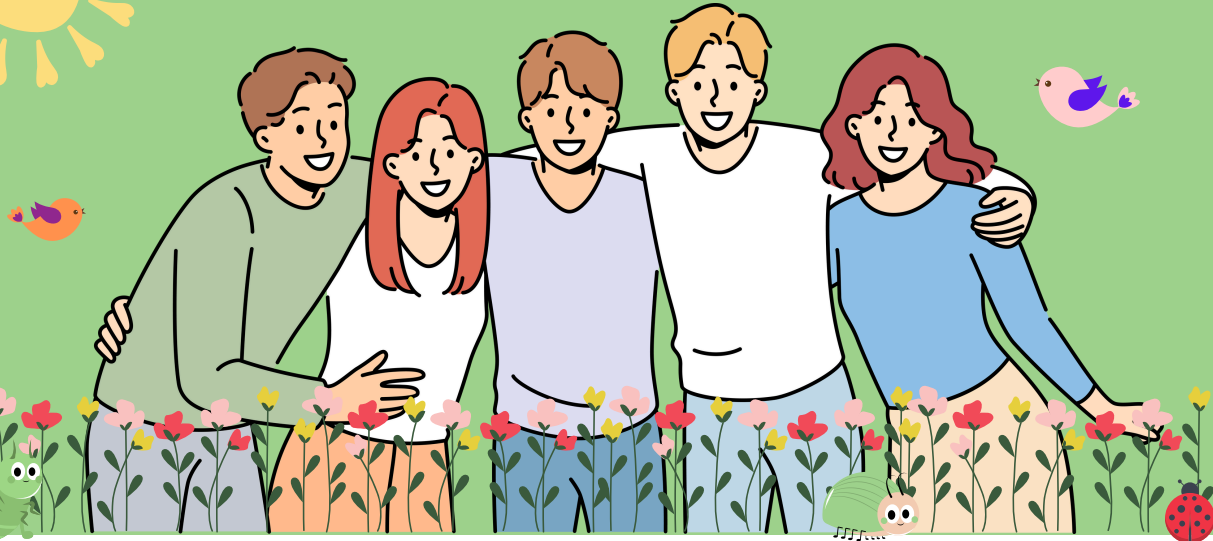
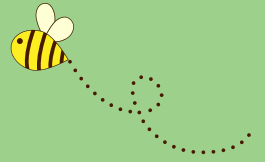




Friends in Faith



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Pastor's Weekly Message on Holy Week 2025

Rev. Dr. Jung Sun Oh

Title: Choose Compassion over Judgement, Humility over Pride

Introduction

Compassion is a deep feeling of sympathy, empathy, and sorrow for someone who is suffering, in pain, or facing misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate that suffering. Jesus exemplifies genuine compassion. He showed compassion by healing individuals from physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual pain and demonstrated the greatest, the most incredible compassion for humanity when He died on the cross. Practicing compassion can be challenging, particularly when we believe an individual deserves their misfortune and suffering. However, the Bible teaches that this is a genuine and authentic mark of Christian character.

In the Parable of the Lost Son (also known as the Prodigal Son), the father vividly exemplified compassion toward his son who returned home (Luke 15:11-32). As we are entering Holy Week, the Seven Days that changed the World Forever, God invites us, through Jesus, to practice compassion.

Gospel Matthew 9:35-38

Then Jesus made a circuit of all the towns and villages. He taught in their meeting places, reported kingdom news, and healed their diseased bodies and bruised and hurt lives. When he looked out over the crowds, his heart broke. They were so confused and aimless, like sheep with no shepherd. "What a huge harvest!" he said to his disciples. "How few workers!" "On your knees and pray for harvest hands!" (Message Version)



Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (NIV)

My Cup of Compassion

--Joyce Rupp

My Cup of Compassion holds tears of the world;
It overflows with sorrow, struggles, and
sadness.

My Cup of Compassion holds the cries of
children who are unfed, unloved, unsheltered,
uneducated, and unwanted.

My Cup of Compassion holds the screams of
war, the tortured, slain, imprisoned, the
raped, the disabled.

My Cup of Compassion holds the bruised and
battered victims of incest and abuse,
gang wars, and violent crimes.

My Cup of Compassion holds the voice of silent
ones, the mentally ill, undocumented
immigrants, and people experiencing
homelessness.

My Cup of Compassion holds the headache of
loss, the sigh of the dying, the string of
the separated.

My Cup of Compassion holds the agony of the
earth, species terminated, air polluted,
land destroyed, rivers with refuse.

My Cup of Compassion I hold it to my heart
where the Divine dwells, where love is
stronger than death and disaster.

Learning Compassion

What can we do? We can become a sign.

Whatever happens becomes a sign of joy
and a fountain of Divine Love. I learned a lot about
compassion from one of my college professors. I
remember being surprised when she took a
personal interest in me, a homesick freshman. I
observed her care and concern for each student in
her large classes. She would stop a student in
class or on campus, ask how they were, and then
listen to the response. I remember nothing of what
she taught me in that class but everything about
how she was with me and the other students.

Compassionate people often inspire others to be
empathetic. I feel this way whenever I meditate on
Jesus's life. I marvel at how consistently
compassionate Jesus was when he met the sick,
the grieving, the hungry, and the oppressed.
He is often described as being "deeply moved in
spirit" or feeling compassion for the people.
Jesus touched torn and tattered people with an
amazing awareness of their woundedness. The
vastness of his ability to love and be loved is
phenomenal.

I have also been inspired by compassionate
people in history, such as Dorothy Day,
Mahatma Ghandi, Etty Hillisum, Tom Dooley,
Mother Teresa, and Albert Schweitzer. I was in
awe as I read about the English spiritual writer
Caryll Houselander. Psychologists would bring
their mentally and emotionally ill patients whom
they could not cure to live with Caryll because they
were astounded at the effect her compassionate
presence had on them. Caryll accepted and loved
the patients, and this made a dramatic healing
impact on their health.



When I look at the lives of compassionate people, I see some common characteristics. They often have significant suffering or painful life events of their own, a generous heart, a non-blaming and non-judging mind, a passionate spirit, a willingness to sacrifice their life, a keen empathy, and a love that embraces the oneness of all creation. (Joyce Rupp, *The Cup of Our Life*)
Now, I invite you to think about your teachers of compassion today. Who has taught you how to offer the cup of compassion to others?

THE DAILY PRACTICE

Scriptures:

Exodus 33:19;
Isaiah 30:18, 49:10;
Psalm 51:1, 103:13, 116:5;
Matthew 9: 35-38;
Romans 9:15; 2
Corinthians 1:3-4;
James 5:11.

Breath prayer:

Breathing in: Divine Compassion. . .
Breathing out. . . . teach me.

Reflection:

Remember compassionate people you have known (personally or from history, Scripture, literature, etc). Review their lives. Notice how they lived. How did they respond compassionately? Write down their names on a piece of paper. Place this paper under your cup to symbolize how their example is a basis for your compassion. Let it be a way of honoring these compassionate people.



Scripture: Matthew 10:40-42

And whoever gives even a cup of water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple – truly I tell you, None of these will lose their reward.

Journaling:

My experience of compassion. . .
The key thing that I have learned from compassionate people is . . .
God of compassion. . .

Prayer:

God of hurting ones, thank you for the loving people you have brought into my life. They have given me comfort and strength in my times of pain. Thank you for my teachers of compassion and for what I have learned from them. I long to be a more compassionate person so that. My life will truly reflect you. Receive and renew the gift of compassion in my life. Amen.



April

Readers & Greeters at OTUMC and SFC



Readers at SFC

April 6 Pam Sirois
April 13 Robin Hile
April 17 Jack Austin
April 20 Susan Austin
April 27 Ron Austin



Greeters at SFC

April 6 Mindy & Lily
April 13 Kelly & Ramona
Maundy Thursday April 17 Robin
April 20 Austin Family
April 27 Austin Family

Readers at OTUMC

6 Mary Matteson and Nolan Matteson
13 Diane Vatne Palm Sunday
20 Joanna Morisson Easter
27 Carol Winslow

Greeters at OTUMC

April 6 Hallie and Mary Mattson
April 13 Denise Sullivan/Don Hillman
April 20th Don Spencer/Cheri Taylor
April 27th Brynn Oliver/Laurie Reichel

***If you are unable to greet on your scheduled Sunday, please contact another greeter to switch dates.

***Please arrive 15-20 minutes early.

***Greeters also bring the offering plates to Pastor during offering. Thank you.



Announcements at OTUMC & SFC



Thursday April 17th Maundy service 6pm (SFC) followed by a light meal
Good Friday at OTUMC at 6pm
Sunrise service (Joint) at OTUMC at 6:00 A.M.
Coffee and Donut fellowship
Easter Service 9:00 A.M at SFC
Brunch at 10:00 A.M.
Easter Service 10:30 A.M at OTUMC
Easter PotLuck following worship at OTUMC





Celebrating



Palm Sunday



Children singing on Palm Sunday



Palm Sunday



Palm Sunday



Children singing on Palm Sunday



Stroudwater Federated Church Fair



SFC Spring Fair




SFC Spring Fair



SFC Spring Fair



SFC Spring Fair

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| PRAYER REQUEST: HEALING PRAYERS FOR LESLIE | JOYS: JESSE CANCER FREE FOR THIRD WEEK IN A ROW | JOYS: LESLIE - ALL WHO BROUGHT FOOD FOR FOOD TABLE | JOYS: DENISE - MAINE YOUTH FISH & GAME ASSOCIATION AUCTION A SUCCESS | PRAYER REQUEST: CHERI - PRAYERS FOR DON SPENCER WHO HAS BEEN IN AND OUT OF THE HOSPITAL THIS WEEK WITH MEDICAL ISSUES |
| PRAYER REQUEST: PRAYERS FOR NANCY J | <div> <h1>Prayer Requests, Concerns & Joys</h1> <p>AT OLD TOWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (OTUMC) AND STILLWATER FEDERATED CHURCH (SFC)</p> <p>HAPPY 21ST BIRTHDAY EDEN!</p> <p>HAPPY 39TH ANNIVERSARY DENISE & GARY!</p> </div> | | | PRAYER REQUEST: BARRY'S NEPHEW ROSS HAS A MASSIVE STROKE |
| CELEBRATIONS: PAT IS BACK TO DIRIGO PINES FROM REHAB | | | | PRAYER REQUEST: BRYNNS FRIEND CARRIE AND MARSHA |
| PRAYER REQUEST: ISABEL - CATHY BARTHOLOMEW AND MICHAEL OUELLETTE CELEBRATION OF LIFE | | | | PRAYER REQUEST: LORRANIE PREBBLE - PRESTON AGE 17 PASSED AWAY FROM A BRAIN TUMOR |
| CELEBRATING A WONDERFUL SPRING FAIR. | | | | PRAYER REQUEST: STEVE & JEANNE BUTTERFIELD - SHOULDER |
| JOYS: CAROL - GREAT JOB TO EVERYONE ON THE FAIR | | | | PRAYER REQUEST: ETHEL HILL - LOST HUSBAND RONNIE FROM A HEART ATTACK |
| CHERI - WE ARE GLAD TO SEE PASTOR OH TODAY! | | | | PRAYER REQUEST: LOUISVILLE KY FLOODING, VICTIMS & PROPERTY DAMAGE |
|  | JOYS: SPRING FAIR, HARD WORK FOR CHURCH | WE ARE GRATEFUL TO BE CELEBRATING HOLY WEEK TOGETHER. | PRAYER REQUEST: SAFE EASTER TRAVELS FOR EVERYONE | |



Thank you for reading!

Feel free to reach out!



Rev. Jung Sun Oh

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