

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Sunday, April 26, 1987

I. GREETING / VISITORS

- A. We greet the visitors in the congregation...delighted to have you worshipping with us this morning...and we hope that we may have opportunity to greet you in a more personal way...
- B. Be free in the sharing of your name. Take a moment to fill out a visitor card...or to sign the guest book. Join us on other Sundays...come and work with us in the programs of service...
- C. You worship in a Church whose roots are deep in the soil of this city...a Church that has been ministering here since 1837...fourth building...neighborhood Church...this is our 150th year...we minister in the name of Christ and it is in His loving spirit...

II. PARISH CONCERNS

- A. Be sure to pick up your copy of the April issue...also be sure to pass your "contributions" for the May issue on to Lucy Dinnes, Editor, today....Lucy has started working on the May issue already.
- B. Adult Bible Class on Sunday mornings. Some 12 people meet regularly from 9:15 to 10:30 every Sunday morning. Mary Lou Risley will be teaching the class over the coming weeks of May. Started today with the introduction to the Prophet, Micah. New friends are always most welcome!
- C. May I encourage you to send in as soon as possible your reservations for the 150th May 16th Banquet. We need to firm up our "count" this week, if possible. We want everyone to be included...

III. CONVERSATIONS IN MEMBERSHIP

- A. Please note that new members will be received into the Church next Sunday...and that persons interested in strengthening a tie with us...invited to meet together this evening with me... and several of our leaders and "key" people...to talk about the Church and membership in it.
- B. John Wesley, founding spirit of Methodism, once said:

"If your heart is, as my heart is, then
come and give me your hand..."

- C. I like that inclusive invitation and the tone that it suggests...and so we say to new friends of recent weeks and months....who have found a church home with us...

"If you heart is as 'our heart is'...then
come and give us your hand...and help."

Hearts and hands are needed to continue to do the Lord's work in this busy corner of His Kingdom! This evening. 6 pm...downstairs Russell Room.

IV. WELCOME SARA GOOLD AS OUR PREACHER TODAY

- A. How nice to welcome Sara Goold to our pulpit this morning! An ordained minister of the UMC, the Reverend Sara Goold was with us for a number of Sundays back in the Fall in connection with a Sunday morning study group on the Bishop's Pastoral Letter.
- B. Both of us have our roots upstate in the Schenectady area... grew up in Niskayuna...studied in.....and a product of the Troy Conference of the Methodist Church.
- C. For me, welcoming Sara here today is like welcoming a dear friend...which she is...and we look forward to her message to us. You'll note that she is...

V. OFFERING

- A. The Response to our Easter appeal was good. We thank you for those special gifts received and still to be received here this morning.
- B. Let us worship God at this time with our morning offering, remember "that it is more blessed to give than to receive".

PASTORAL PRAYER: April 26, 1987.

ETERNAL GOD, OUR FATHER...we come from many backgrounds, many places, and bringing many moods to this great sanctuary and the inspiration of this April Sunday.

There are some here, O Lord, who feel that life is simply a treadmill stretching between birth and death, and we're just being pulled along on some meaningless trip.

There are some here, Lord, who may feel despair over the pains and the problems of life...some who have grown cynical and bitter because of too many disappointments that have deflated their spirits.

There are some, O God, who feel defeated by the troubles that seem to pile up and overwhelm them.

O LORD, come and minister to us as you once ministered to the disciples. Roll back the rock from our tombs of despair. And as you lifted the sadness from the hearts of those who were mourning at that first Easter, lift our spirits out of the sadness we may be feeling.

THE WORLD, O GOD, once again is reminding us of Your renewing power. That which appears dead seems to come alive again.

May that remind us, O Lord, of how we can be renewed in spirit and revitalized in outlook. That which was dark and dull has color and vibrancy again.

May that remind us of the beauty of spirit that can come to us when we grow in Your love and in Your goodness.

LORD, WE ARE GLAD FOR LIFE, and in the spirit of Easter we are grateful for the promise of renewal.

We praise You, O God, for showing us that kind of love that never gives us -

...that hopes all things,
that believes all things,
that endures all things....
the love that is eternal.

SO WE COME THIS DAY with our symbols of music, of flowers, the greatness of anthems and hymns, our prayers and sermon, all to Thy glory, and in the strong name and loving spirit of Jesus, we ask all of this.

INTRODUCTION

The week of toil has ended. The day of rest is at hand.

May the rest and the quiet of this hour of worship refresh our inner life and may it renew in all of us a sense of God's holy and abiding presence. In silence, let each now pray as the heart may prompt.

MEDITATION

We rest our hearts in the Promise of Jesus who said:

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me. For my yoke is easy and My burden is light".

"Comfort ye. Comfort ye my people, saith your God. He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs in His arms."

"For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His steadfast love toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us."

"In the name of Jesus Christ, I share with you the Good News: we are forgiven."

"And all things...whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing... you shall receive. And as many as touched Him were made whole"

PRAYERS / LORD'S PRAYER

Touch with healing, O God, those whom we mention in our prayers this hour. Heal each of us at the point of our deepest need.

Comfort the bereaved and the broken-hearted among us. Abide among us as a healing benediction.

Answer the unspoken prayers offered to You on the altars of our hearts, spoken in the spirit of Jesus who taught us to say when we pray:

"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. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever. Amen."