

Sunday, June 27, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Mark 5:21-43 and 2 Corinthians 8:7-15
“Giving What You Have”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In pairs or groups of three, have participants share when they have seen the church’s generosity toward individuals, families, and/or the community at large.

Mark 5:21-43. Context. This week’s reading contains two stories of Jesus’ healing, the one “sandwiched” into the other, heightening the contrast between the two: the apparently dead daughter of a prominent leader of the synagogue, Jairus, and the anonymous woman with chronic hemorrhages. Jesus’ power to heal – and in the case of Jairus’ daughter, to bring her back from death – is effective, only when those who seek it have faith.

2 Corinthians 8:7-15. Context. In this part of his correspondence with the Corinthian Christians, Paul is trying to “mend fences” with them: previously he had been offended by one of their number who had been highly critical of him; and he had in turn offended and hurt some of them when he didn’t come to visit them as he had promised. A piece of the unfinished business that Paul had with the them was the collection for the poor in Jerusalem that he had announced when he had been with them on a previous visit. This was a collection that he had promised to undertake when he had met with the apostles in Jerusalem some years earlier and they had confirmed his mission to non-Jews. And while the Corinthians had initially taken up the cause enthusiastically, it seems that things had dragged on – to the point of some embarrassment in comparison with the prompt and generous response of that “other” Greek church in Macedonia. In this week’s reading, Paul urges the Corinthians to complete the project.

Read Mark 5:21-43 and 2 Corinthians 8:7-15

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 Mark 5:21-43 and 2 Corinthians 8:7-15 again.

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

- While it might easily get missed about what the Corinthians had begun last year (v. 10) and Paul’s appeal or testing of their genuineness (v.8), he is inviting them to be generous in an offering to other churches in need. How is giving an opportunity to display our generosity?

- How does Paul lift up Jesus as a model of giving and generosity (v. 9)? What might that mean about how we practice generosity?
- What are ways you can give of yourself and not just your money?
- How does Jesus handle the “interruption” that happens in verse Mark5:27? (Does he get mad, refuse to heal the woman, chastise her, greet her enthusiastically?) How do you handle the “interruptions” in your life?
- What do we know about Jairus (v. 22)? What might that say about his standing in the community? How might it have been risky for him to reach out to Jesus?
- How is Jairus a model for us as followers of Jesus?
- How can this group help you to be a better disciple?

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:

Loving God, you invite us to a new way of being – a way of self-giving and generosity that seems scary. It is a way of life that radically trusts your provisions. Help us to experience true life in giving instead of through getting. Help us to live in such a way that others experience new life that comes solely by your grace. Amen. **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.