



Make a splash. Look before you leap. Don't jump to conclusions. Enjoy a good swim. Stretch your legs often. Spend time at your pad. Hop to it! (Author Unknown)



The Lily Pad

WELCOME TO OUR AMAZING ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL SEASON

To God be the glory! I start this new church year and blessed appointment as Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church humble servant-leader Pastor with an abundance of desire, exhilaration, and confidence! I believe this year will be a season of extraordinary transformation as each of us grows in Christian Character. My Sisters and Brothers in Christ, this is the moment of truth – we are to have a healthy relationship with the Lord; build a strong bond that enables Christians (you and me) to mature into a fruitful, productive, and joyous disciple of Jesus. I genuinely believe and sense the Lord's presence is with each of us and that we have a divine momentum generated by the Holy Spirit to go in the plentiful mission field and save souls for Jesus! The Lord's Church has the great privilege of being an instrument for revealing God's glory on this earth.

To God be the glory great things He has done
So, loved He the world that He gave us His son
Who yielded His life an atonement for sin
And opened the life gate that all may go in
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the earth hear His voice
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord let the people rejoice
Come to the Father through Jesus the Son
Give Him the glory great things He has done

“To God be the Glory” - Fanny Crosby

“This is a doxology of praise to the One with power that is beyond understanding.”

Never doubt God's mighty power to work in you and accomplish all this. He will achieve infinitely more than your greatest request, your most unbelievable dream, and exceed your wildest imagination! He will outdo them all, for his miraculous power constantly energizes you. Now we offer up to God all the glorious praise that rises from every church in every generation through Jesus Christ—and all that will yet be manifest through time and eternity. Amen! Ephesians 3:20-21 The Passion Translation (TPT)

We exist to glorify God by leading people to **KNOW** Jesus, **GROW** to be like Him, and **GO** to serve Him.

Paul outlines the riches of God's grace towards His people, explaining our privileged position in Christ and reminding us of the love of God, which passes all human understanding. Paul implores us to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which we have been called; to the praise and glory of God the Father and our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Paul expounds the length and breadth and depth and height of the Good News of God's grace towards each of us and the over-abounding riches we already have in Christ - by faith in His sacrificial death and glorious resurrection. And Paul's heart-desire and earnest prayer is that we understand the riches of His grace towards us and that we stand firm in the faith; grow in grace; trust in the Lord with all our heart and become rooted and grounded in the love of Christ.

And so, Paul draws this inspiring and exhilarating letter to the Ephesians to a climatic close with a doxology of praise proclaiming God's goodness and grace. Paul desires that we **KNOW** that God is able - that God is able to do - that God is able to do what we think - that God is able to do what we ask and think - that God is able to do all that we ask of think - that God is able to do above all that we ask or think - that God is able to do abundantly above all that we ask or think! Paul in this inspiring and exhilarating doxology of praise wants us to **KNOW** that God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think! Leading and calling each of us to be changed from being fallen sinners into the remarkable extraordinary likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This superabundant blessing that God gives freely to all who simply trust in the divine Person and atoning work of Jesus is ours - according to the Power that works within us. That inner power is not of ourselves but the supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit - for She continuously works in the inner person (a new life in Christ that receives salvation) in order to transform us from glory to glory - into the person and character that befits a spiritual person; a child of God; a joint-heir with Christ and a citizen of heaven.

The Holy Spirit power that works within us - teaches, guides, rebukes, and correct us. She is forming and transforming, fashioning and refining our inner selves. She is guiding and directing us; teaching and training us and the more that we yield to Her the more exceedingly abundantly will be our inner transformation into the image and likeness of Christ - until we can say with Paul - *the life that I live in this flesh is not I, but Christ that lives in me. Now to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen!*

Ask yourself this self-evaluation question - What will this new amazing inspiring original spiritual season bring to the front door of my heart? What joys and challenges await me? Will this be a crucial season with exciting landscapes to explore and conquer? Or will this be just another church year of regularity and insignificance? Will I meet a new lifelong friend or lose one? Will investments succeed beyond my wildest dreams or will skimpy fortune be overcome by hard economic times? Will I discover a hidden strength that propels me into a new direction or will I experience lessons of failure that will annoy my heart? The answers to these and many more stirring questions remain a mystery still to be unraveled in the scroll of God's plan for your life and our lives as Disciples of Christ. Yet, Jesus provides some great advice for us:

*"Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? **And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?***

The worry-free life Jesus spoke of does not remove our responsibility to work harder, volunteer, serve passionately, achieve, share your abundance, especially your gifts and talents. What Jesus tells us is that we are "more important" and "more valuable" to God than any thing that could possibly worry us.

Don't let the silent thief of worry claim this season of newness! Awaiting your arrival is a passionate energetic Spirit-filled servant-leader Pastor and First Mate (Martin), an active governing leadership model - Accountable Leadership Board (ALB), a smorgasbord of Christian Education opportunities - *Sunday School, Music Ministries, Bible Study, book readings, faith gathering, and small group study (every member or friend of 5th Avenue United Methodist Church should be in at least one of these learning groups), most important regular and consistent church attendance*, topped off with a variety of ecumenical partnership and worship opportunities. **WOW!** As I look forward to this awesome season of grace and favor- *I smile*, and with the Promises of a never-failing always present Savior, I place my faith and hope in God who considers each of us more valuable and more important than anything we can ever imagine or worry about.

Let us be forward thinkers who are filled with hope because we know the secret of Romans 8:28: *We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.*

Let's pray and be expecting of a glorious harvest season! Martin and I thank you for your kindness, hospitality, support, prayers, and the awesome freshness to be called once again to serve as your Pastor and 1st Mate of Fifth Avenue United Methodist Church. May God's richest blessing be bestowed unto all of you as we go forward to serve the Beloved Community.

"Loving God, thank You that You are able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think. Thank You for the ever-present power of the Holy Spirit working within each of us. I humbly pray that we, 5th Avenue United Methodist Church, willingly yield to your abundant and transforming grace as it works in our lives - sending us into the community of West Bend to bring souls to Christ! This humble prayer is prayed and ask in Jesus name. AMEN."

PASTOR CLARISSA & MARTIN