

Sunday, July 11, 2021 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church

**Bible Study – Ephesians 1:3-14
“Setting Our Hope”**

Open with a word of prayer

Gathering Time (5-10 minutes) In groups of two or three, share a time you were chosen or selected for an experience that made you feel special (selected for an award, picked to be team captain, etc.).

Read Ephesians 1:3-14

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 Ephesians 1:3-14 again.

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

- Read the passage a third time, emphasizing the words “us,” “we,” “in Christ,” and “in him.”
- What do we learn about each person of the Trinity from this passage?
- What do we learn about ourselves and about the hope we have in Christ?
- Where in this passage do you find encouragement?
- Where do you find a challenge to live as a disciple of Jesus?
- While it might be easy to read this passage as promises and truths just for individuals, Paul clearly has a larger framework in mind (remember the use of the words “us,” “we,” and the word “you” is plural). How can our community of faith help us to hold on to hope?

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:

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we are blessed and overwhelmed at the thought that we are children of God. Enable our praise to be more than mere words or tokens of appreciation. With all of our being, empower us to live a life that praises you and is clear where our hope rests. **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.