

**Sunday, January 22, 2023 – Easter Hill United Methodist Church**

**Bible Study**

**1 Corinthians 1:10-18**

**“Have the Same Mind: Glimpses of the Kin-dom”**

Open with a word of prayer

**Gathering Time** (5-10 minutes)

In pairs or groups of three, discuss the following: “Name a time you experienced division or disunity.” (It could be at work, at church, on a sports team, within a family, etc.)

**1 Corinthians 1:10-18, Context.** Following his opening greeting and benediction, Paul addresses the fundamental challenge among the Corinthians: they love to take sides and foster rivalries and quarrels. His argument seeks to demonstrate that however they might divide themselves, they are fundamentally one in Christ and have been baptized in the name of Christ, not in the name of one of his followers. Paul can’t even remember exactly whom he might have baptized because the one baptizing is of no significance compared to the one into whom we are baptized, namely Christ. Paul is acutely aware of the role that the persuasive eloquence of some of the Corinthians has played in creating and maintaining the divisions among them and concludes with the point that it is not clever eloquence, but the scandal of Christ’s cross and the power of God that has overcome it, that has reconciled us with God and with each other.

**Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-18**

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 text?

**Read 1 Corinthians 1:10-18 again -**

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

**Some reflection questions –**

- Paul is honest about his purpose for writing the letter (v. 10). The ways in which the people are divided will become more apparent as the letter goes on. What might it look like to experience a church where there are “no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose”? What might that feel like? What might that smell like?

- Why do you think it is human nature to be drawn into certain allegiances, much as the Corinthians did? (Today, this can be seen in allegiances such as Republicans, Democrats, conservatives, liberals, southerners, northerners, Americans, etc.)
- Does it seem realistic that we are of the “same mind and the same purpose” (verse 10)? With so many denominations, what does this look like today?
- What does Paul put forward as a solution to the divisions (verses 17-18)? How is the cross unifying? [At the cross, we are all equal. We are all identified with the Messiah who was willing take on shame and dishonor.]
- If you were to draw the body of Christ, what and who might be included in this drawing? Who is present? Who is excluded? What voices and languages are present?
- How might your church begin to live into that vision?

### **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). Share prayer requests and respond appropriately.

**Sending Forth** (2 minutes). After all, have shared, end by praying the following or a similar prayer:

God of redemption, we thank you that we are part of the wonderfully diverse body of Christ that transcends nationalities, ethnicities, and even time. Give us the eyes to see others within the body of Christ who are in need and how we as the body of Christ might extend your care and love to them and those who are not yet part of your family. **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.