

Sunday July 26, 2020 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Romans 8:26-39
“More Than Conquerors”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes). In pairs or groups of three, have each participant answer the question, “What is the longest amount of time you’ve been alone and silent in the last few years?”

Romans 8:26-39. Context. This week’s reading sums up a number of themes that Paul has developed in his letter to the Romans: living in the Spirit (the Spirit living in us), we yearn, even groan, for the ultimate reconciliation with God, a promise that has been vouchsafed by the death and resurrection of Jesus – the perfect revelation of God’s love for all of us. And as we strive for that deeper, most intimate, loving relationship with God, we put aside all the distractions of this world, disdaining the powers that be and all merely human convention, because in the end, we know that absolutely nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God. What could be more thrilling? What could be more joyous?

Read Romans 8:26-39

What touches your heart, what do you hear in the scripture, what questions do you have, or what doesn’t make sense to you in the story?

Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

Read Romans 8:26-39 again

Some reflection questions – Write down your thoughts or share your thoughts with the person or group you are with.

- When did you learn to pray? Who taught you?
- What exactly does it mean to pray? [My favorite definition of prayer is intentionally being present before the Lord.] What role does silence play in prayer?
- How is it comforting to know that the Spirit prays with us, intercedes for us, and empowers us to pray?
- Why do you think so many people are uncomfortable praying aloud in a group? How might knowing the Spirit intercedes for us give us confidence to pray aloud?

- Paul names some difficult life stresses and powerful entities in verse 35 and 38. How does the affirmation that nothing can separate us from God’s loving presence give us the confidence and boldness we need in prayer? [Side note: Verse 28 should not be read as affirming that with enough faith or saying the right prayer will make God work as we wish.] It is affirming that in all circumstances, God is at work, whether we understand how or where.
- How can this group pray for you?

Read Romans 8:26-39 again

Closing Reflection Question

How is this scripture calling you to change, to see, to be or what might it be calling you to do?

Prayer (10 minutes). Each person prays sharing their answer the following statements:

I ask God for....

I thank God for.....

Sending Forth (2 minutes). After all, have shared, pray the closing prayer. Ask for a volunteer to lead the group or read the following prayer in unison:

Much like Jesus’ first disciples, we too request, “Lord, teach us to pray.” Help us lean into, stand on, and be confident in your presence, which intercedes and gives us words when words fail us. Give us the eyes to see your presence calling us to be more than we see. Give us the eyes to discern when and where your presence is calling us to be in ministry to those we encounter.

Amen.

And now we pray The Lord’s Prayer....

Our Father who art in Heaven
hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,
on earth as it is in Heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power
and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.