

# The Lily Pad *"I am a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valleys."*

Solomon 2:1



Last August, Martin and I were blessed to purchase a beautiful rustic barn wood home, lovingly referred to as Orange Martinelli. The rural cornfields are so tranquil and reflective as they provide us the opportunity to recall memorable family gatherings the Martinelli's have experienced and our hope for many, many more; we give all thanks and praises to Jehovah Jireh (Our Provider), Jehovah Shalom (Our Prince of Peace).

With summer starting in just over a month, June 21, I invite each of you to use this time to celebrate your abundant blessings. How should you celebrate these blessings? **REST, REFLECT, RECREATE, AND REJOICE** in one another's company at family and friends' gatherings, summer worship services, and around various food tables while engaging in deep and sometimes hilarious conversations.

Every family needs experiences that remind each member of our high value, our common history, and our future destiny. Time off with family and friends that have faced their share of unexplained trials, the usual frustrations of life, and more than a few painful self-inflicted wounds, is refreshing water for our very weary souls.

Chisel into your busy schedules dedicated prayer walks with God; how splendid it is to stroll in Creation with the Almighty Creator! It's a time of inspirational meditation! It's a spiritual discipline as you consciously invite God to journey with you. It's an opportunity to fully experience in your body the extraordinary gift of life. Outdoors is the best place for a prayer walk. God is so beautifully revealed. At first, this idea may feel outside-of-the-box. Think about it as if it were a walk with a good friend, a time to enjoy each other's company, intimately, passionately.

These passages are recommended before and after your prayer walk for spiritual guidance.

- Psalm 96
- Hebrews 4:12–16
- Psalm 104:24–30
- Isaiah 40:25

It is moments like this that truly allows you to reflect on God's love and grace. As often as possible try to reflect the love that God has shown and given to you. To be that reflection of God's love is being aware of your faith, time, treasures, and talents. When we look at things in that reflective mindset, we can see that all we have is sincerely God's. It isn't given to us because of our achievements or what we do or who we are, but rather it is given out of God's love and grace.

All that we have God has given us. For the ministry to continue in West Bend, Wisconsin through Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church, it will take all of us. Each and every one of us! We must work on our **invitation. Gossip the gospel** - an attitude of ordinary Christians, who recognized that sharing the message of Jesus is everyone's mission.

*"But the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you power. Then you will tell everyone about me in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and everywhere in the world."* Acts 1:8

Meet and exceed the expectations of our guests through the intricacies of a developing **Guest Services** ministry. We must improve our direct interaction with our **mission field** (those we are called to serve) Refresh our **hospitality**. We must be willing to make a concentrated effort to **build relationships** with our community as we share our faith and the Good News to a spiritually hungry and thirsty people.

I humbly ask that you consider your giving, your pledge, your stewardship, remembering that all you have been given is by the grace of God. As you prayerfully consider gifts, tithes, and talents, I pray that they will be a mirror image of God's gift to you.

This summer as you take time **TO REST, TO REFLECT, AND TO RECREATE**, don't forget **TO REJOICE** in the blessed "rest" you have in Jesus. Here and only here will you find rest for your souls.

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* Matthew 11: 28-30

During my seminary studies, I found this prayer and it spoke to me. It settles deep into my bones. I leave it with you as a prayer for the summer. May it speak to your heart. With my sincerest gratitude for all that you are and for all that you do, for all God is calling us to be and do; I am Your humble Pastor-servant-leader in Christ.

May today there be peace within.  
May you trust God  
that you are exactly  
where you are meant to be.

May you not forget  
the infinite possibilities  
that are born of faith.

May you use those gifts  
that you have received  
and pass on the love  
that has been given to you.

May you be content  
knowing you are a child of God.

Let this presence settle  
into your bones and  
allow your soul the freedom  
to sing, dance, praise, and love.

It is there for each and every one of us.  
Be still and be aware of God's  
presence within you and all around you.

May there be peace within.

Teresa of Avila

***If God has been generous with you, he will expect you to serve him well. But if he has been more than generous, he will expect you to serve him even better.*** Luke 12:48

**HAVE A BLESSED SUMMER!**

***Pastor Clarissa & Martin***