

The Village Steeple

From the Pastor's Desk: Standing up to bullies.



Lectionary Texts for the Next Two Weeks

October 10:

Jeremiah 29:1-7
Psalm 66
2 Timothy 2:8-15
Luke 17:11-19

October 17:

Jeremiah 31:27-34
Psalm 119
2 Timothy 3:14-4:5
Luke 18:1-8

The recent headlines about teenagers committing suicide after enduring bullying have been heartbreaking. Faced with continual verbal and physical abuse, some young people have felt that life is not worth living. As people who believe in the value of all of God's children, we are called to stand up against the bullying epidemic and serve as examples of a better way.

You may be a parent or grandparent. You may be a teacher or coach. Or, you may work with youth at the church. But chances are you are in a position to reach out to young people and help stop the bullying. Here are some practical suggestions. This is by no means a complete list, but it's a start.

1. Let the young people in your life know how you feel about bullying. Just like you talk to them about drugs and alcohol, talk to them about how you expect

them to treat their peers. Make it clear that you do not approve of bullying

2. Whenever possible, talk about the theological reasons we do not bully. Remind young people that we are all valuable parts of God's creation and all deserve respect. Teach them the Golden Rule.

3. If you were bullied, tell your story. Sometimes youth who are being bullied feel ashamed of the fact. Or, they may not realize that people they love have gone through the same thing, and have come out the other side. Stress to them that they will get through it, and that they are not at fault.

4. If your child is being bullied, make sure they have good support systems at school, at church, and in their family. Encourage open dialogues with them. Do not shame them for being bullied or tell them (cont.)

THIS MONTH'S BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

Birthdays: None this month. Did we miss yours?
Let us know.

Anniversaries:

Oct. 5, 2009 - Leni Brown & Roberta Kresch

Oct. 31, 2009 - Sally Stott & Barbara Reinhold

Pastor's Note (continued)

- they need to "get a thicker skin".
5. If your child is the bully get them the help they need. Bullies are not born. If they are targeting other young people it is often because they are learning the behavior from someone else.
 6. Model non-bullying behavior in your home and business life. Bullying, unfortunately, does not end with high school. Adults are often just as guilty. Show the young people in your life what it means to treat everyone with respect and civility.
 7. Help shape anti-bullying programs in your schools and communities. Take a public stand against bullying. Encourage parents and other adults to talk about the issues. Participate in honest dialogue.
 8. Be your young person's best advocate. While we want to teach our kids to be strong and

independent, this is one time when our voices need to be heard. Work with teachers and school administrators to let them know what's happening.

9. Grow your young person's confidence in their ability to stand up to bullies. Teach them to be strong without being a bully. Praise them when they stand up for more vulnerable classmates.
10. Give them hope. It does get better. Make sure they know that. Remind them of their value. Tell them they are loved. Talk to them about their future. And, if you are worried, talk to them about whether they are considering hurting themselves. It is worth it to have the conversation.

As always, I am here to support our young people as well. Please let me know if I can help any of you to stand up to bullying. We are all better for it.

Calendar

Sunday, October 10

Worship, 9am
 Coffee Hour, 10am
 Bible Study, following

Wednesday, September 13

Coffee Hour, 8-10am

Thursday, September 14

No Exodus Bible Study

Saturday, October 16

90th Birthday Party for Cookie,
 1-4pm, Grand Summit Lodge
 AA, 8pm

Sunday, October 17

Worship, 9am
 Coffee Hour, 10am
 Bible Study, following

Wednesday, October 20

Coffee Hour, 8-10am

Thursday, October 21

Exodus Bible Study at WCC, 7pm

Saturday, October 22

AA, 8pm

MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR OUR FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING AND BLUE JEANS SUNDAY:

OCTOBER 31, 2010

After worship we will work around the church. Then we will have a brown bag lunch together with desserts and coffee provided by the LKG. In addition to church business, Emily will be kicking off stewardship season and showing the congregation where your offerings go.

STAYING CONNECTED

If you or a loved one are sick, hospitalized or in crisis please call the Rev. Emily Heath at (802) 258-1143 at any time.

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Ringers Needed:

We are looking for Young Ringers Do you have or know a child in grade 2-6 who would like to ring? We would like to start a young ringers group. Children do not need to be members of the church.

For more information, contact Laurie Newton, newt42@wildblue.net

Food Pantry Needs:

- Hot Cereal (oatmeal, etc.)
- Hot Chocolate
- Boxed Stuffing