you have a best friend? Do you have many

friends or a small group of friends? How do you define and distinguish between friendships and acquaintances? Consider these questions and write your reflections here.

Tuesday, June 16

Read John 15:1-8. This is a wonderful passage of scripture in which Jesus teaches about the essential quality of connectedness between God and ourselves and between ourselves and others. Jesus mentions the interdependent nature of Jesus’ relationship with his disciples. The branches cannot bear fruit without the vine and the vine cannot survive without the nourishing branch. Jesus went on to say that without the branch, the vines can do nothing. Apart from Jesus the Christ, we cannot bear fruit for God’s Kingdom. There is a saying, “Without God, we cannot and without us, God will not.” What do you believe about the interdependent relationship we have with God through Jesus the Christ? Meditate on this question and write your thoughts here.

Wednesday, June 17

Read John 15:9-17. Jesus had some very definite ideas about friendship. Those ideas are expressed with the characteristics of sharing and sacrifice. How have you experienced our community of faith through sharing? Sure, we share our resources so that the church can help others, but how do you see our members sharing with each other our burdens and cares, our celebrations and joys? How have you or how have you seen members of our faith community sacrificing? Have you seen members sacrificing their time? Their resources? Their possessions? Think about these defining qualities of friends sharing and sacrificing. Write your ideas here.

