

Sunday, June 6, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Mark 3:20-35 and 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1
“Being Renewed”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In pairs or groups of three, have participants share what they do to experience renewal.

Context Mark 3:20-35. As we come to this week’s reading, Jesus’ ministry is now in full swing: demons have been cast out; the sick have been healed, sins have been forgiven; he has gone head to head with the religious authorities; and he has chosen his disciples. He has begun attracting large crowds, and no little controversy. In a typical “Marcan” fashion, two stories reflecting that controversy are “sandwiched” together: the passage begins and ends with a controversy between Jesus and his family; and in the middle, a controversy between Jesus and the Jerusalem scribes.

Context 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1. In the first nine chapters of Paul’s second letter to the Christians at Corinth, the Apostle attempted to heal the breach that had arisen between him and them over various insults and snubs that they had exchanged since his previous visit with them a couple of years before. These chapters provide him with the opportunity to heal those wounds. In the immediate context of these verses, Paul describes to them how he is but an earthen vessel carrying for all who would accept it the message of the gospel: an unseen and eternal blessing that is not worth comparing to the sufferings of this present age (as he says in Romans 8).

Read Mark 3:20-35 and 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1

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 3:20-35 and 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 again.

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

- Where is “home” for you?
- Why do you think Jesus’ family came to “restrain” him (v. 21)? [In that culture, if one person is shamed, the shame is carried by the whole family. If Jesus is not THE Messiah and is a failed messiah, the shame of that would have extended to the whole family.]
- Why are the scribes there to encounter Jesus?

- How does the story of the scribes and Jesus' response to them gain clarity by the story Mark tells of Jesus' family coming to "restrain" and Jesus' response to them? (Particularly in regard to verses 28-29.)
- Biological family was important in Jesus' day. A person's identity and even career came from family (for example, Jesus son of Joseph, a carpenter; James and John, sons of Zebedee, fisherman). Jesus seems to redefine family. How revolutionary must that have seemed? What might that say about how we should experience Christian community today?
- How is this church community a "home" for you? How might this church better be a "home" for others?

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:

God of grace, transform us and renew us closer into your likeness. Help us to experience renewal and abundant life through you and from our community. Guide us, as a community of believers, to help others experience a "home" through a way of life. **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.